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ABSTRACT

This study is an exploratory analysis to understand evangelical Protestant church growth in the Dominican Republic. In light of social, economic, and religious needs there, and due to the inefficient supply of religion from the Roman Catholic Church, Dominicans seek sources of fulfillment. Protestant churches reach out to them more efficiently because—in organizational terms—they are entrepreneurial, decentralized communities, who are responsive and adaptive to local custom. I show that Protestant churches multiply rapidly while maintaining their religious identity; indeed, they grow because of it. In ideological terms Protestant churches carry a specific theological orientation that emphasizes affective worship, a spiritual experience of a God that is said to intervene supernaturally, and a demanding moral world. I combine two conceptual traditions to explain Protestant expansion—religious economy and sub-cultural identity theory. These theories presume specific social and metaphysical rewards, predict the creation of religious boundaries, and explain the boundary-keeping characteristics of the moral worlds established by evangelical Protestant Dominicans.

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Religious Transformations
The Protestant Movement in the Dominican Republic

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I. Catholics and Protestants

> I was not a Christian most of my life. I changed when I prayed for my sick daughter that she would be cured of a disease. And if God answered the prayer, then I would follow God. And she was healed. But after I prayed, she still could not walk or talk. Then I prayed and she walked. Then I prayed again, and she talked.[1]

In 1930, a Pentecostal preacher from Puerto Rico, Francisco "Pancho" Hernández González, received a mandate from God to preach the gospel to the nearby people of the Dominican Republic. Sailing there with trepidation, he witnessed intense persecution of non-Catholics by dictator Rafael Trujillo. He returned home to Puerto Rico. As punishment for returning home, the story goes that God struck Hernández with tuberculosis. Repenting, he traveled again to the Dominican Republic and embarked on an eight-year journey, "proclaiming a message of hope and of the quick coming of Christ's return, offering health to the sick, and creating places of solidarity and life together."[2]

Now some seventy years later, that Pentecostal "message of hope" has become part of a religious transformation throughout the world, especially in Latin America and the Dominican Republic. Across this region, Protestantism has weakened the dominant religious institution — Catholicism — and encouraged people to transform their lives with faith and devotion.

[1] I would like to thank Professors Jim Wellman, Chair of the Comparative Religion Program, UW, and Kathie Friedman, Chair of the Jewish Studies Program, UW, for their assistance in molding a vague, ambiguous idea into something refined. I would have never had the opportunity to go to the Dominican Republic had I not been a part of University Presbyterian Church during my stay at the University of Washington, whose program, World Deputation, sent me to the Caribbean. This project was also made possible by the generous support from a Mary Gates Research Grant. I would also like to thank Children of the Nations, which was kind enough to let me conduct research while I worked with them in the Dominican Republic.

[2] Beinvenido Alvarez-Vega, "Movimiento Pentecostal Dominicano", in *El campo religioso Dominicano en la década de los 90s: diversidad y expansión*, ed. Alejandra Liriano (Santo Domingo: DESyR, Departamento de Estudios de Sociedad y Religión, 1996), 106.

This rise of Protestantism in the past century, both globally and in Latin America, has been widely observed and discussed by political analysts, feminists, church members, observers, natives, and foreigners. However, the current sociological literature on religion contains little analysis for the Caribbean region in general and for the Dominican Republic specifically. Indeed, most studies cyclically examine and re-examine more 'mainstream' nations (e.g. Brazil, Chile, and Guatemala) and extrapolate those conclusions to peripheral countries. In doing so, these case studies underestimate the regional variances in sects (e.g. differences in doctrines), cultures and societies (e.g. levels of unemployment and urbanization) among Protestants in Latin America, which leads to imprecise theorizations of intra-country situations.[3] Moreover, these analyses on a whole neglect to tie broad social forces —culture, economics, and politics — into what happens inside and outside the walls of Christian churches — and these forces tend to vary between countries. Finally, generalized reasons for Protestant expansion pay no attention to historical contexts (e.g. the curious reality that the majority of Protestant growth in the Dominican Republic has occurred entirely in the past three decades).

Due to this drastic shift in influence over the religious lives of people in Latin America and particularly in the Dominican Republic, I ask the following: Why, in spite of historical privileges, is the Catholic Church's power and membership decreasing in the Dominican Republic while Protestant churches and membership are increasing? This question necessitates two areas of investigation — first, the societal reasons that Dominicans are attracted to Protestantism, and second, the reasons Protestant churches do better as organizations once people come to them. While some of the explanations are transferable from other countries, I seek to understand what is specific about the Dominican Republic to cause expansion there now.

I theorize that Protestantism is growing because, in *societal* terms, Dominicans are searching for something to give them an identity, a role, and to meet their social, emotional, educational, economic, spiritual, and physical needs. As Dominicans seek places to fill these needs, Protestant churches easily welcome them because — in *organizational* terms — they are nimble, decentralized communities led by native Dominicans that multiply easily without losing core values. Hence, I combine two theories to explain Protestant expansions — rational choice theory and social identity theory.

[3] See Edward L. Cleary, "Latin American Protestantism", in *The Globalization of Pentecostalism: a religion made to travel*, eds. Murray W. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Petersen (Oxford: Regnum Books International, 1999), 135, who argues that "a unified Pentecostal culture cannot be assumed."

First, I set the background and examine the context of the Dominican Republic, both its social and religious history. Second, I review the literature and debates in religious studies, particularly the theories of Protestant growth and Catholic decline. I conclude with a look at the two theories, rational choice and sub-cultural identity, that matter most to my arguments. Third, I explain the methodology for my study and research, and explore my findings. Finally, I consider the implications for religious growth in Latin America and globally.

II. The History of Catholic and Protestant Expansion in the Dominican Republic

Villamán asserts that religious systems can be categorized as dominant, established, and, depending on their level of institutionalization and acceptance within a country.[4] Their locations, then, determine what power they have and what their focus is. Villamán argues that states seek cordial relations with *dominant* religious institutions[5]as a way of ensuring status quo relations in society. Both sides, therefore, frequently establish concordats[6] that give a prominent role to that religious institution (e.g. the Concordat of 1954 that made Catholicism the official religion of the Dominican Republic). The Catholic Church, which held its first Mass on January 6, 1494 in La Isabela, plays this role in the Dominican Republic. Its' most successful and recent contribution to Latin America has been "Base Communities."[7]

Established religious systems have a long presence with multiple social sectors, but they have not achieved the same privileges or advantages from the State as dominant ones. Protestant churches, arriving first in 1824 to the Dominican Republic, comprise this group. These churches include Presbyterians, Conservative Baptists, Methodists, Episcopalians, and Moravians, among others.[8] *Unestablished* religious systems (e.g. Pentecostalism and Evangelicalism) — which have caused the majority of the recent Protestant growth worldwide — are contemporary arrivals that are most popular with the urban poor and have a limited relationship with the State. Pentecostals and Evangelicals are exclusive

[4] Marcos P. Villamán, *el auge Pentecostal: certeza, identidad, salvación* (Mexico City: Centro Antonio de Montesinos, 1993).
[5] Ibid. Villamán states that a *dominant* religious system is one that "throughout its history constitutes a relevant component of the world vision of the different social sectors" (23). Translation mine.
[6] Concordats are agreements between a pope and a government that regulate State-Church interactions.
[7] See the "Glossary of Terms", Appendix.
[8] The vast majority of Protestants in the Dominican Republic do not include churches affiliated with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints or with Jehovah's Witnesses, for they do not subscribe to the Nicene Creed of AD 381—the statement of faith upon which every other Christian denomination agrees.

and active in education, evangelization, and Spirit-filled *cultos*.[9] Although both groups are frequently analyzed separately from "main-line" Protestant denominations — they are still, nonetheless, only a recent form of Protestantism.[10] That is, while their emphases vary slightly, their core doctrines are indistinguishable from other Protestant groups.[11] Hence, I consider the change in the Dominican Republic to be a Protestant one.

In general, Christians in the Global South are not the liberal, activist revolutionaries that the West expected based on the teachings of liberation theology in the 1970s. To the contrary, they are "far more conservative in terms of both beliefs and moral teachings… [They] are stalwartly traditional or even reactionary by the standards of economical advanced nations."[12]

There are two categories of Protestant churches and organizations. First, "traditional" or "historic" groups (like Presbyterians, Mennonites, Lutherans, Methodists, and Episcopalians) have historically been supporters of education, human rights, and health care projects.[13] Their style of worship is formal and traditional — the most staid of all the groups. Second, Pentecostals — by far the largest reason for growth in Latin America — engage in worship experiences and encounters. They desire to have a personal relationship with God (highlighting that aspect instead of doctrine); out of this relationship flows participatory worship — healings, testimonies, and speaking in tongues.

Several traits characterize Protestant churches. First, they rely on nationals to direct organizations and congregations in Latin America. Whereas the Catholic priests are often non-native (due to a chronic understaffing), these groups put lay people — those without any formal education in seminary — in charge with some supervision from the home country (virtually always the US). To be sure, these churches and organizations are still very reliant on their "home" support. Second, the focus of these groups is evangelization.[14] That is, members respond to the inner joy of the Gospel that they receive by making other disciples. Third, there is an emphasis on the individual testimony or story of each person, which

[9] See "Glossary of Terms,"Appendix, p. 523.
[10] Although both groups are frequently analyzed separately from "main-line" Protestant denominations — they are still, nonetheless, only a recent form of Protestantism.
[11] See Corten and Marshall-Fratani,1-21.
[12] Philip Jenkins, *The next Christendom: the coming of global Christianity*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002), 4.
[13] Virginia Garrard-Burnet, *Protestantism in Guatemala: living in the New Jerusalem* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1998), 33-37.
[14] *To evangelize* means "to preach the gospel to someone." An *evangel* is a "messenger," from the Middle English *evangile*, from Late Latin *evangelium*, and from Greek *euangelion*, which means "good news."

provides an outlet for self-assertion to people who are not heard otherwise. Fourth, Protestant churches are characterized by splits and schisms regarding Biblical teachings. In other words, each group feels unique and loyal to itself because it teaches the "right" doctrine of baptism, confession, or Biblical inerrancy.

Wellman describes the differences between Roman Catholics and Evangelicals. Evangelicals emphasize Scripture and the inerrancy of the Bible. They focus on a truly religious *experience* in their conversion or in healings. Churches are independent and decentralized. Finally, Evangelicals welcome lay participation in leadership, often including women as missionaries and occasionally as pastors.[15]

In Latin America three categories of Catholics exist. The first category is the traditional Roman Catholics who follow the hierarchy demonstrated in the Vatican City, who pray to Christ, the Virgin Mary, and Saints, and who practice ancient rituals. The second category, progressive Catholics or Liberation Catholics, began in the 1970s under the writings of Gustavo Gutiérrez, who emphasized the Biblical mandate to care for the poor. Hence, these Catholics fight for the liberation of the impoverished from oppressive and exploitative economic systems. One manner in achieving this result was CEBs —*Comunidades Eclesiales de Base* — whose goal was the gathering of communities and the development of native priests and nuns. Liberation theology is viewed as an impetus of the Sandanista Revolution in Nicaragua in 1979, as well as the reason behind the martyrdom of archbishops, priests, nuns, and followers. The Vatican in the 1980s removed several influential Church officials to reign in liberation theology in its original form; however, basic tenets and principals regarding poverty remain. The third and most recent category is Charismatic Catholics — those who worship outwardly and utilize testimonies and Bible study like Pentecostals while still embracing (to a lesser extent than traditional Catholics) Catholic doctrine.[16]

Starting in 1492 with the arrival of Christopher Columbus, the Catholic Church and the State were intimately connected. Religious affairs were political ones and *vice versa*. In 1844 (after Haitian occupation for 22 years when the eastern two-thirds of Hispaniola became the Dominican Republic), the Church's intimacy with the State was solidified in the first constitution. During the dictatorship of

[15] James K. Wellman, "Christianity: Evangelicalism." in *Worldmark encyclopedia of religious practices,* Vol. 1: Religions and Denominations, Ed. Thomas Riggs. (Detroit: Thompson Gale, 2006), 183-89.
[16] Anne Motley Hallum, "Taking Stock and Building Bridges: Feminism, Women's Movements, and Pentecostalism in Latin America", *Latin American Research Review* 38, no. 1 (2003): 173-75.

Rafael L. Trujillo from 1930-1961, the Catholic Church spiritually supported him (i.e. gave its blessing and support) in exchange for material benefits: Trujillo restored buildings, churches, schools, rectories, convents and provided for stipends for clergy. In 1954, the Dominican Republic and the Holy See signed a Concordat, which gave Catholicism special privileges. The Catholic Church can use public funds to finance certain church expenses (e.g. the rehabilitation of church facilities). The state waives all customs duties when the Catholic Church imports goods.[17]

On the other hand, Wipfler emphasizes the Church's weakness and immobility in the 20th century: "Thus, the church entered the era of Trujillo (1930-1961) as a legal nonentity threatened with the confiscation of its already meager possessions. Its structure, consisting of a single archdiocese, had not changed in four centuries, a sign of its stagnation."[18] Yet to its credit, the Catholic Church has survived the rise and fall of slavery, economic troubles, myriad Dominican constitutions, skirmishes and battles, US military occupation in 1916-1924 and 1965-1966, and a brutal dictatorship. In addition, the Vatican and the clergy in the Dominican Republic *did* withhold favor from Trujillo toward the end of his dictatorship, denying from him the title of Benefactor of the Church.[19]

Protestantism, meanwhile, did not enter the Dominican Republic until 1822 through missionaries from the Methodist Church of England in Puerto Plata. The African Methodist Episcopal Church arrived in 1824 with several thousand former slaves from the US lured by the promise of freedom and good, arable land to work.[20] The Dominican Episcopal Church entered in 1896 and the Moravians in 1907, followed by the Free Methodists and the Adventists in 1908.

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[17] See Ian Bell, *The Dominican Republic* (Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 1981), 235-243. See also U.S. Department of State, "Dominican Republic," *International religious freedom report 2004,* http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2004/35535.htm.

[18] William Louis Wipfler, *The churches of the Dominican Republic in the light of history; a study of the root causes of current problems*, Sondeos, no. 11 (Cuernavaca: Centro Intercultural de Documentacion, 1967), 205.

[19] Bell, *The Dominican Republic, 237.*

[20] See United Methodist Church, "Dominican Republic: Mission Profile," General Board of Global Ministries, http://gbgm-umc.org/country_profiles/country_mission_profile.cfm?Id=12 (accessed February 24, 2005). The reason for Protestantism's late arrival in the Dominican Republic is the simple fact that the Dominican Republic was under either Spanish or French rule until Juan Pablo Duarte led a movement for independence in 1844. In other countries, Protestantism started much earlier. For example, shipwrecked soldiers established churches in Belize in 1638, the British seized Jamaica in 1655 and established Anglicanism there, and pirates who attacked Spanish galleons were usually Protestant. As Nelson quotes Stephen Caiger: "they [pirates] looked upon the plundering of the Spanish as almost a Holy War against the greed of the *conquistadores* and the cruelty of the Inquisition… Every ship had its Bible on which the Oath of Brotherhood was sworn." Wilton M. Nelson, *Protestantism in Central America* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), 4.

The United Methodist, the Presbyterian USA, the British Methodist, and the Moravian churches formed the Dominican Evangelical Church in 1922.

Pentecostalism — an American movement that started in California at the turn of the 20th century — was briefly present in 1918 but was truly established in 1930 in the Dominican Republic with the Assemblies of God. Villamán lists four "cardinal" beliefs in the doctrines of Pentecostalism — the second coming of Christ, salvation by faith, divine healing, and the baptism by the Holy Spirit.[21] In the Dominican Republic, Pentecostalism started with the missionary activity of "Pancho" Hernández under the dictatorship of Trujillo — a time "of instability, of tireless swings, of human sufferings, of scarcity of food and clothing, of ruptures in congregations, and of social and religious scorn."[22] The State and the Catholic Church marginalized Pentecostal adherents, leaving them poor with virtually no food or money. Yet since the 1970s, Pentecostalism has caused an explosion of denominations.[23] It is "a new, national infrastructure of churches that… own their own buildings, have juridical personality, and have organized well within and beyond their own communities."[24] Indeed, the largest denomination (after the Catholic Church) in the country is Assemblies of God, which arrived in 1940.[25] In the current state of religious affairs, Pentecostalism is by far the biggest threat to the Catholic Church's dominance.

The current economic condition of the Dominican Republic is prosperous relative to its neighbor, Haiti (the poorest country in the Western hemisphere). The United Nations ranks the country as 98 out of 177 countries in the Human Development Index—a measure of literacy, life expectancy, and GDP per capita in terms of purchasing power parity.[26] Industrial parks, tax-free areas, export-led processing zones, tourism, and mining companies dominate the economies of the largest cities — Santo Domingo (the capital), San Pedro de Macorís, La Romana, and Santiago. These cities boast better education, health care, and public services than rural areas. The attraction to these cities as an escape from rural poverty has resulted in intense urbanization — one of the highest

[21] Villamán, *El auge Pentecostal*, 55.
[22] Alvarez-Vega, "Movimiento Pentecostal Dominicano", 107.
[23] Protestants in the Dominican Republic are more ecumenical than one might expect by looking at the number of denominations. For instance, the label *evangélico* (or, less frequently, *protestante*) serves to identify non-Catholics. This is in contrast to—for example—the United States where Christians almost always label themselves specifically by their denomination. The term *pentecostal*, however, has the same significance in Spanish as in English although it is less frequently used. See also Nelson, *Protestantism in Central America,* 60; and Hallum, "Taking Stock and Building Bridges", 43.
[24] Cleary, "Latin American Protestantism", 143.
[25] See Tables 1 and 2 for denominations in the Dominican Republic
[26] United Nations, "Dominican Republic." *UN human development report online*, November 11, 2004, http://hdr.undp.org, (accessed April 21, 2005).

percentages in the world [see Figure 1]. Because of this fast growth, new neighborhoods in cities often lack any social services. This allows an opportunity for churches to enter with provisions.[27]

Ethnic tension between Dominicans and Haitians has been a source of repeated conflicts throughout the country since the early 1800s. International human rights groups have issued repeated warnings about the condition of Haitians (also known as Dominico-Haitians) in the Dominican Republic. These Haitians generally work as sugar cane cutters or plantain harvesters and reside in *bateyes* near the fields. The majority of these Haitians entered the country around the turn of the 20th century, and — though they have resided in the Dominican Republic for four or five generations — they are still "illegal people." Many churches and Protestant organizations have taken up helping these workers who number from 500,000 to 1,000,000 people.[28] Broadly, the population is comprised of 85 percent Hispanics and 14 percent Haitians with 1percent of another race (Jamaican, Chinese, Lebanese, or Japanese).[29] Of the Hispanics, 7,136,000 are Afro-Caribbean, and 1,360,000 are Euro-American.[30]

A deep tension between Catholics and Protestants has been constant since the 1940s in the Dominican Republic (and, indeed, since the Protestant Reformation in the 16th century), when increasingly large numbers of Catholics began to convert to Protestantism. These clashes endure as both sides try to make the other an enemy or scapegoat for social ills.

DeHainaut describes that Protestants in the Dominican Republic fear that those in power politically and socially (Roman Catholics) will attempt to restrict the freedom of worship of those not in power (Protestants) in an effort to eliminate anti-Catholic sentiments.[31] Meanwhile, Protestants are engaging in campaigns to vocalize their contempt for Catholicism. Because of the opportunities at stake, both sides are playing smarter and harder to gain and maintain political control over their adherents.[32] Yet this current confrontation is hardly new. For

[27] Alvarez-Vega, "Movimiento Pentecostal Dominicano", 96.
[28] Joanne Mariner, "Dominican Republic: "Illegal People": Haitians and Dominico-Haitians in the Dominican Republic," http://www.unhcr.org/refworld/publisher,HRW,,DOM,3cf2429a4,0.html, (accessed February 8, 2009).
[29] The actual numbers are Jamaican, 25,000; Chinese, 9,000; Lebanese, 3,200; and Japanese, 1,700.
[30] "Operation World 2001 Reveals Emerging Global Trends", https://www.strategicnetwork.org/index.php?loc=kb&view=v&id=9381&fto=1772&, (accessed February 8, 2009).
[31] Raymond DeHainaut, "Interfaith Clash in the Dominican Republic," *The Christian Century* 108, no. 35 (1991): 1140-1143.
[32] Ibid. One can see an example of this cycle of attacks: an evangelist Eugenio Rodríguez López during radio broadcasts in 1991 called the Catholic Church a "tool of Satan and blamed it for all of Latin America's grave social ills—for general immorality, for irresponsible governments and even for the

example, former Archbishop of Santo Domingo Ricardo Pittini furiously denounced Protestants to in a letter to Trujillo in 1943:

> I have viewed with alarm the Protestant propaganda grow and intensify, directed and financed from the United States… Salaried ministers travel the country, inundating it with Bibles, magazines, leaflets, [and] handouts that always ooze a subtle venom and often direct vulgar attacks against our Catholic Religion.[33]

As recently and publicly as 1992 during the fourth Latin American Bishops Conference (CELAM) in Santo Domingo, the late Pope John Paul II famously declared Protestants to be "rapacious wolves"[34] and appealed to the notion that Latin America is inherently Catholic[35]— and thus relies on the Catholic Church for stability:

> We should not underestimate a particular strategy aimed at weakening the bonds that unite Latin American countries and so undermine the kinds of strength provided by unity. To that end, significant amounts of money are offered to subsidize proselytizing campaigns that try to shatter such Catholic unity.[36]

Indeed, Catholics portrayed Protestant missionaries as embodying British domination during colonialism, as Yankee imperialism during independence,[37]

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proliferation of drugs and the arrival of Satanism." Catholic leaders responded by banning his program from the airwaves, which led Evangelicals to complain of restrictions on their freedom to worship. The Archbishop López Rodríguez responded that "these groups [non-Catholics] are sent here by the foreign interests that control them and are nothing more than demonic, irrational and uncontrollable aberrants." (1140)

[33] Bernardo Vega, *La vida cotidiana Dominicana a través del archivo particular del Generalísimo* (Santo Domingo, Dominican Republic: Fundación Cultural Dominicana, 1986), 73. Translation mine.

[34] Pope John Paul II's statement refers to one of Jesus' warnings—to watch out for false prophets who come in sheep's clothing, but inwardly are ferocious wolves. See the Gospel of Matthew 7:15-16.

[35] See C. René Padilla, "Latin American Evangelicals Enter the Public Square," *Transformation* 9, no.2 (1992). Padilla writes that the "Roman Catholic hierarchy finds it exceedingly difficult to set aside the centuries-old premise that Latin American society is essentially Catholic. Thus it acts with an integralist vision of the Church and civil society according to which the Church depends heavily on the support of the oligarchic State to maintain its position of power"(4). See also Cleary, "Latin American Protestantism," 134-135.

[36] Cleary, "Introduction: Pentecostals, Prominence, and Politics", 5. Strachan (quoted in Wipfler) writes that:

> The extraordinary growth of that wing of the Protestant missionary enterprise which is not officially linked with the historic or traditional denominations has brought about a significant change in the evangelical situation in Latin America today…[T]he movement represented by these bodies has grown to such proportions that it can no longer be ignored.

Wipfler, *The churches of the Dominican Republic,* 18.

[37] Indeed, the "trendy expression" during the 1940s according to Archbishop Pittini was "Protestant imperialism infiltrates through three steps: the Bible, the dollar, the Marines" (Vega, *La Vida Cotidiana Dominicana*, 73. Translation mine).

and as Communist influence during the mid-20th century.[38] Yet Martin reminds readers that this religious revolution is "an *indigenous* enthusiastic Protestantism rooted in the hopes of millions of Latin Americans."[39]

According to the *International Religious Freedom Report 2004* from the US State Department, religious groups are required to register with the Government to operate legally. The Catholic Church, which pays no customs on imported goods, is privileged: other religious groups must request exemptions from customs duties from the Office of the Presidency. The Report notes that Evangelical Protestant leaders have lobbied the Government to equalize the privileges that all churches receive. One point of contention is that — although all civil unions are recognized by the state — Roman Catholic weddings are the only religious marriage ceremonies that the Government legally recognizes. As late as 1999, members of the National Police were required to attend Mass weekly.[40]

The Dominican Republic seems like the archetype for Catholicism. Official statistics invariably list the population as being 85 to 90 percent Catholic.[41] However, estimates of actual church involvement range from 5 to 15 percent of the population.[42] In the Dominican Republic, official statistics still show a high number of Catholics. According to *Demos 97*, a population survey taken in 1997 by the *Instituto de Estudios de Población y Desarrollo* (Institute of Population and Development Studies) the population is 68.1 percent nominally Roman Catholic and 11 percent Protestant Christian. (This figure includes Pentecostals, members of Jehovah's Witnesses, Mormons, and traditional Protestants.) One fifth of the sample (20.1 percent) claimed to have no religion. Protestant Christians

[38] See Nelson, *Protestantism in Central America*, 54; and Jean-Pierre Bastian, "The Metamorphosis of Latin American Protestant Groups: a Sociohistorical Perspective," *Latin American Research Review*. 28, no. 2 (1993): 33-35.

[39] David Martin, *Tongues of fire: the explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Oxford, UK: B. Blackwell, 1993), 3. Emphasis mine. See also Everett A. Wilson, "Emergent Latin American Protestantism," in *Called and empowered: Global mission in Pentecostal perspective*, eds. Murray A. Dempster, Byron D. Klaus, and Douglas Petersen (Peabody, MA: Hendrickson Publishers, 1991), 81-82; and Anthony Gill, *Rendering unto Caesar: the Catholic Church and the state in Latin America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 83.

[40] U.S. Department of State, "Dominican Republic," *International religious freedom report 2004: Dominican Republic*, Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor, Sept 15, 2004. http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/irf/2004/35535.htm (accessed May 6,2005).

[41] See CIA Factbook, "Dominican Republic," http://www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/dr.html (accessed February 14, 2005)

[42] The discrepancy in statistics is theorized to be from people who were baptized or confirmed in the Church but have no part in it today.

meanwhile insist to have 20 to 25 percent of the population as members; the Catholic Church claims 87 percent.[43]

Operation World is a survey of Christian activity around the world. The most recent edition, from 2001, shows that Catholics still outnumber Protestant members in the Dominican Republic. However, revealing information is found in the column "Congregations." Here, Protestant groups far exceed the number of congregations; hence, while their numbers are smaller, their ability to rapidly expand to form new denominations and congregations is intriguing.
As seen in Table 1, the sheer number of denominations that are Protestant or Independent as well as their ability to sustain large numbers of small congregations predicts that they will be able to grow rapidly. Indeed, examining Table 2, that is the case. So-called Independent denominations are able to grow annually at about 8 percent — far faster than other Christian groups. Thus, the ability of non-mainline Protestants to expand and form small nuclei of religious activity far exceeds the ability that Catholics have to perform the same function.

We have seen the economic, historic, and ethnic contexts of the Dominican Republic currently. We have also explored the histories of Protestantism in the Dominican Republic, ending with a look at their relative strength in numbers. In addition we looked at the rife tensions between Catholics and Protestants — a trend that becomes of utmost importance in determining social identity. I now explore the reasons behind the success of Protestants. I begin with a look at political activity and practical, concrete reasons for growth, and then move into more abstract theories of religious growth. I conclude with a comparison of rational choice and sub-cultural identity theories.

III. Exploring the religious debate: how political are Protestants?

Certainly, Protestantism and Catholicism as movements have fluctuated in their political power throughout history. Yet the current literature debates to what extent Catholics and Protestants as *people* are politically involved. The simple answer is that Protestants are inherently and directly political, seeking to grow their power for political and economic gain. Current conditions, though,

[43] State Department. "Dominican Republic".

Table 1: Catholic and Protestant Congregations in the Dominican Republic

Churches	MegaBloc[44]	Congregations	Members	Affiliates
Catholic	C	300	3,917,867	7,522,000
Seventh-Day Adventist	P	417	111,455	170,000
Jehovah's Witnesses	M	342	22,906	71,000
Church of God of Prophecy	P	322	23,716	65,000
Assemblies of God	P	751	42,593	59,643
Church of God (Cleveland)	P	367	24,245	55,000
Dominican Evangelical	P	180	6,803	20,000
Christian Assembly of God	I	120	9,500	18,000
Moravian	P	37	5,200	15,000
Church of the Nazarene	P	130	6,000	14,000
Free Methodist	P	115	6,000	12,000
Christian Bible	P	50	5,000	11,000
Salvation Army	P	40	4,000	10,000
Christian Brethren	P	120	5,000	10,000
Christian Reformed	P	90	3,000	10,000
Evangelical Temple Association	P	30	2,000	5,000
Episcopal	A	30	2,767	4,400
Baptist Convention	P	23	1,417	3,200
Other denominations (52)		1,223	106,165	-280,000
Doubly affiliated			-140,000	

Source: *Operation World 2001*, 208.

[44] The symbols are as follows: C-Catholic, P-Protestant, M-Marginal, I-Independent, and A-Anglican.

Table 2: Growth rates of Christian churches in the Dominican Republic

Christians	Denominations	Affiliation %	Adherents	Annual Growth
Protestant	30	5.79	491,000	2.4
Independent	36	1.65	140,000	8.2
Anglican	1	0.05	4,000	0.6
Catholic	1	88.55	7,522,000	1
Marginal	2	1.54	131,000	4.4
Unaffiliated		0.87	74,000	n.a.
Doubly affiliated		-3.30	-280,000	n.a.

Source: *Operation World 2001*, 208.

require a nuanced approach — namely, that Protestants form "social countermodels" to champion for specific causes.

A multitude of authors argue that Protestants are indeed involved in party politics. Focal to Freston's work is that Protestant churches (exemplified especially by those in Brazil and Guatemala in the 1980s) began combining religious rallies with political speeches.[45] The adopted Protestant attitude was that "brother votes for brother"— in other words, "brothers" of the same faith would (and ought to) vote for their Protestant brothers in elections. Commonly cited empirical examples are Protestant political parties (e.g. National Solidarity Movement in El Salvador and Autonomous Progressive Organization in Venezuela), the former president of Guatemala — General Efraín Ríos Montt, and the former president of Perú — Alberto Fujimori (both of whom claimed to be Pentecostal).

The reasons behind political party involvement vary. Kamsteeg argues simply that Pentecostal Evangelicals create movements not against secular politics but

[45] Paul Freston, "Brother Votes for Brother: The New Politics of Protestantism in Brazil", in *Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America*, eds. Virginia Garrard-Burnett and David Stoll (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993); See Freston, *Evangelicals and politics in Asia, Africa, and Latin America* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001).

against Catholicism.[46] Padilla offers that Protestants realized during elections that "the mobilization of these humble communities of believers could be as effective in politics as it has been in spreading the gospel".[47] In a similar manner, Cleary describes that Protestants appraised their access to people in positions of power and their ability to bring about changes in the political system, and then became political.[48]

Other authors analyze Protestant politics outside the realm of parties, seeking to understand how democratic these groups will become. One group sees Protestantism as much more than "Christian politics";[49] rather, it is a democratic social movement with "*collective challenges by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities*."[50] Protestants thus develop "social countermodels" through egalitarian social relationships and democratic principles in religious administration[51] where they can "devise their own social world for themselves."[52] Willems studied Protestants and Pentecostals in Brazil and Chile and noted that Pentecostalism is "a symbolic subversion of the traditional social order," for when converts receive the Holy Spirit they then have authority to evangelize.[53] Dodson contends that the power to lay on hands and speak in tongues is egalitarian, participatory, and communal.[54] To use Tocqueville's phrase, the Protestant community engages in 'associational activities' that create participatory membership, thus developing a "culture of citizenship."[55] Indeed, Protestants seek to change far more than political institutions, according to Peterson, Vásquez, and Williams, citing Peruvian and Salvadoran Evangelicals:

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[46] Fan Kamsteeg, "The Message and the People: The Different Meanings of a Pentecostal Evangelical Campaign", in *The popular use of popular religion in Latin America*, eds. Susanna Rostas and André Droogers. (Amsterdam: CEDLA, 1993).

[47] Padilla, 5.

[48] Cleary, "Introduction: Pentecostals, Prominence, and Politics", 13.

[49] Which produces Padilla's statement that "there is no Christian politics: there are only Christians serving God and society in the political field" (7). Perhaps the best summation comes from Levine: "neutrality in effect commits one to work within the status quo; activism may require a commitment to change. Both are political positions." Dan Levine,

[50] Sidney G. Tarrow, *Power in movement: social movements, collective action, and mass politics in the modern state* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994),3-4.

[51] Bastian, 38.

[52] David Martin, *Tongues of fire: the explosion of Protestantism in Latin America* (Cambridge, USA: Basil Blackwell, Ltd., 1993), 285.

[53] Emilio Willems, *Followers of the new Faith: culture change and the rise of Protestantism in Brazil and Chile* (Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967), 249.

[54] Michael Dodson, "Pentecostals, Politics, and Public Space in Latin America", in *Power, politics, and Pentecostals in Latin America*, eds. Edward L. Cleary and Hannah W. Stewart-Gambino (Boulder, Colo: Westview Press, 1997), 33.

[55] See Anna L. Peterson, Manuel A. Vásquez, and Philip Williams. "The Global and the Local," in *Christianity, social change, and globalization in the Americas*, eds. Anna L. Peterson, Manuel A. Vásquez, and Philip J. Williams (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2001), 210-228.

> Democracy is more than just elections, rationalized institutions, and legal procedures. It involves revisions in cultural and personal identity, transformations in local social relations, and greater participation in all dimensions of the public sphere.[56]

The other side vigorously maintains that Protestantism "does not foster democratic values or encourage the sense of civic commitment that is necessary to democratic politics."[57] These authors include Bastian and, in particular, d'Epinay, whose writings are based on his experience in Chile and describe the quasi-authoritarian nature of Pentecostal churches (like the former *hacienda* system) led by a pastor who shepherded a group of believers who withdrew from society and politics.[58] As d'Epinay claimed, Pentecostalism "alienates itself and 're-alienates' its members, since it looks upon itself as alien to the 'world' and effectively makes its members strangers to society."[59] Bastian agrees. He claims that "the majority of Pentecostal churches have pastors who are the chiefs, owners, caciques, and caudillos of a religious movement that they themselves have created and transmitted from father to son" in a sort of nepotistic fashion.[60] But Bastian's evidence is spotty: he lists only a few large churches with much higher-than-normal levels of institution (e.g. *Brazil para Cristo*) in a few countries (Brazil, Mexico, and Peru) — unconvincing evidence for a claim that messianism "reappears at all levels of the Pentecostal hierarchy."[61] Hallum's critique is most applicable here:

> [T]he local context shapes not only the religious and political activities but the teachings of the pastors and the overall Protestant message as well… the people are not simply objects absorbing a prepackaged delivery but are actively reforming a theology even as they respond.[62]

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[56] Ibid., 215.
[57] Dodson, 26.
[58] Jean-Pierre Bastian, "The Metamorphosis of Latin American Protestant Groups: a Sociohistorical Perspective," in *Mexico, Central, and South America: new perspectives,* ed. Jorge I. Dominguez (New York: Routledge, 2001), 191-220; See Christian Lalive d'Epinay, *Haven of the masses: a study of the Pentecostal movement in Chile*, World studies of churches in mission (London: Lutterworth P, 1969), 38-39. d'Epinay's purpose, though, is not to contend that Pentecostal churches are dictatorial; rather, in proving his hypothesis that Pentecostalism thrives because of rupture and continuity, he attempts to show the continuity of the *hacienda* system.
[59] D'Epinay, 130.
[60] Bastian, 206.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Anne Motley Hallum, *Beyond missionaries: toward an understanding of the Protestant movement in Central America*, Religious forces in the modern political world (Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, 1996), 28.

Perhaps the greatest clarity, though, comes from the *Declaration of Jarabacoa*, signed on May 24, 1983 by the Latin American Theological Fraternity (LATF). This group by the leading of the Holy Spirit called for political action from the Latin American Evangelical community. Yet the LATF affirms what Hallum argues:

> The church is not called to work out specific political proposals, identify itself with any system of social organization, or to form political parties. The church is called to participate in the human struggles against oppression, misery, ignorance… to denounce unjust systems and collaborate with the construction of a more just and fraternal society.[63]

The issue of political involvement by Protestants is complex. While empirical examples point to simple involvement in political parties, one sees that Protestants take collective political action not for political gain *per se* but as a method of combating social problems. Through this process, Protestants attempt to create social countermodels of democracies and egalitarian communities.

IV. Theories of Protestant popularity in the Dominican Republic

Various theories surround the debate over the increasing number of churches and members of Protestant churches in Latin America. These are usually predicated on micro-level case studies from which an author extrapolates country-wide or even general, universalized axioms. I begin with three common explanations for Protestant expansion, and then present an outline of five common theories of religious growth.

The rise of Protestantism is due to imperialism: Many authors attempt to connect the rise of Protestantism and recent trends of globalization as a sign of American imperialism. The former accusation—surprisingly still visible—is that "Latin American Protestantism…is a subproduct of political, economic and cultural conquests of past centuries."[64] These authors cite flows of money from the North to the South, convinced that the North is "buying" converts and extorting money — "a religious version of the quest by multinationals for new markets."[65]

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[63] Juan Samuel Escobar, "Catholicism and National Identity in Latin America," *Transformation*. 8, no. 3 (1991): 24

[64] Waldo Cesar, et al, *Protestantism e imperialismo no America Latina* (Petropolics: Vozes, 1968), 12.

[65] André Corten and Ruth Marshall-Fratani, eds., *Between babel and Pentecost: transnational Pentecostalism in Africa and Latin America* (London: Hurst & Co, 2001), 6.

Bastian, on the other hand, contends that the *raison d'etre* of Protestant societies in has less to do with "'North American imperialism' than with the internal political and social struggles in the continent" — a struggle based on "the equality of a participatory and representative democracy."[66] Moreover, Corten and Marshall-Fratani highlight two assumptions that this argument makes: first, it assumes that millions are unthinking "dupes"; second, these cultural flows are not unidirectional and have no predictable significance in a given context.[67] Hence, this debate contributes little to explaining *current* trends of growth due to its inability to see Latin Americans as aware and alert.

The rise of Protestantism is due to the increased liberty women find: These authors theorize about the changing role of women as a cause for the growth of Protestantism. The commonly accepted notion is that women find acceptance, safety, a space for community, and even leadership within churches — both within the physical buildings and in the community of fellow believers. Other authors, however, see Christianity in general as failing to include women in egalitarian roles.

Hallum observes that women are attracted to Protestant churches because they "desire to bring stability to the family, to counter the destructive aspects of *machismo*, and to find support in times of political violence and poverty, all highly rational, pragmatic motivations."[68] Later, Hallum asserts that the desperation of illness combined with prayer often leads to healing and security. This gives women an "available, effective and affordable" manner to survive physical disease and economic poverty.[69] Thus, women come to churches for spiritual and physical healing. Yet Hallum supposes that women, who are "inherently" social, come to church out of a sheer desire to socialize. This downgrades the status and purpose of women in the church as a mere social activity with no spiritual or personal intent.

Powers attempts to synthesize the positive outlook of Hallum with Jaquette's pessimism toward egalitarian inclusion of women. She shows that the number of ordained women pastors is *decreasing* and that the majority of women end up

[66] Bastian, 216.
[67] Coren and Marshall-Fratani, 6-7.
[68] Hallum, *Beyond missionaries*, 55.
[69] Anne Motley Hallum, "Taking Stock and Building Bridges: Feminism, Women's Movements, and Pentecostalism in Latin America," *Latin American Research Review* 38, no.1 (2003): 176.

serving in ministries that do not directly proclaim the gospel.[70] To be sure, "Pentecostals have affirmed women's ability to speak for God as fully empowered vessels of the Holy Spirit[71] but have also accepted traditional attitudes about the place of women in society."[72] In other words, women have expanded roles during spiritual experiences, but both men and women are uncertain of what women's roles look like in daily church life.[73] Roebuck adds to Powers' analysis, stating that baptism by the Holy Spirit originally took the place of qualifications for ministry (e.g. age, education, and gender). Over the past four decades though, he argues that baptism in the Spirit (especially prophecy and glossolalia) has become a "witness" of God — not a sign of qualification for ministry. Hence, Pentecostals added other qualifications to determine a "calling," including the commission of already-ordained human figures. Thus, a "male minister had to be secured in order to baptize converts, receive members into the church, officiate at the Lord's Supper, perform weddings, etc."[74] Lawless analyzed the themes of the sermons of women pastors and notes that the idea of surrender to God and man recurs most frequently and that women seem consumed with self-denigration to prove their submission to men.[75]

Yet myriad authors contend that women define power differently than men, and they do not feel disfranchisement if they do not bear an official title. This notion of "complementary partnership" still grants women agency, though, as they choose to reject elements of liberalism and secularism. Hence, women who are leaders in communal or social roles (but are not necessarily in the Church

[70] Jane S. Jaquette's scholarship has focused upon the position of women within the Latin American context, and in particular the success women have had (or lack thereof) in participating in the democratic movements within Latin America.

[71] See the classic biblical text from Joel 2:28-29—"And afterward, I will pour out my Spirit on all people. Your sons and daughters will prophesy, your old men will dream dreams, your young men will see visions. Even on my servants, both men and women, I will pour out my Spirit in those days." Also, Galatians 3:28—"There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

[72] Murray W. Dempster, B. Klaus, and D. Peterson, *The globalization of pentecostalism: a religion made to travel* (Oxford, UK: Regnum Books Intl., 1999), 314.

[73] Roebuck quotes Frank Bartleman: "Men are supporting an effeminate ministry, following women. A female ministry is naturally a weak ministry. With doubtless a very few noticeable exceptions. The character seen in the faces of men of a generation ago is gone". David Roebuck, "Go and Tell My Brothers"?: The Waning of Women's Voices in American Pentecostalism", Paper presented at the Society for Pentecostal Studies (Dallas: Texas, November 1990), 15.

[74] Roebuck, 12.

[75] Elaine Lawless, *Handmaidens of the lord: Pentecostal women preachers and traditional religion*, Publications of the American Folklore Society, v. 9 (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988), 93; 111-112. While Lawless' work errs with inaccurate scriptural references and broad generalizations about the feminist movement within churches, she does make an interesting observation that women see themselves as "handmaidens" of the Lord rather than servants (154).

hierarchy) still feel valued and important through their unofficial influence and their daily interactions with the decisions of the church.

While Roebuck and Powers certainly have shown a "weaker" role of authority for women (which, oddly, can only be defined in comparisons to "stronger," male roles), the strong success of the movement among women implies that Protestant women do define power differently — or put less emphasis on their authority in lieu of other aspects that they find in Protestant churches. These other aspects are the most intriguing ones, and I shall examine later the ways that Dominican churches draw people — especially women — through social programs.

Protestantism is attractive because of modernization and economic reasons: Recently, the debate surrounding Protestantism has revolved around "modernity" or economic "development," which attempt to link changes in religious behavior with changes in economic behavior. The implication, then, is that people will become Protestant because of their desire to "modernize" and to succeed economically. For example, Stoll argues that Protestants attempt to morally transform Latin Americans with the hope that a strict lifestyle will lead to economic savings — they "earn more, save more, and as a result prosper economically and rise culturally."[76] During times of distress, Latin Americans view Protestants as wealthy in terms of money and resources. In one case study, Annis concludes that the factor in determining upward mobility within an indigenous Guatemalan town was whether or not the families were Protestants. He asserts that Protestant townspeople were "future-oriented": their children were more likely to attend school, and they worked in upwardly-mobile jobs (e.g. tourism, transportation, or sewing).[77] Sherman expands on this theory by contending that a theology of "rebirth" enables believers to grasp hold of a sense of power and hope for changing the quotidian. She claims that Pentecostalism offers "biblical support for such free-market propositions as private property, economic initiative, and man's creative capacity."[78]

Coleman et al maintain the opposite. From their study in El Salvador, they conclude that Protestants "have lower education levels, occupy lower-status

[76] Wilton M. Nelson, *Protestantism in Central America* (Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1984), 53.
[77] Sheldon Annis, *God and production in a Guatemalan town*. The Texas Pan American series (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1987).
[78] Amy L. Sherman, "The Public Role of Evangelicals in Latin America: Implications for the Consolidation of Democracy," paper presented at the International Studies Association convention (Atlanta: Georgia, March 31, 1992), 18.

occupations, and earn less than Catholics, whether the latter are practicing or non-practicing."[79] Their data, taken from two nation-wide surveys, reveal that the historical and geographical context of believers is important. One drawback to their work is that — since it traverses a country — it does not account for regional variations. Moreover, considering that the country was in the midst of civil war during the surveys, if Protestants were scapegoats for the strife, their employment opportunities may have decreased. Finally, Protestants — since they tend to be located in poor and marginalized areas — do not start with the same socioeconomic status as Catholics.

In general, national or even regional studies that attempt to prove a Protestant savings or work "ethic" make too many assumptions. They assume the same amount of religious activity, the same teachings and doctrines on daily life, and the same amount of opportunity nationally or even internationally. Furthermore, they ignore religious and cultural factors (such as persecution or opposition) that — for example — could lead to disdain or praise in their worksite. This is not to say that the lure of wealth does not draw a person to religion; rather, accounting for all the variables and proving this on a regional scale is virtually impossible.

Some authors, meanwhile, attempt to provide a new paradigm for analysis. Bonino summarizes Brazilian sociologist Francisco Cartaxo Rolim, declaring that social scientists who define what Protestantism *does* (in terms of economics and politics) instead of what it *is* ignore the movement's core function in fulfilling a societal need for identity and belonging.[80] It is within that paradigm that Villamán describes Protestant attitudes toward modernity or development: "conservative" thinkers attempt to live in "pre-modernity," putting science and reason at the service of a "true faith".[81]

In sum, it does seem that the strictness of Protestantism leads to increased levels of investment and wealth through changed behaviors. However, as Bonino and Villamán highlight, arguing that Protestants engage in active church membership exclusively for material benefits yields an incomplete analysis of participants' behavior. That is, inside the realm of church activity, followers live in "pre-modernity" with only faith — not economics — to guide them.

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[79] Kenneth Coleman, et al, "Protestantism in El Salvador: conventional Wisdom versus the Survey Evidence," in *Rethinking Protestantism in Latin America*, eds. Virginia Garrard-Burnett and David Stoll (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 1993), 115.

[80] Míguez José Bonino. *Faces of Latin American Protestantism* (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1997), 59.

[81] Villamán, *El auge Pentecosta,* 45-46.

The rise of Protestantism is due to transnational migration and movements: The importance of migrants has played a significant role in the theorization regarding the diffusion of religious ideas across the Global South from the 1970s until today. Globalization has certainly influenced cultural and religious decisions; currently, theorists describe the extent to which globalization both homogenizes and localizes religion (i.e. makes them global *and* particular to a geographic location).[82]

Open borders allow for the transfer of homogenized denominations across borders; thus, locals can compare their religious options and join global communities in which they feel most comfortable. This process began immediately after Latin American countries gained independence, argues Nelson, when locals "became conscious of their backwardness" and thus became receptive to immigrants from so-called Protestant countries —"the most progressive and advanced of the time."[83] Levitt, DeWind and Vertovec state that the homogeneity of religious institutions allows for convenience and comfort for the migrant newcomer. This occurs through localization in new geographies, which create "hybrid social remittances".[84] Levitt uses Catholicism as an example of a religious institution that creates uniformity across boundaries, hence facilitating easy connections to previous styles of worship. These familiar elements involve a generic "Latino style".[85] Yet tension occurs when globalization creates homogeneity *and* heterogeneity. For example, globalization allows the creation of multiple identities and loyalties to religious institutions especially for migrants and refugees.

Missing from these authors is an analysis of how gender, race, and socioeconomic class impact the adoption of religious identities. As Corten and Marshall-Fratani note, "global circulation of the objects of material culture…in no way predicts their significance in a given context."[86] Furthermore, analyses of cross-border connections tend to reduce religion to an economic commodity in which those with a "flexible" production and dissemination will best meet the needs of

[82] Corten and Marshall-Fratani, 3.
[83] Nelson, *Protestantism in Central America.* Nelson quotes Juan Rafael Mora, president of Costa Rica from 1849-1859: "We need immigration at all costs and if we really wish to get out of the rut and enter fully into the way of progress, if we wish to get rid of our problems and ignorance, we must hurry and share with North America the guarantees granted to the foreigner" (12).
[84] Peggy Levitt, Josh DeWind, and Steven Vertovec, *Transnational migration: international perspectives* (Staten Island, N.Y.: Center for Migration Studies, 2003), 8.
[85] See Peggy Levitt, "Transnational Ties and Incorporation: The Case of Dominicans in the United States," in *The Columbia History of Latinos in the United States since 1960,* ed. David G. Gutiérrez (New York: Columbia University Press, 2004).
[86] Corten and Marshall-Fratani, 6.

religious consumers. Peterson, Vásquez, and Williams, utilize economic discourse in claiming that "Pentecostalism, like global capitalism, homogenizes, making particularity only a strategy or stepping stone toward the production of globality/universality."[87] This analysis ignores both the heterogeneous anchoring that occurs as well as Hallum's observation that local contexts shape global realities.[88] Also, in the case of the Dominican Republic, leadership is virtually always indigenous. For example, Petersen and Vásquez note that "no formal agreements of any kind have ever been established between the Assemblies of God in the United States with any national Assemblies of God fellowship. The relationship has always been strictly fraternal."[89] Certainly, religious remittances impact the Dominican Republic yet the analyses seem too abstract for specific case studies. One can conclude, however, that Protestants in the Dominican Republic and the US — while similar — possess autonomy over their moral spheres.

V. Abstract Theories of Religious Growth

Status discontent theory originated in the 1950s with Hofstadter as an explanation for the political activity of conservative ("right-wing") Christians.[90] Along with Lipset and Lenski, he reasoned that the moral decline of traditional, Protestant lifestyles in the US had ignited political activism, for "religious resources [are] more easily mobilized for activism the more a religious group feels a threat to the social status that it *previously* enjoyed."[91]

This theory applies least to the Dominican Republic because Protestants there never "enjoyed" a time when it used its social status to champion for temperance, prison reform, and the abolition of slavery (like US Protestants in the late 19th

[87] Peterson, Vásquez, and Williams, "The Global and the Local", 4.
[88] Hallum, *Beyond missionaries*, 28.
[89] Anna L. Peterson and Manuel A. Vásquez, "'Upwards, Never Down': The Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Transnational Perspective," in *Christianity, Social Change, and Globalization in the Americas*, eds. Anna L. Peterson, Manuel A. Vásquez, and Philip J. Williams. (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 2001) 188-209.
[90] Richard Hofstadter, "The Pseudo-Conservative Revolt," in *The new American Right*, ed. Daniel Bell (New York: Criterion, 1955). For Seymour Martin Lipset, see *Political man: the social bases of politics* (Garden City, N.Y.: Anchor Books, 1963), and *The value patterns of democracy: a case study in comparative analysis* (Berkeley: University of California, 1963). For Lenski, see *The religious factor: a sociological study of relgion's impact on politics, economics, and family life* (Garden City, N. Y.: Doubleday 1961), and *Status crystallization: a non-vertical dimension of social status* (Indianapolis, Ind: Bobbs-Merrill, College Division, 1960).
[91] Christian Smith and Michael Emerson, *American evangelicalism: embattled and thriving* (Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press, 1998), 70. Emphasis mine.

century did).[92] That is, from the arrival of the first Protestants, the State and the Catholic Church persecuted them — and they were did *not* grow because of any place in society that they formerly occupied. Moreover, Smith and Emerson — working from Hart as well as from Schmalzbauer and Wheeler — contest the notion that religion is perpetually involved in a "zero-sum struggle" against secular modernity.[93] Indeed, they describe that reading the past as some sort of "golden age" of moral standards creates a sense of perpetually-increasing immorality; furthermore, viewing religion and modernity in a competition over a fixed number of moral "goods" fails to show the ways religions generate new ones, reclaim lost traditions, and use modern tools to strengthen their traditional worldviews.[94]

Sheltered Enclave Theory: This theory states that religious groups prosper most when they are sheltered from external, contaminating influences. As Berger argues, since religion is a socially constructed "sacred canopy" and "all socially constructed worlds are inherently precarious," then religion will face challenges and disconfirmation in times of modernity.[95] Hunter describes one of these challenges as modernization, which threatens religious order due to its functional rationality and pluralism — both cultural and structural.[96] Yet Evangelicalism thrives. The reason, Hunter claims, is because the Evangelical community is more "sociologically and geographically distant from the institutional structures and processes of modernity."[97]

Unfortunately, this theory, too, yields little help for this study. As Petersen notes, Protestants have been "remarkably realistic in functioning in the temporal world" even as they embrace differences.[98] Indeed, Smith and Emerson conclude the opposite of Berger and Hunter — that Evangelicalism "*thrives* on distinction, engagement, tension, conflict, and threat… the evangelical movement's vitality is not a product of its protected isolation from, but of its vigorous engagement

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[92] Ibid., 2-6.

[93] See Stephen Hart, *What does the Lord require? how American Christians think about economic justice* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992), 175-77; See also John Schmalzbauerand C. Gray Wheeler, "Between Fundamentalism and Secularization: Secularizing and Sacrilizing Currents in the Evangelical Debate on Campus Lifestyle Codes," *Sociology of Religion* 57 (1996): 241-257.

[94] Smith and Emerson, 97-102.

[95] Peter Berger, *The sacred canopy; elements of a sociological theory of religion* (Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967), 29

[96] James Davison Hunter, *American evangelicalism: conservative religion and the quandary of modernity* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1983), 12-13.

[97] Ibid., 60. Admittedly, one could argue that the analysis of American Evangelicals is not congruent to the Dominican Republic. Nonetheless, I include his thoughts to expand the scope of this religious discussion.

[98] Anna L. Peterson, "The Formation of Popular National Autonomous Pentecostal Churches in Central America," *Pneuma*. 16, no.1 (1994): 43

with pluralistic modernity."[99] Protestants in the Dominican Republic are certainly distant in their religious activities (e.g. attending *cultos* up to four times per week, participating in week-long fasts, praying throughout the night) yet these distinctions tell nothing of their demography and geography. Indeed, Protestants attend the same schools, live in the same neighborhoods, have the same jobs, and face the same "modernity" daily as Catholics and non-Christians.[100] Thus, isolation cannot be a contributing factor.

Strictness Theory: Strictness theory emphasizes the micro-level mandates and behaviors that each church issues to its members, arguing that "strict" religions prosper while "lenient" ones diminish. Kelley studied conservative Evangelical churches in the 1960s to find that they were growing while mainline-liberal Protestant churches were diminishing. He explains this trend with a simple formula — "*meaning = concept + demand*". His reasoning is that "the quality that enables religious meanings to take hold is not their rationality, their logic, their surface credibility, but rather the *demand* they make upon their adherents and the degree to which that demand is met by *commitment*."[101] Iannaccone explains this phenomenon in economic terms — that "strictness" eliminates religious "free riders" (those who obtain religious benefits without exerting effort to contribute).[102] These groups, thus, "enjoy high degrees of commitment, investment, solidarity, and mutual-rewards."[103]

This theory has applications in the Dominican Republic to "strict" (i.e. fundamentalist) Protestant churches. Nonetheless, other churches, which are growing equally well, orient themselves toward "*reducing the level of strictness* in its organizational culture at all levels."[104] Hence, while strictness explains some of Protestant expansion, it does not encompass it all.

Social Anomie Theory: Social anomie theory claims that certain social traumas induce people to change their attitudes toward (i.e. demand for) religion— where they attend church, what they want from their religion, and how much religion they want. The most commonly blamed sources of anomic dislocation

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[99] Smith and Emerson, 89.
[100] Smith and Emerson quote a Pentecostal woman: "You know we're *in* the world, but we're not supposed to participate in things that are *of* the world" (132, emphasis mine).
[101] Dean Kelley, *Why conservative churches are growing; a study in sociology of religion* (New York: Harper & Row., 1972), 52-53.
[102] Laurence Iannaccone, "Why Strict Churches are Strong," *American Journal of Sociology* 99, no.5 (1994): 1180-1212; and, "Sacrifice and Stigma: Reducing Free-Riding in Cults, Communes, and Other Collectivities," *Journal of Political Economy* 100 (1992): 271-292.
[103] Smith and Emerson, 72.
[104] Ibid., 85.

are modernization and its brother, secularization. These create a "*crisis of identity* by those who fear extinction."[105] d'Epinay, who studied Protestantism in Chile and working from Emile Durkheim, noted that anomic dislocation occurs most when:

> the structure of that society, in the security of which the individual used to find support, is in a state of *rupture*, which in turn involves the loss of the consensus that regulates the normative orientation and existential definition which give meaning to the life of the individual or group.[106]

Yet modernization and secularization, argues Gill are used to describe two "diametrically-opposed" situations — anemic Europe and thriving Latin America. This produces the universally-applicable axiom that "Modernization causes fundamentalism in places where people can't handle modernization all that well, and creates secularization in places where they are all set to embrace modernization."[107] To add precision, Gill advocates for micro-level case studies, which would eliminate "grand theorizing" about entire cultures. Indeed, d'Epinay's work focuses on cities.[108] This is inadequate, as Smith and Emerson note:

> cities produce unconventional behavior, not because primary-group ties are weakened and people feel anonymous and anomic. Quite the opposite: cities produce deviance because their ecological size and density promote a host of strong subcultures which generate unconventional beliefs and behaviors.[109]

Thus, neither cities nor modernization *per se* invariably catalyze religious growth; rather, they lead to complex identities. This theory seems to apply nicely to the Dominican Republic, where 66 percent of the population lives in urban areas, because the country has endured anomie recently with the end of a dictatorship, rapid inflation rates, and increased social ills.[110] Hence, the need for identity and stability seem valid.

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[105] Anthony Gill, "Religion and Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 4 (2001): 124.
[106] d'Epinay, 32-33. Emphasis mine.
[107] Anthony Gill, "Protestant Problems? What Protestant Problems?: The Coming Golden Age of Latin American Catholicism," Paper presented at the Contemporary Challenges to Latin American Catholicism Conference (Notre Dame, October 2-3, 2003) 4.
[108] See Anthony Gill, "Religion and Comparative Politics," *Annual Review of Political Science* 4 (2001):117-138.
[109] Smith and Emerson, 100. Emphasis mine.
[110] See Table 6

Rational Choice Theory: Whereas social anomie theory analyzes reasons for changes in religious "demand," rational choice theory (also known as religious economy theory) examines the effects of changes in religious "supply".[111] It states that monopoly churches are weak and inefficient, and new religious growth thrives through some change or opening in the so-called "religious marketplace." Monopoly churches are weak as Pousson succinctly puts it because "As movements become mature institutions, they tend to 'domesticate' the Spirit and the kingdom of God."[112] Finke and Starke argue that this "domestication" occurs because religious monopolies do not need to conform to demand, thus begetting poorer service and diminished innovation.[113] Underlying this theory is the contentious assumption that people behave in ways to maximize their own good.

Gill agrees that the origins of Protestant growth stem from a problem in religious "supply"—the fact that "Latin Americans… have a thirst for spirituality" but that "the RCC [Roman Catholic Church] undersupplied spiritual services to vast swatches of Latin American society, primarily those at the lower economic strata."[114] Hence, when Protestants missionaries arrived to establish churches, those churches exploded in membership. That is, religious participation increased when people found more variety in religious "products" to meet their wants and needs. Chestnut concurs that — in his terminology — an unregulated religious economy allows religious consumers to choose from "a dizzying array of religious options."[115] He even goes so far as to list the three main "selling points" of religion — contractual relationships (e.g. with saints and the Virgin Mary), miraculous occurrences (e.g. healings or divine rapture), and pneumatics (e.g. glossolalia).[116] As proof that religious innovation occurs when religious freedom exists, Gill cites the Catholic Church, who recognized their lethargy in the 1960s, and responded with liberation theology (to match consumers' tastes for social activism).[117] Further evidence is the modern-day Catholic Charismatic Renewal (an attempt to woo Pentecostal "consumers" back to the Church).[118]

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[111] Roger Fink and Laurence Iannaccone, "Supply-Side Explanations for Religious Change," *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science* 527 (1993): 27-40.
[112] Edward Keith Pousson, "A 'Great Century' of Pentecostal/Charismatic Renewal and Missions," *Pneuma* 16, no.1 (1994): 99.
[113] Roger Finke and Rodney Stark, *The churching of America 1776-1990: winners and losers in our religious economy* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 1992) 44, 149.
[114] Anthony Gill, "Protestant Problems? What Protestant Problems?", 6.
[115] Andrew R. Chesnut, *Competitive spirits: Latin America's new religious economy* (Oxford [England]: Oxford University Press, 2003), 4.
[116] See 'Glossary of Terms'.
[117] See Anthony Gill, *Rendering unto Caesar: the Catholic Church and the State in Latin America* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1998).
[118] See Peterson and Vásquez (2001).

Yet this story is not so simple, for the arrival of the Methodist Church of England in 1822 in the Dominican Republic did not produce a boom. Instead, that occurred some 150 years later. Something besides increased religious "supply" must have precipitated the growth. According to Gill the key was liberty, which makes religious minorities (if given the liberty to organize) prosper. Then, once the minorities achieved religious freedom, they could provide "goods and services" at lower per-member costs due to their lack of organizational hierarchy. Gill cites the high costs of maintaining ornate cathedrals, paying for priests during seminary, and maintaining celibacy as factors that make Catholicism more expensive.[119]

It would be too simplistic, though, to assume that Protestant churches grow merely because they add plurality. No, locals demand Protestant "services," which — according to this theory — have a comparative advantage over Catholic "goods and services." Smith and Emerson describe these as traits of "entrepreneurial" leaders who promote an immense variety of religious products, a common Christian identity without geographical or organizational centralization, fluid networks of small denominations, and the ability to create new churches, educational centers, missions boards, and programs.[120] Gill lists others, such as ownership over one's faith, showing films in rural areas, and distributing copies of the Bible.[121]

Peterson and Vásquez complicate rational choice theory. While they agree with Gill, Stark, Finke and others in viewing the Catholic Church as a monopoly, they contend that religious pluralism also prospers *within* the Catholic Church. Specifically, Catholicism has four models in the Americas — traditional unpopular (centered on Mary and patron saints), reformed Catholicism (influenced by the Second Vatican Council), progressive or liberationist (which opposes conservative regimes), and Charismatic (with small groups connected globally). These four "do not simply compete but enter into complex relations of accommodation and cross-fertilization."[122] The authors explain that there are differences in structural arrangements, hierarchies, levels of autonomy, levels of decentralizations, and differences between "a hierarchical, clerical, and oppressive official Catholicism and an egalitarian, lay-centered, and emancipatory grassroots Catholicism."[123] Protestantism also has varying levels of

[119] Anthony Gill, "The Institutional Limits of Catholic Progressivism: An Economic Approach," *International Journal of Social Economics* 22, nos. 9-11 (1995): 138-42.
[120] Smith and Emerson, 86.
[121] Gill, *Rendering unto Caesar.*
[122] Peterson and Vásquez, "Upwards, Never Down", 211.
[123] Ibid.

size, bureaucratization, and indigenization. Thus, neither of the two groups are static monoliths.

Bonino raises a second objection concerning the conceptualizations of any religious theory. Identifying the most effective ways to proselytize "seems to depersonalize the work and… person of the Holy Spirit which end up as a sort of programmed and programmable 'force,' contrary to the whole ethos and experience of the Pentecostal movement." He further argues vehemently against viewing religion in terms of social processes:

> [T]o somehow normalize a technical methodology as the work of the Holy Spirit seems to me a dangerous tendency. Dangerous in so far as it threatens to transform the missionary mind into an imitation of the operations of the transnational corporations. Also dangerous to the extent that it may subordinate the spontaneous, outgoing, dynamic force of the people of God to the strategies of those who know and can or think and do.[124]

The most frequent complaint against rational choice theory is its reduction of religious adherents to mere religious consumers. Like any rational choice theory, there is an underlying assumption that people are rational actors who seek to maximize exogenous or endogenous profit (e.g. money, status, creativity, etc.). Yet — and this is the shortcoming of the theory — religious adherents do *not* engage in lives of faithful devotion in exchange for the promise of riches in heaven. This is far too simplistic and trivializes the lives of millions of people around the globe.

Rational choice or religious economy theory helps to show why some churches succeed *organizationally* more than others. First, Finke and Stark and Finke, Guest, and Stark's observation that cities are quite conducive environments for religion — not inimical toward it — applies well to the 66 percent urbanization in the Dominican Republic.[125] Second, other theories do not account for the fluidity and decentralization of Protestant churches (instead viewing religious collectivities as blocks). Finally, rational choice theory has the only space for State involvement in promoting one religion over another (the others assume a static or nonexistent State).

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[124] Míguez José Bonino, "Pentecostal Missions is More Than What it Claims," *Pneuma* 16, no.2 (1994): 286.

[125] See Finke and Stark, *The churching of America 1776-1990;* See also Roger Fink, Avery Guest, and Rodney Stark. "Mobilizing Local Religious Markets: Religious Pluralism in New York State, 1855-1865," *American Sociological Review* 61, no. 2 (1996): 203-219.

Nonetheless, this theory is incomplete. It primarily addresses the organizational and administrative differences between Catholic and Protestant churches. To complete it, I analyze what is happening that makes people seek Protestantism and enjoy their participation there in the first place.

Sub-Cultural Identity Theory: This theory argues that Protestants create social subcultures with positive and negative reference points and thus create identity. Perhaps the greatest proponents of it are Smith and Emerson, whose nation-wide, comprehensive look at American Evangelicals honed their ideas. As they states: "Religion survives and can thrive in pluralistic, modern society by embedding itself in subcultures that offer satisfying morally orienting collective identities which provide adherents meaning and belonging."[126] The key to maintaining popularity is to establish *unique* niches or places that no other religion, denomination, or movement can fill.[127]

Smith and Emerson issue several prescient propositions about groups and belonging. They begins with the basic principle that "human drives for meaning and belonging are satisfied primarily by locating human selves within social groups that sustain distinctive, morally orienting collective identities."[128] Next, they contend that humans create these distinctions by drawing "symbolic" boundaries between themselves and "outgroups".[129] A few propositions later (Proposition 5), they states that "Individuals and groups define their values and norms and evaluate their identities and actions in relation to specific, chosen reference groups; dissimilar and antagonistic outgroups may serve as negative reference groups."[130] Strength comes when groups and individuals create "clear distinction from and significant engagement and tension with relevant outgroups"— but do not become "genuinely countercultural."[131]

Who are these outgroups? They serve "as sources of norms, values, and standards of judgment, functioning as informal authorities in the process of self-evaluation."[132] They are "any actual or imaginary individual, group, social category, norm, or object that influences the individual's covert or overt

[126] Smith and Emerson, 118.
[127] For this point see John H. Evans, "The Creation of a Distinct Subcultural Identity and Denominational Growth," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 42, no. 3 (2003): 467-477.
[128] Smith and Emerson, 90.
[129] Ibid., 91.
[130] Ibid., 105.
[131] Ibid., 118-19.
[132] Ibid., 105.

behavior," according to Raymond Schmitt.[133] Negative reference groups are those that embody everything the group does *not* want to become—how not to behave, how not to think, what not to believe. Theodore Newcomb defines negative reference groups simply as "a group the individual opposes and whose norms he rejects."[134] A positive one, then, is a group in which the individual desires membership status and whose norms he accepts.

Importantly, the creation of positive/negative reference points as well as ingroups/outgroups tells us nothing of the *material* condition of the individual or group. Indeed, these authors presuppose and assume that these groups and references are part of some sort of material group (e.g. families, religious groups, clubs, unions, teams, etc). Schmitt comes closest to addresses material existence when he offers that an individual requires an empirical status in addition to a *membership* status to create reference others. That is, an individual must define himself as a member of the group; also, others must define him as a member.[135] Hence, the membership must be *real and in existence*. The questions to explore, then, are twofold. First, to what extent do Protestants feel embattled in the interactions with "relevant outgroups"? Second, what are the negative reference points that Protestants create, and who are the "dissimilar and antagonistic outgroups"? Third, to what extent do these groups employ *non-material* and *material* tools as well?

VI. Methodology—Collecting Data

During the summer of 2004, I was an intern with Children of the Nations, a Christian organization based in Silverdale, Washington. They are a religious non-governmental organization with three global sites in Sierra Leone, Malawi, and the Dominican Republic. They are also a *young* organization, participating actively in each country since the late 1990s. However, upon arrival to the country, they connected with a Haitian missionary who was already working in a *batey* (a Haitian village in the Dominican Republic). Hence, their network of connections is based upon approximately fifteen total years of work in Barahona, Dominican Republic.

[133] Raymond L. Schmitt, *The reference other orientation; an extension of the reference group concept*, Perspectives in sociology (Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press, 1972), 4.
[134] Theodore Mead Newcomb, *Social psychology* (New York: Dryden Press Publishers, 1965), 225-27.
[135] Schmitt, 59.

Throughout the two months that I was there, I conducted eight formal interviews and made myriad personal observations while teaching, playing, and living with a host family, and attending church in Barahona. These interviews allowed me to contact a diverse group of people in a fairly representative Dominican town—part agriculture and part export-processing zone. The city's population is somewhere around 70,000 people (although the presence of uncounted Haitian harvesters and rural, uncounted Dominicans makes the actual number difficult to obtain). In addition, I performed statistical collection and analysis once I had returned to the United States. From this work, I gained a better understanding of the institutional and organization situations of Catholics and Protestants. What follows is a description of my methodology (how I collected these findings) and its strengths and weaknesses.

Table 3. People interviewed – ages and occupations

Person Interviewed	*Approximate Age*	*Gender*	*Occupation*
Subject A	Early 30s	Female	Administrative Assistant
Subject B	Early 60s	Male	Driver/Chauffer
Subject C	Late 50s	Male	Guard
Subject D	Mid 30s	Female	Cook/Housekeeper
Subject E	Late 40s	Female	Cook/Housekeeper
Subject F	Mid 30s	Female	Cook/Housekeeper
Subject G	Mid 40s	Male	Pastor
Subject H	Late 60s	Female	Missionary

Research Methods

While the majority of my fieldwork involved interviews, I also collected in-country data through personal observations and experiences. I made initial contact with potential interviewees in person, provided an overview of my project, and asked if they would like to be interviewed. I did not record the

interviews; however, I took copious notes and asked the subjects to repeat any unclear information. The interviews were conducted entirely in Spanish.

The questions I used were formed through discussions with my thesis advisor, Professor Jim Wellman. The best description of the interviews would be "semi-standardized" because I had a list of questions but deviated from them as the situation required. However, aside from an occasional clarification, the respondents explained themselves well.

Once in the US again, I looked at several sources for statistical data. The *Catholic Almanac* (also known as *Our Sunday Visitor's Catholic Almanac*) is an annual publication that contains basic statistics (e.g. number of priests, number of infants baptized, etc.) on international Catholic activities for the preceding year. It provided a historical look at Catholic activity from the 1950s to present. *Operation World* is the Protestant equivalent of the aforementioned almanac. The latest edition of it is from 2001; hence, the data are slightly outdated. Another source that I used was the *Directorio Evangélico* — the Evangelical Directory — published in 1995. While not entirely current, it provided useful information about various Protestant services and organizations. It also has a section that lists churches and their dates of founding. Finally, I relied on data from the World Bank to analyze rates of urbanization and education.

Limitations

An obvious limitation to my work is that the respondents were located all located in the same town, Barahona. While this city is like many other Dominican cities—rapidly urbanizing, experiencing the clash between agriculture and manufacturing, and full of hopeful unemployment—it is also just one city. Moreover, the size of the sample is small—just eight respondents. Another limitation might have been the interview itself: since I was unfamiliar as an American university student, the respondents may have exaggerated their faith and beliefs or — conversely — underemphasized some feelings they had toward their church or faith.

VII. Findings: Cities, Priests, , and the Holy Spirit

My hypotheses suggested that I would find organizational and sub-cultural reasons for the popularity of Protestant groups. These hypotheses were mostly correct. The qualification to my conjectures is that the Catholic Church has not been a passive entity in the Dominican Republic throughout the latter

20th century. Indeed, the number of Catholics seems to be rebounding (albeit slowly) after centuries of neglect from the Vatican, probably because the number of priests per capita is improving. Membership in the Catholic Church is growing at approximately 1 percent per year [see Table 2]. Below, I explain several findings from my research that give evidence for and explain the success of Protestants in the Dominican Republic. First, I begin with urbanization, material needs, and then move into sub-cultural identity.

Finding 1: Religious freedom allowed for rapid religious growth; this growth often came because of *foreign* missionaries or churches. Rafael Leónidas Trujillo Molina was perhaps the most brutal of the Latin American dictators. Taking the title of Generalissimo in 1930 from President Horacio Vásquez, he forced a brutal rule on Dominicans and Haitians alike in the country until his assassination in 1961. The capital, Santo Domingo, became *Ciudad Trujillo* (Trujillo City); the highest peak, *Pico Trujillo*. His ordered massacre of some 30,000 innocent Haitians in 1937 was another vivid example of racial tension between Haitians and Dominicans — and his attempts to "whiten" the country.[136] Finally, in 1961, he was shot dead while traveling in a car by members of his own army.

His death opened the country to increased religious freedom. While Trujillo and the Vatican had signed a concordat in 1954 to give Catholicism special privileges (which still remain), Protestants nonetheless enjoyed more opportunities after his assassination. As shown in the Table 4 and 5 below, the death of Trujillo brought about a rapid expansion of denominations. A mere 18 churches (i.e. denominations) were founded before or during his rule. Meanwhile, at least 41 denominations started and currently operate in the years after his death. The latter number is certain to be an underestimate.

Importantly, many of these denominations have their roots in *foreign* leaders or churches. The very first church founded — the African Episcopal Methodist Church in 1824 — started with 200 slaves led by an American reverend, Isaac Miller. *Iglesia de Dios* was founded by Jorge Silvestre, a missionary from the Bahamas in 1939. The *Iglesia Cristiana Reformada* started when Christian Reformed missionaries visited from Puerto Rico in the 1970s. The first American missionaries, Ray and Gladys Brinks and Neal and Sandy Hegeman, began work among the Haitian immigrants working in the cane fields and marginal areas of urban centers in 1981. At least three churches from the list were started in New York, where their congregations sent missionaries to plant other churches in foreign countries.

[136] See Wucker 1999 and Howard 2001 for a full description of Haitian-Dominican tensions

Table 4. Dates of Founding for Protestant Churches—before 1961[137]

Year	*Name of Church/Denomination*	*Founder and Origin, if known*
1824	Iglesia África Metodista Episcopal	200 freed slaves and Rev. Isaac Millar
1889	Iglesia Evangélica Metodista Libre Dominicana	Samuel Mills, North America
1897	Iglesia Episcopal Dominicana Comunión Anglicana	Benjamin Isaac Wilson
1921	Iglesia Evangélica Cristiana	
1930	Asambleas de Dios	
1930	Iglesia de Dios Pentecostal Movimiento Internacional	
1939	Iglesia de Dios	Jorge Silvestre, Bahamas
1939	Iglesia de Dios Incorporada	
1940	Iglesia de Dios de la Profecía	Trajano Andrián, Haiti
1941	Concilio Nacional de las Asambleas de Dios	William Laurence Perrawit, USA
1945	Arca de Salvación	
1945	Templo Evangélico de la Republica Dominicana	Don Hilario Diaz Bonachea, Cuba
1946	Asamblea de Iglesias Cristianas	
1946	Asambleas de Iglesias Cristianas Incorporada	
1946	Iglesia Evangélica Menonita	4 missionaries from Indiana
1947	Movimiento Defensores de La Fe Cristiana	
1950	Iglesia Cruzada Evangélica Misionera	
1955	Iglesia Unión Cristiana y Misionera	

Thus far, it is clear that an explosion of denominations occurred in the years following the assassination of Dictator Trujillo. The influence of foreign missionaries and church-planters cannot be underestimated, as they have contributed greatly to this rapid growth.

Finding 2: Simultaneous rapid urbanization allowed these new denominations to fill a *material* need for social services while Catholic priests were undersupplied. These new denominations and churches were certainly put to good use in the years following Trujillo's execution. The rapid urbanization rates in the Dominican Republic were the highest in all of Latin America for twenty years (from 1960 to 1980 until Haiti surpassed the Dominican Republic). The World Bank data, which began recording this statistic in 1960, show a trend across Latin

[137] Date for Table 4 and 5 are from *Directorio evangélico 1995*.

Table 5. Dates of Founding for Protestant Churches—after 1961

Year	*Name of Church/Denomination*	*Founder and Origin, if known*
1962	Convención Bautista Dominicana	
1962	Misión Evangélica Pentecostal Príncipe de Paz	
1963	Iglesia de Cristo Misionera, MI	
1963	Iglesia de Dios Unida	
1964	Iglesia Tabernáculo Evangelístico Movimiento Misionero Mundial	After a campaña with Rev. Arlem, from USA
1965	Iglesia Pentecostal Unida	
1967	Iglesia de Dios en Cristo La Senda	
1968	Iglesia Alianza Cristiana y Misionera Dominicana	
1969	Iglesia Fuente de Salvación Misionera	
1969	Iglesia Pentecostal Misionera Círculo de Oración	Ramon Acosta and Nancy Acosta, originating in New York.
1970	Iglesia Hermanos Unidos en Cristo	
1970	Iglesia Pentecostal de Jesucristo Internacional	Started in New York
1971	Iglesia Pentecostal y Misionera	
1972	Asamblea de Iglesias Cristianas Unidas	
1972	Iglesia de Dios Misionera Pentecostal	
1974	Federación de Iglesias Pentecostales Alfa y Omega	
1975	Asamblea de Iglesias Pentecostales de Jesucristo	
1975	Iglesia Bíblica Profética y Misionera	
1975	Iglesia de Nazareno	William Porter and Louis Butler, Americans from Puerto Rico
1975	Iglesia Misioneras Asamblea Cristiana	
1976	Iglesia Apostólica y Misionera	
1976	Iglesia Cristiana Damasco	
1978	Iglesia Apostólica de La Fe en Cristo Jesús	
1978	Iglesia Cristiana Fuente de Salvación	
1979	Asamblea Evangélica Misionera Pentecostés "Luz en el Camino"	
1981	Concilio de la Cristianización Nacional	
1981	Iglesia Cristiana Reformada	Ray and Gladys Brinks and Neal and Sandy Hegeman, American
1982	Iglesia Evangélica Pentecostal Cristo en las Antillas	New York
1983	Conferencia Internacional de Iglesias Hermanos Unidos en Cristo Incorporada	
1983	Iglesia Jesucristo Fuente de Amor	
1987	Iglesia Pentecostal Arca Cristiana	
1989	Asamblea Evangélica Pentecostal Enmanuel	
1989	Concilio de Iglesias Carismáticas Espíritu de Hermandad	New York in 1980
1990	Concilio Latinoamericano de Nueva York	
	Iglesia Alfa y Omega la Hermosa	
	Iglesia Evangélica Ebenezer	
	Iglesia Evangélica El Tabor	
	Iglesia Evangélica Misionera	
	Iglesia Independiente	
	Iglesia Nueva Vida	
	Iglesia Pentecostal Shekinah	

of high urbanization rates in the 1960s that slowly decline until the present time. For this analysis, I chose a small, representative sample of Latin America. Cuba and Haiti are both island nations in the Caribbean with tumultuous histories of revolutions and dictators. In the case of Haiti, it shares the island with the Dominican Republic and controlled it during the 1800s from 1795 to 1809 and from 1821 to 1844.[138] Cuba was evangelized starting in 1514 and was predominantly Catholic; however, Fidel Castro declared the country a socialist state in 1961 and banned worship and religious instruction in any place outside of Church premises.

Brazil, Chile, and Argentina are all countries in South America that have colonial legacies as well. More importantly, though, these three countries are the classic examples of Protestant success. Indeed, most of the literature surrounding Pentecostalism in particular centers on case studies of these three countries.[139] Hence, if corresponding trends emerge between the Dominican Republic and these three countries, then we might have a clue as to the reasons behind religious success.

This rapid growth in urbanization drove hordes of people to cities. By 1981, one-half of the population lived in urban areas in the Dominican Republic. In 2001, two-thirds dwelled in cities and urban areas. According to the United Nations, by 2015, about three-fourths will live in cities. Table 6, below, illustrates this rapid shift.

Along with this increase in urbanization came social service organizations as well as transparently Christian businesses. Evangelical radio stations sprouted to broadcast their message of hope and truth in these crowded cities. Stations began such as *Alfa Omega*, *Alerta*, *Amanecer* [Dawn], *Enmanuel*, *La Voz Cristocéntrica* [the Christ-centered Voice], *La Voz de Sinai* [the Voice of Sinai], *Mar*, *Renuevo* [Renew], *Revelación en América*, *Revelación de Puerto Plata*, *Transmundial* [Worldwide], and *Ven* [Come]. From this list, one can see the vast amount of effort put into radio stations and into spreading a Christian message.

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[138] In 1795, Spain ceded all of *Española* to the French in an attempt to cover war debts incurred in Europe. The then-Haitian colony returned to Spanish rule in 1809, but was taken over on December 1, 1821 by a group of Haitians who named the colony *Haití Español*. Finally, on February 27, 1844 under the direction of Juan Pablo Duarte, *Haití Español* gained independence, changing its name to the Dominican Republic—an epoch historians that mark as the country's First Republic

[139] There are myriad examples of Brazil, Argentina, and Chile in religious studies literature. See, for example, R. Andrew Chesunt, . 1997. *Born again in Brazil: the Pentecostal boom and the pathogens of poverty* (New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers University Press, 1997); Christian Smith and and Joshua Prokopy, *Latin American religion in motion* (New York: Routledge, 1999); and Paul E. Sigmund, *Religious freedom and evangelization in Latin America: the challenge of religious pluralism*, Religion & human rights series (Maryknoll, N.Y.: Orbis Books, 1999).

Table 6. Urban Population of the Dominican Republic, as a Percentage of Total, 1935-2015[140]

1935	18
1960	33
1970	40
1975	45
1981	52
1993	55
2001	66
2015	73

Furthermore, one can see the directive implicit in their names — a dawn of global renewal to which all should come. Evangelical service agencies were founded to help newcomers in urban areas as well as to assist those still in rural areas. What is fascinating about these groups is their connections across the country and their eagerness to work together with other Evangelical groups. These groups work with children, widows, drug addicts, rural farmers, elderly, and pastors, and against deforestation, hunger, and poverty. A truncated list follows:[141]

Acción Evangélica de Desarrollo: Evangelical Action for Development. National, private, interdenominational, preoccupied with the transformation of needy individuals and communities of the country without religious, political, or any other distinction. Started in 1987. Serves urban and rural places. Implements projects of preventative health, education, farming, and social infrastructure. Serves 41 communities, some 3,200 families, and some 20,000 persons.

Aguas Vivientes: Works to train rural pastors, promotes health, and advises churches in community development. *APEN*: Alliance for the Evangelization of Children *AONA*: National Association of Evangelical Churches at the Service of the Community

[140] Data for Table 6 and Figure 1 from: *Union Nations human development index 2003,* and Beinvenido Alvarez-Vega, "Movimiento Pentecostal Dominicano", 126

[141] *Directorio evangélico 1995*

Foresta: Dedicated to the reforestation, economic betterment, and education of the Dominican countryside.

Fundación contra el Hambre: Foundation Against Hunger

Fundación Filantrópica: A non-profit organization to assist the widows and elderly in the whole country.

Jesucristo es mi Patrón: Jesus Christ is my Leader. Ministry for recovery of drug- and alcohol-addicts.

La Casa Caribeña, Inc.: The Caribbean House. Integrating families through manual work of women. Started in 1984.

Liga Bíblica Mundial del Hogar: World Bible League of the Home. Interdenominational ministry that supports churches in evangelization plans through the provision of low-cost literature.

Visión Mundial: World Vision

Outside of these official organizations, Protestants keep members engaged through unofficial ones. Known as *grupos de célula* ("cellular groups"), these meet at least once weekly. During these times, the members of this small group — they comprise about ten to fifteen people — study the Bible, have potlucks or picnics, pray for each other, and visit one another. Indeed, this idea of visiting sick or elderly members is an integral part of Protestant life. Respondent 7, a pastor of a small church, spends every Sunday afternoon visiting those who could not attend the *culto*. For those who are poor, exhausted, or ill, these signs of affection foster love and personal connections.

Protestant churches also offer schools and — if connected to a foreign denomination — a supply of short-term worker volunteers from abroad to build clinics, perform surgeries, train pastors, etc. The Episcopal Church operates a Center for Theological Education in Santo Domingo, a camp and conference center (Mount Transfiguration), and seven schools across the country with some 3,000 students.[142] Children of the Nations in Barahona provides surgeries at little or no cost through its own clinic, runs three schools in Haitian *bateyes*, occasionally forms baseball teams, recently built a skill center for technical training, and donates food for feeding centers.[143] Youth With A Mission (YWAM) plants churches, leads evangelistic outreach through song and

[142] Iglesia Episcopal Dominicana, http://www.episcopalian.org/DR/index.htm (accessed May 11, 2005).
[143] Children of the Nations, http://cotni.org/ (accessed January 25, 2005).

choreography, and donates livestock and seeds with the community.[144] After Hurricane Georges and Hurricane Jeanne passed in 1998 and 2004, respectively, Dominican churches gathered together to bring in cooking supplies, to rebuild houses, to provide food, and to donate medicine. Local churches and World Vision were at disaster sites within hours of the catastrophic flooding.[145] Many other organizations are spread across the country, working with the poor, the newly-urbanized, the marginalized, and the addicted.

The Catholic Church, meanwhile, lacks the ability to be so intimately connected to Dominicans on a daily basis. To be sure, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) — a truly honorable organization — *is* involved and does spend time, money, and resources on Dominicans to improve socioeconomic conditions. CRS began its work in the Dominican Republic in 1961, thus enjoying a longer presence in the country than most Protestant social service organizations. It currently provides meals to children in school, works to reduce HIV/AIDS infections, and provides disaster relief. According to their mission, "The program is rooted in Catholic social teaching, which upholds the dignity of every person and gives priority to the needs of the poor." Interestingly, though, CRS has one office in Santo Domingo with three expatriate and 11 national staff members.[146] Hence, without diminishing the work they do, CRS is vastly undersupplied in terms of sheer staff members. Further, I argue that CRS does not attract its clients into Catholic cathedrals or groups because it lacks a sub-cultural identity with positive and negative reference points towards others.

Put simply, the limited number of priests makes contact with clergy a rarity in most villages, towns, and cities. Figures 2 and 3 illustrate quite vividly the disproportionate numbers of people to religious and diocesan priests. *Diocesan priests* work in a geographic area (a diocese) under a bishop, having taken oaths of celibacy and obedience. They meet the spiritual, pastoral, moral, and educational needs of the members of their church. They are sometimes teachers at parochial schools. *Religious priests* belong to a religious order (e.g. Jesuits or Franciscans) and take the vows of poverty, celibacy, and obedience. They engage in communal life in monasteries, teach at Catholic high schools or universities, or serve as missionaries in foreign countries.

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[144] Youth With A Mission, http://www.ywamconnect.com/sites/ywamdr (accessed May 1, 2005).
[145] World Vision International, http://www.wvi.org/wvi/archives/lacro/dominican_republic.htm (accessed May 8, 2005); World Faith News, http://www.wfn.org/1998/10/msg00059.html (accessed May 15, 2005).
[146] Catholic Relief Services, "Dominican Republic," http://www.catholicrelief.org/our_work/where_we_work/overseas/latin_america_and_the_caribbean/dominican_republic/index.cfm (accessed May 8, 2005).

Figure 1. Urbanization Growth Rates, 1960-2002

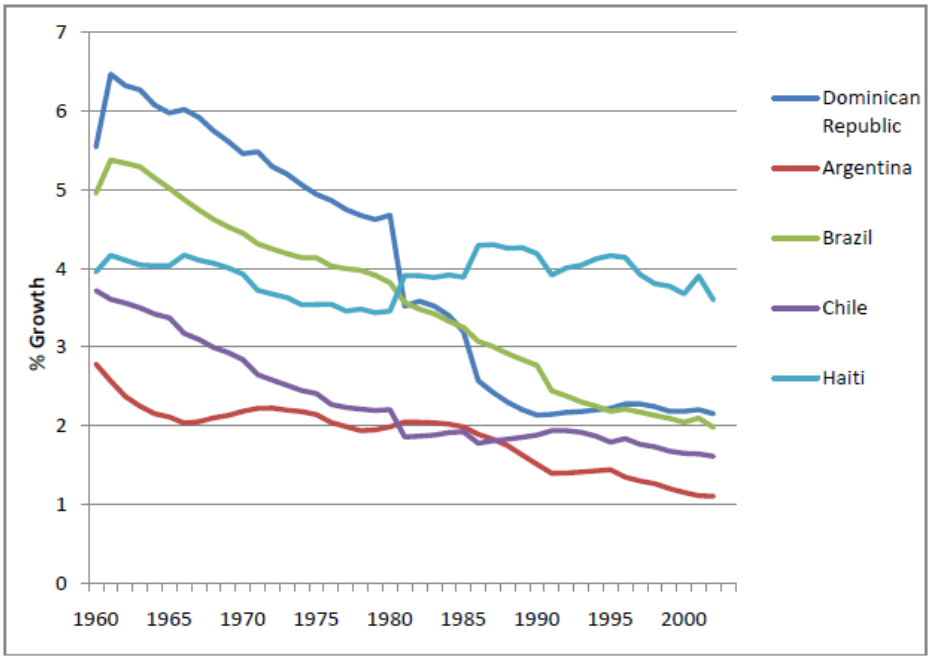
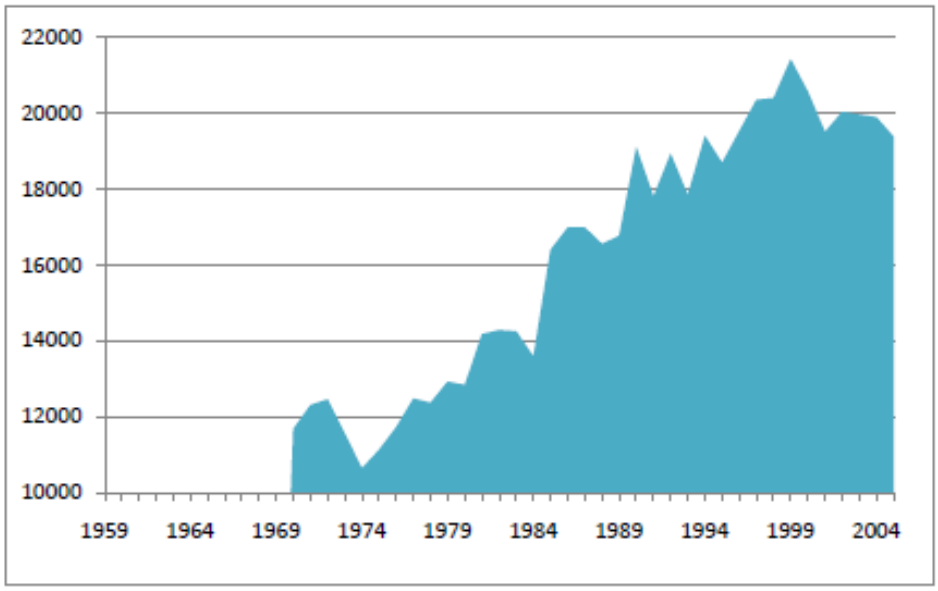


Figure 2. People per Religious Priest[147]



[147] The Data for Figures 2-4 from *Our sunday visitor's Catholic almanac* for each respective year. Each country entry for each year contains various statistics—among those were the number of priests and the total population.

Figure 3. People per Diocesan Priest

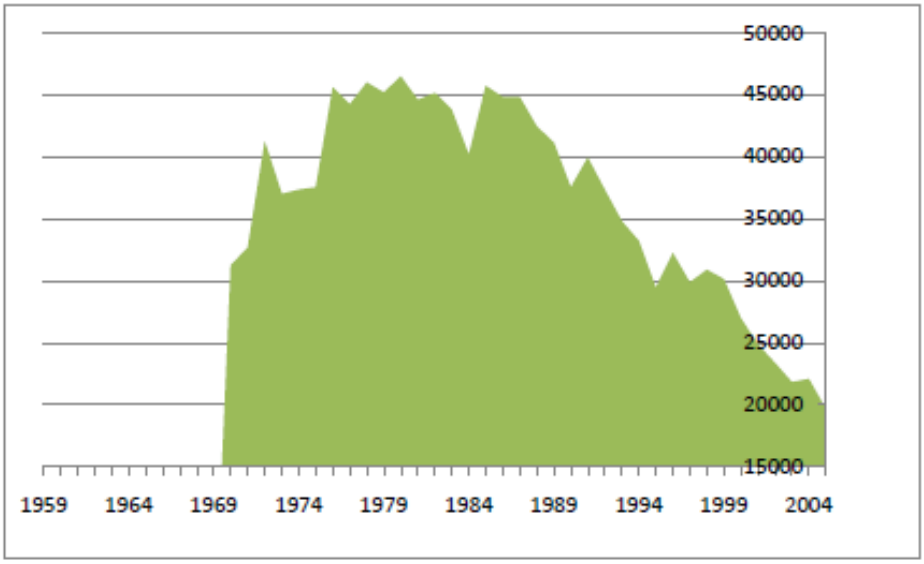
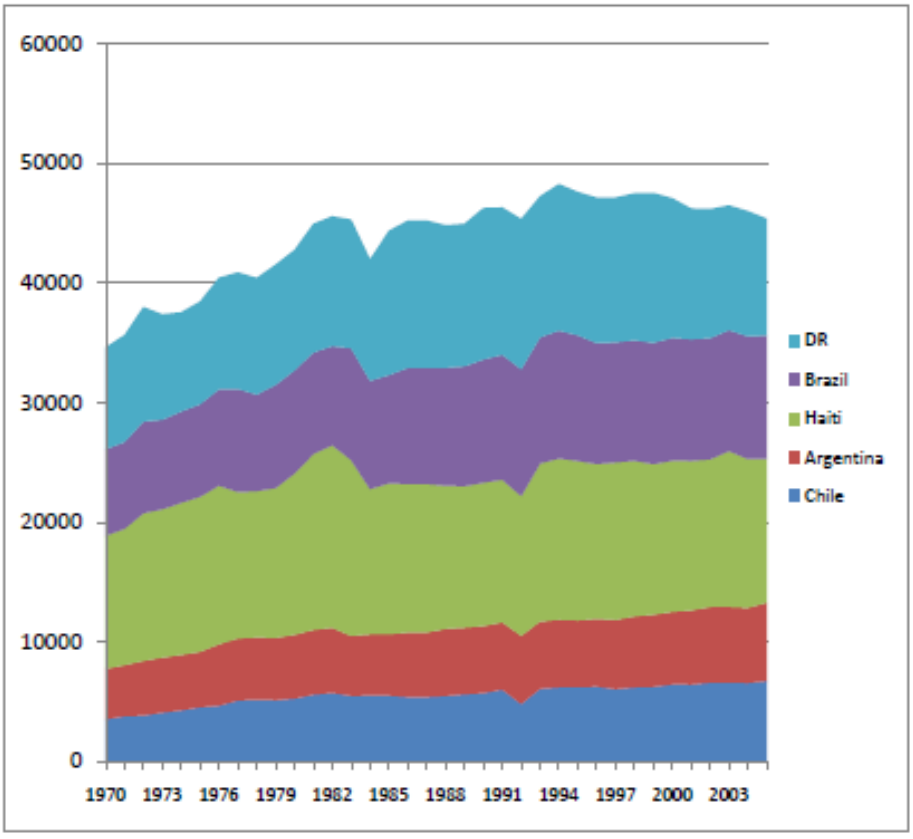


Figure 4. People per Diocesan and Religious Priest in Selected Latin American Countries



The trends are astonishing. As Figure 2 shows, the number of people to a religious priest in 1970 was about 11,600. This disproportion continued to rise throughout the next four decades, peaking in 1999 with 21,409 people per religious priest. More religious priests have diminished the number somewhat in the past five years. Figure 3 reveals that the number of diocesan priests was incredibly high in the 1970s and 1980s, and then began decreasing rapidly to about one half of its all-time ratio.

How do these proportions compare with other countries from Latin America? As Figure 4 shows, compared to Chile, Argentina, Haiti, and Brazil, the Dominican Republic has experienced an extreme under-provision of Catholic priests. Only Haiti, its neighbor to the west, has a more unequal proportion — although the two countries are roughly equal during the mid-1980s. Chile and Argentina reach a maximum of approximately 6,700 people per priest in 2005. Brazil reaches about 10,300 to finally surpass the Dominican Republic in 2005.

What is the purpose of these priests, churches, and social organizations? I contend that they are the first contact with the physically and spiritual downtrodden. The marginalized countryside and the chaotic city shatter previous livelihoods and cultural practices. These various institutions then help to create *strategies of survival*. According to Migdal, strategies of survival include:

> mundane needs for food, housing, and the like…in a world that hovers on the brink of a Hobbesian state of nature. Such strategies provide not only a basis for personal survival but also a link for the individual from the realm of personal identity and self-serving action (a personal political economy) to the sphere of group identity and collective action (a communal moral economy).[148]

Attracting new members, sustaining them, and participating in a vibrant community are all part of Protestant "success." At first glance, success seems to come from large organizations with surplus funding and abundant staffing. However, I argue that the amount of money spent or the number of staff members — while important — is certainly not *crucial* to the popularity of a church or social service organization. To be sure, the choices for strategies of survival are limited by "available resources, ideas, and organizational means."[149] Yet the contact between clergy and lay leaders with physically and spiritually vulnerable people produces intimate connections that overcome constrained

[148] Joel S. Migdal, *Strong societies and weak states: state-society relations and state capabilities in the Third World* (Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press, 1988), 27.
[149] Ibid., 27.

resources. That is, the availability of faith and prayer in a powerful God annihilates limitations (especially physical ones) on what that organization has or can do. Furthermore, when those Protestant leaders (volunteers, workers, etc.) are profoundly committed and tied to a local church, they work for a reason — sharing in something to be proud of, participate in, and experience. Thus, these workers cannot help but draw the people they serve into their church body—in other words, their "communal moral economy." As I argue below, outsiders who receive social services and then accept an invitation to a *culto* are immediately thrust into a moral world with a new identity and a supernatural God who works miracles, which gives them pause and reasons to commit their lives to him.

Finding 3: Negative Reference Points—Protestants create identities for themselves against antagonistic "outgroups" (Catholics and politics) through delineations (symbolic demarcations against other groups) The Protestant respondents were unanimous about two things during interviews — a dislike of politics and Catholicism. Indeed, the unwavering disdain for those practices was surprising. First, I address dislike toward Catholics, and then disdain for politics.

Catholics/Catholicism and Evanglization: Two main reasons emerged as the reason behind the dislike toward Catholics: Protestants evangelize better, and Catholics are idolaters. Respondents 1, 3, 5, and 7 all attributed the success of Protestants to their ability to evangelize with more success. This evangelization comes in two ways — both through *campañas* and through door-to-door evangelization. Along with being aware of their success in evangelization, Protestants were proud of who they were *not* — namely, Catholics.

Respondent 1 stated that "When people are in the street and don't want to be bothered with evangelism, they say, "*Soy católico*" [I'm Catholic]. And the evangelizers leave them alone." Here, being Catholic is an adopted mask or title to escape from evangelization. Respondent 6 concurred that Catholics are not *active* formers of their faith and — to the contrary are unable to choose their own faith: "Catholics are Catholics because of fathers who taught them. But other people who weren't a part of the Catholic Church were free to choose their own faith."

Respondent 4 was quite lengthy in her dislike toward Catholics: "There is one Catholic Church. Many people like to dress in pants, wear earrings, and drink; and they are part of the Catholic Church. They adore and worship idols — images, papers, and saints. They pray by the Virgin Mary, but Jesus Christ is not from her flesh. We must pray to Jesus Christ in the name of Jesus Christ.

Catholics do not believe in the Holy Spirit and His manifestation. They thus remove words from the Bible. Catholics put the Bible into their own words. Jehovah's Witnesses don't follow the rules of the Bible either. In Revelation sinners will not enter. Psalms 115 says we must look for God and not engage in idolatry."[150] Later, the same respondent stated that "Catholics don't believe in the fainting or the falling of people"—her proof that Catholics are not filled with the Holy Spirit and thus not true followers of Christ.

Several aspects are evident here: first, Catholics lack the discipline and strictness of Protestants in their dress and lifestyle [see "Strictness Theory" p. 570-71]; second, the Holy Spirit is a crucial aspect and sign of "true" Christian life (a church without it will not bring converts); third, the Catholic Bible does not represent the true, inerrant form of God's word. This is consistent with Wellman's description of Evangelicals. Furthermore, Respondent 4, 5, and 6 both illuminate the question of idolatry. As Respondent 6 notes, "There is idolatry in the Catholic Church. For example, San Miguel, Don Bosco, and Altagracia [names of surrounding villages]." Respondent 5 brings in a transnational criticism that "Other counties are idolaters with their images. The only one we should adore is God. There is not much idolatry in the Christian churches here."

In other words, the Protestant churches in the Dominican Republic are unique in their limited idolatry. They are disciplined; they believe in the True Bible and in its True revelation of Jesus and the Holy Spirit. These all reinforce their belief that believers in that country are unique, special, and different.

Politics: The issue of politics was another source of disdain for the respondents. As Respondent 5 stated simply: "A true Christian cannot be involved in politics." Two reasons were evident in the dislike of politics: it is corrupt and it distracts believers from God. Regarding the latter, Respondent 5 stated: "A man who puts his hope in the government is bad. He should put his hope in God." Or, as Respondent 2 declared, "My religion is better than politics." Respondent 6 said that even though the *sindicato* (union) comes every once in a while to her church, "politics don't offer anything to me. Politicians don't fulfill any needs. We cannot promise without fulfilling promises."

[150] The pertinent part of Psalms 115 reads: "Why do the nations say, 'Where is their God?' Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases him. But their idols are silver and gold, made by the hands of men… Those who make them will be like them, and so will all who trust in them."

Not participating in politics was a part of identifying oneself as *apart* from corruption and from non-believers. Indeed, as Respondent 4 declared, "Christians should live apart and shouldn't live and interact with the *ímpios* [ungodly, irreligious]. Wheat and chaff are separated." (This is a similar reference to an earlier footnote—that Christians should live *in* the world, not *of* it.) As Respondent 6 noted, "the *Partido de la Liberación Dominicana* [Dominican Liberation Party], the *Partido Revolucionario Dominicano* [Dominican Revolutionary Party], and the *Partido Socialista Cristiano Reformista* [Social Christian Reformist Party] do not preach the politics of Christ."

To what extent, then, should Christian be involved in politics? Well, "not directly" according to Respondent 3. Respondent 4 clarified that "There is no one who should be involved. Christians shouldn't be involved… [However], we can vote — it is a duty — but we cannot be involved and give opinions." Respondent 1, though, was candid in her observation that Christianity and politics "look a lot alike. As Christians, in order to be able to reach the people, you have to preach, move around, and convince people. Politicians do similar activities to get people to vote for them." The difference, however, is that "Politics is dirty: they [politicians] deceive, rob, lie, and promise but don't deliver."

Finally, Respondent 2 combined the two "dirty" professions: "Catholics when involved in politics look for everyone to be friends with—to win votes and to reach a position." Here the broad dislike for both politics and Catholics became a combined evil with the underlying assumption that perhaps politicians are corrupt because they are Catholics.

Hence, Protestants create negative reference points — people and topics in which they are "better" than others. Catholicism is described as full of idolatry, a faith without meaning and without the Holy Spirit, and a trap for those who were raised in it. Politics, too, is dirty, distracts believers from God, and leads to deceit and empty promises. From these negative references, though, emerge points of pride and boasting.

Finding 4: Positive reference points — Protestants evangelize "better" and are filled with the Holy Spirit. One of the recurring themes throughout the interviews was that Protestants are more committed and better at evangelizing — that is, converting more people to Christianity. That confidence in their ability combined with their frequent experience of the Spirit through numerous *cultos* creates a positive reference point of what Protestants *are*. In other words,

while Protestants create negative reference points against their surrounding world — for example, against Catholicism and politics — their pride in their successful and frequent Christian activity creates positive reference points — points of incorporation into something exciting, meaningful, and successful.

In the Dominican Republic evangelization occurs in two ways — on the street or at houses and through *campañas*. *Campañas* are Christian campaigns that generally last three or more nights. Several can occur at the same time in the same city, depending on the night. A Protestant church establishes a location for the evangelization drive and then the members pray over the site and the people and fast for several days before the actual events occur. During the lengthy evenings—usually lasting from sundown until midnight or 1 or 2 AM, an outside evangelist or a local pastor preaches the gospel of Jesus Christ; both old and young accept Jesus into their lives and the sick receive healing.[151] The church also provides music. Members of the congregation are there to pray for people, to witness to them, and to participate in the activities. One of the most anticipated parts of any *campaña* is the presence of the Holy Spirit and subsequent miracles. Respondent 5 related the story of a *campaña*, on the waterfront of Barahona in which a child of six told his dream about going to Hell through a tunnel and then being lifted by three angels to go to Heaven. Indeed, several posters throughout the town of Barahona advertised a *campaña* in mid-August, 2004 with the command: "*Ven y espera un milagro*" ("Come and wait for a miracle"). According to a poster for another *campaña* held in April 2004, "the lame walk, the blind see, and the deaf hear."[152]

Another technique of evangelization is spontaneous — either passing out information about Christianity on the street to passersby (e.g. tracts or pamphlets) or walking door-to-door to talk to neighbors. Respondent 1 compared her door-to-door evangelization as successful, "like what the Mormons do." However, she proudly boasted that "Christians" (i.e. those outside of Mormonism) were more successful because "Christians go during the afternoon and evening to convert people. Mormons go early in the morning and aren't as successful because people are gone working." Hence, to her the mere difference in time leads to success. Respondent 2 attributed success to the fact that "Christians are friendly because they want to win souls." Respondent 3 said that

[151] I asked Respondent 5 why outside evangelists come to the Dominican Republic for *campañas*. She replied: "Many speakers at *campañas* are foreigners because 'a prophet is not accepted in his own country.' More people also come when the speakers are foreign." This is a reference to the Gospel of Luke 4:24 in which Jesus uses this phrase

[152] This refers to a passage in Luke 7:22 in which Jesus responds to a question from a follower of John the Baptizer as a sign of his lordship

"Evangelicals are *always* carrying the gospel to people — to the door and on the street" (emphasis mine), adopting a tone of unceasing work for her faith.

Respondent 3 also noted that when people come to church, they begin to follow Jesus. Respondent 7 shared his belief as to why this happens: "In the *Iglesia Evangélica*, people are challenged to change their lives. The impact of the *campañas* is that people hear and see a difference in the lives of Christians. People see healings. Anyone who passes on the street will see a difference between the people inside our church and those outside." The confidence, then, is that changes in lifestyles and the experience of miracles shows passers-by a different, dynamic lifestyle — one different than the Catholic one. As Respondent 4 declared, "Churches are popular because there are miracles, healings, and manifestations of the Holy Spirit. They are not so 'cold' to the Spirit… God manifests himself as a blessing on my church. *Ímpios* won't go to church if they don't see the difference of a manifestation of the Holy Spirit."

Thus, two distinct and related factors give Christians pride in the Dominican Republic. One is the successful techniques of evangelization, utilizing *campañas* to share the Gospel amidst miracles and actively seeking new converts through door-to-door persistence. The second is the presence of the Holy Spirit as confirmation that their beliefs are real, powerful, and true. Indeed, the presence of the Holy Spirit is what draws passersby and substantiates that group's message.

VIII. Implication and Conclusions: Global Protestant Success?

Protestants in the Dominican Republic are in a position of enviable strength. They are "rapacious wolves" in the eyes of some; "religious consumers" in the metaphors of others. Whatever their moniker, they are Christian adherents who are revolutionizing religion in Latin America and the world. Starting with the African Episcopal Methodist Church in 1824 and continuing with Pentecostal groups in the 20th century, these Protestants have overcome persecution and a powerful Catholic Church to now grow at rapid rates. This is, indeed, a religious revolution.

Why this term "revolution"? Surely there are inferences of takeover, of shifting paradigms and orthodoxies. Undoubtedly, too, there are insinuations of a subversion of religious dominance from Catholicism to Protestantism. Mostly though, the revolution comes from the absolute and unwavering conviction that Protestants — far from being religious consumers or adherents — are fully

dedicating their lives to an unshakeable faith in the God they serve. Attending *cultos* four nights a week, participating in miracle-filled *campañas*, experiencing glossolalia and faith-healings on a daily basis produce power in movement. This devotion certainly is not a new phenomenon across the globe. However, this religious expression is unique to the Dominican Republic in its history and has every sign of enduring for centuries to come.

One of the principal reasons for this longevity is found in the signs and wonders that Protestants experience in their interactions with each other and their churches. Respondent 7 was indeed correct when he said that people notice something different about his church. Indeed, the very energy and dynamism in which Spirit-filled worshippers engage is attractive in its uniqueness. Furthermore, when these followers take that energy into evangelizing (literally, "making other bringers of the good news") and witness changed lives, they begin to establish positive reference points about who they are and what they do. From that exuberance follows a certain disdain, then, for those who are *not* — not Protestant, not successful evangelizers, not righteous, not true followers of Jesus Christ, etc. Dominican Protestants easily pick two groups to criticize — politicians and Catholics. By their assertions these two are immoral, dirty, deceivers, and hypocrites. Against these evil-doers, Protestants form countermodels, "clear distinction from and significant engagement and tension with relevant outgroups."[153]

When daily life confronts these tensions—when food is limited, when farmers are hurting, when drug addictions take over lives—Protestants jump to help with myriad organizations. They help the downtrodden to create new spiritual and physical strategies of survival — meeting the needy in their stomachs and in their hearts. The amount of money and resources that these organizations have and the number of services they provide has little to do with their success in attracting new members. Instead, these organizations—so intimately connected with local churches across the country — draw people to experience and participate in a group that already has a strong sub-cultural identity. Moreover, the belief in a miraculous God that can heal and change lives makes worldly limitations seem trivial. Put simply, the faith of Protestants in the Dominican Republic can truly "move mountains."

Thus, Protestants are people who are both participants of sub-cultural identities and rational choice theory. They hold two ideologies in tension — the desire to

[153] Smith and Emerson, 118-19.

meet their material needs at the present moment and their yearning for deep spiritual satisfaction and identity in a vibrant group of individuals. Both theories work together to describe the moral spheres that Protestants populate.

The unanswered questions seem to be twofold — how political will these Protestants become and how much will they continue to grow. In other words, will they become motivated (much like conservative Evangelicals in the US) to take their ideas of morality and apply them to public offices and public law? One of the reasons Protestants have avoided direct political involvement is that they see politics as an occupation for the God-less. Another reason comes from a subtle undertone in their history: Protestants have been persecuted and repressed by the state and government at different points in time. To lose that persecution and suddenly to gain acceptance is also to lose a feeling of constant pressure to conform, a feeling from which Protestants currently build much of their strength. Becoming widely accepted, therefore, is to become complicit with the status quo. It is also to revoke the intensely-held belief that the only way to solve problems is in the creation of ever-increasing Christian moral spheres. This is evident in Respondent 1 —"The church combats delinquency by evangelizing the youth." Perhaps the clearest explanation comes from Respondent 2 — "My religion is better than politics." Indeed, until politics is able to meet the same needs of identity and belonging with miraculous signs, it will be a dirty, worldly activity.

In terms of continued growth, as long as Protestants in the Dominican Republic continue to witness a God that transforms lives, the churches will grow. Speaking in tongues, experiencing faith-healings, being "slain in the Spirit," and celebrating a supernatural God show outsiders that something special is happening within these moral spheres. Those outsiders then join and commit their lives. And so the Good News spreads.

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Glossary of Terms

Comunidades Eclesiales de Base (CEBs, or Base Communities). Catholic communities that were popular in the 1960s and 1970s. They were developed with the purpose of forming grass roots Catholic communities, which protested and fought for the poor. According to Levine, "they are small groups, usually homogeneous in social composition (based on class and neighborhood or village), which gather regularly to read and comment on the Bible. Without exception, CEBs originate in some linkage to the institutional church, a linkage that is maintained through courses, the distribution of mimeographed material, conferences, and periodic visits by clergy and sisters."[154] Some made alliances with military groups and became violent. They receive their funding from the Catholic Church in various forms — money, land donation, or volunteer manpower. In 1979, the *Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano* [Latin American Episcopal Counsel] in Puebla, Mexico proclaimed that they were "motive for joy and hope within the Church. … They have become loci of evangelization and motors of liberation and development… it is one of the sources entrusted to lay persons [who are] cheerleaders of communities, catechists, missionaries."[155]

Bateyes: villages in the Dominican Republic comprised of Haitian workers— either sugar cane cutters or plantain harvesters. During harvest season, these workers cannot leave the villages — enforced with police by the State Sugar Counsel [*Consejo Estatal de Azúcar*]. Haitians are constructed to be disease-ridden, malnourished, and uneducated descendants of African slaves who believe in Voodoo. Dominicans, other the other hand, are brave warriors, Catholics, and descendants of Spaniards.[156] Joaquín Balaguer, a politician, declared that Haitians are "marked by horrible defects," "generator[s] of sloth," and "indolent by nature."[157] They thus work 11.48 hours per day, 6.4 days a week. This leaves little time for school (one-third are literate) but plenty of time for injuries: 85 percent of workplace injuries in the Dominican Republic occur in the fields.[158] Malnutrition, disease, and child labor are quite rampant since toilets and running water are rare.[159]

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[154] Daniel H. Levine and Scott Mainwaring, "Religion and popular protest in Latin America: contrasting experiences," in *Power and popular protest: Latin American social movements,* eds. Susan Eckstein and Manuel A. Garreton Merino (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1989), 14.

[155] CELAM. "CELAM Declaration in Puebla, Mexico," *Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano* (1979), 96-97.

[156] See Ernesto Sagás, *Race and politics in the Dominican Republic* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2000), 46-47; See also David John Howard, *Coloring the nation: race and ethnicity in the Dominican Republic* (Oxford, U.K.: Signal Books, 2001), 35-37.

[157] Sagás, 51.

[158] Michele Wucker, *Why the cocks fight: Dominicans, Haitians, and the struggle for Hispaniola* (New York: Hill and Wang, 1999), 95.

[159] Mary Jane Camejo, and Amy Wilentz, *Harvesting oppression: forced Haitian labor in the Dominican sugar industry* (New York, NY: National Coalition for Haitian Refugees, 1990), 44-48

Campañas: evangelistic "campaigns" sponsored by one or more churches. Lasting two or more days and held at night, they are filled with prayer, music, sermons, and miracles.

Cultos: worship services with "oral and corporal participation of the assembled, corporal contortions, constant responses to the preaching, ecstatic experiences, testimonies of conversion and curing miracles."[160]

Glossolalia: a manifestation of the Holy Spirit involving speaking in tongues.

Pneumatics: communication with God.

[160] Villamán, 27. See also d'Epinay, 45-55, for a broad—albeit rustic—description of *cultos* in Chile.