

# Contemporary Evangelicalism and Catholicism in Comparative Perspective: A Case Study from a Rural Nicaraguan Village

MICHAEL J. PISANI

*Texas A&M International University*

JANA S. PISANI

*Texas A&M International University*

WILLIAM B. DUNCAN, JR.

*Lamar State College-Port Arthur*

We must stir up a new springtime of holiness... No more violence, terrorism, or drug trafficking. No more torture or other forms of abuse... No more exploitation of the weak, race discrimination or poor slums. Never again. These are intolerable evils. This is our cry: Life with dignity for all, for all who have been conceived in their mother's womb, for street children, for indigenous people and... for those who suffer any kind of marginalization.

**Pope John Paul II, January 23, 1999, Mexico City, Mexico.**

Pope John Paul II came to Mexico and the United States in January 1999 to preach about the evils of rampant world capitalism (Tamayo 1999). This rekindled popular interest in "the preferential option for the poor," as expressed a generation earlier within the Catholic Church under the auspices of the 1968 Latin American Bishop's Conference held in Medellín, Colombia (Lernoux 1989). For many, this movement towards the preferential option for the poor had been operational under the moniker of Liberation Theology (Gutiérrez 1988). Originally, however, this "preferential option for the poor,"

or the drive towards social justice, was rebuffed when Pope John Paul II first became leader of the Roman Catholic Church in 1978. Strikingly, the Pope's message to the Liberation Theologians within the Nicaraguan Church was pointed, upon his Nicaraguan visit in March 1983, when he wagged his finger at Reverend (and Minister of Culture) Ernesto Cardenal for mixing political and religious service (Kirk 1992). More importantly for social movements within Latin America, the opposition of the Pope to social justice within a framework of social action through politics stunted the vitality of the Catholic Church in serving and expressing a preferential option for the poor.<sup>1</sup>

Nonetheless, with the Pope's current blessing, many Catholic clerics continue to serve the needs of the poor in Latin America. From Cuba to Central America, the religious tend to their flocks, often with the official sanction of the state. However, the religious environment is changing. In a Latin America which is still predominantly Catholic (estimates range from 70-85%), Protestant denominations have gained much ground. In the last generation, about one-third of Guatemalans and upwards of one-fifth of Nicaraguans today claim Protestant affiliation (Berryman 1994; Hallum 1996; Deann 1997; Fleet 1997). This study seeks to grasp some of the reasons for increased interest in Evangelicalism among the poor, through the examination of an impoverished village in northern Nicaragua. The article is organized as follows: section two provides an overview of the pertinent literature; section three presents case study data for Teotecacinte, Nicaragua; and section four offers some preliminary conclusions and suggestions for further research.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

Within the general study of Latin America, much scholarly activity has revolved around the topic of religion, especially during the Spanish colonial period (see, for example, Schwaller 1987). Indeed, the study of religion continues to play an important role in the intellectual contributions of scholars. More recently, academics have begun to study the impact of church reforms, counter-reforms and revolution in the post-World War II period (for a review, see Daudelin and Hewitt 1996). Of special significance for the study of religion in Central America is the revision of Catholicism and the schism within the Catholic Church resulting from differing interpretations of Vatican II (1962-1965) and the CELAM (*Consejo Episcopal Latinoamericano*) Conferences of Catholic bishops in Medellín, Colombia (1968) and Puebla, Mexico (1979). Evangelicalism is also on the rise in Latin America, with the highest concentration of converts in Central America (Cleary and Stewart-Gambino 1997). This section will focus on the literature concerning Catholic

Church reforms and counter-reforms as well as evangelicalism in Central America in general, and Nicaragua in particular, during the last generation.

### **Catholic Reforms**

Vatican II (1962-1965) started the modernization of the church (Flannery 1992). In all, "bishops were given greater liberty, the laity more participation in the church. Latin was replaced by the vernacular, and respect for religious freedom and cultural diversity was a key issue in the council documents. The council also stressed Catholicism's special concern for the poor and committed the church to a dialogue with the world and other religions" (Lernoux 1989: 22). The CELAM Conference in Medellín (1968) ushered in a new spirit directed towards the "preferential option of the poor" (Lernoux 1989). In essence, this special preference called on the Church to strive for social justice in concert with, and on behalf of, the poverty-stricken. Social justice meant (and still means) the establishment of adequate levels of health care, education, nutrition, housing, sanitation, and basic material conditions (Polakoff and La Ramée 1997). According to Brown (1990: 11-13), the Medellín Conference called for the defence of the rights of the oppressed; a recognition of the plight of the poorest segments of the population; the development of Christian Base Communities (CBCs); a correction of prices for Third World products to ensure just terms for raw material exports; and a denunciation of the unjust actions of world powers perpetrated against weak nations. This was a radical condemnation of most Latin America governments and the international economic system which had for nearly five centuries been, at the very least, tacitly supported by the traditional Catholic hierarchy.

Both Vatican II and CELAM sparked a movement in the Catholic Church, focused on the poor, which came to be known in part as Liberation Theology. Although Liberation Theology is not a monolithic philosophy, Duncan (1995: 1) asserts that "anyone seeking to understand, study or analyze contemporary Latin American society must confront the [Liberation Theology] movement and its implications." The recognized "father" of Liberation Theology is Gustavo Gutiérrez, a well-traveled and educated inner-city priest from Remac (suburb of Lima), Peru. Gutiérrez (1983: 37) defines the theology of liberation as an "attempt to understand faith from within the concrete historical, liberating, and subversive praxis of the poor of this world," the exploited classes, despised ethnic groups, and marginalized cultures.

Most importantly for the marginalized, Liberation Theology promotes an active means by which to engage in social change through politics, struggle, and the abolition of structural impediments to poverty (McGovern 1989). Christian Base Communities (CBCs) became a primary channel for



Liberation Theology. The first CBC developed in Nicaragua, initiated by Father Ernesto Cardenal in 1966, was on the island of Solentiname (Foroohar 1989; Kirk 1992). The Solentiname CBC took the concept of social justice through social change quite seriously. As a result, the Solentiname CBC community took up arms against the socially "unjust" state, then under the harsh dictatorship of the Somoza family, in hopes of eliciting permanent change in the social structure. This brief experiment at CBC development met its demise as a result of fighting between Solentiname members and members of Somoza's National Guard. The government forcefully disbanded the CBC, and CBCs in Nicaragua operated at their own peril throughout the remainder of the Somoza period.

In general, CBCs advocate social action and liturgical reflection on the Bible at the popular level (Levine 1993). Led by a priest or lay leader in small groups, CBCs promote Bible study, catechisms, and social organization. Because of the paucity of clerics in the field, "delegates of the word" were established to allow for local lay leaders to move CBCs forward (Foroohar 1989). Typically, delegates of the word were trained by parish priests to lead Bible study groups; the degree of politicization of the CBC varied depending on the congregation and the CBC leader. The impact of CBCs has been uneven throughout Latin America, as institutionalized links, group harmony, religiosity, and social action depend on the ability, tenacity, and theology of local leadership (Levine 1993).

## **Counter-Reforms**

The traditional church, as embodied by most of the Catholic hierarchy in Latin America and Rome, has viewed the developments of Liberation Theology, as well as the popular church,<sup>2</sup> as unpalatable. This means a return to the status quo of the nearly five centuries of tacit and, at times, open church involvement in the undemocratic political, social, and economic structures in the region. With the ascension of Pope John Paul II in 1978, a counter movement against the reforms of Vatican II and Medellín took place. The Pope, along with his trusted associate Cardinal Joseph Ratzinger, head of the Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith (the Inquisition), pushed the Church back to the right with the help of the CELAM Conference in Puebla, Mexico (1979). Although the Puebla conference did not repudiate the preferential option for the poor, it certainly cooled the Church's interest in social justice (Brown 1989). The Church used institutionalized means for silencing Liberation Theology through the removal of bishops supportive of social justice and the promotion of conservative priests in their place.

In Nicaragua, the Pope promoted conservative Archbishop Obando y



Bravo to cardinal in 1985, knowing well that the new cardinal would soon meet openly with, and say Mass for, Contra leaders based in Miami (Kirk 1992). In essence, the Pope sought to keep the radicals from having any influence within the Church. In addition, those most outspoken on the issue of social injustice, such as Gustavo Gutiérrez and Leonardo Boff, appeared on separate occasions at the Vatican and were questioned concerning their respective mixture of theology and politics (Hennelly 1990: 393-434). Boff was eventually censured severely and left the Roman Catholic Church. These Liberation Theologians had to choose between toning down their rhetoric and maintaining a relationship with the Church, as Gutiérrez has done, or seeking to express their opinions outside the formal framework of the Church, as was the case with Father Boff.

Cardinal Ratzinger accused both Liberation Theologians and CBCs of radicalism, specifically Marxism. In his view, this radicalism had undermined the true mission of the church—to minister to the religious needs of the flock. In his rebuff of Gutiérrez, Ratzinger criticized Gutiérrez's writings for being Marxist in orientation by promoting popular revolution and class struggle, for reading the Scriptures through selective lenses, and for being too involved in politics (Ratzinger 1983). Unfortunately, despite the obvious deprivation and mass poverty suffered by the majority of citizens throughout Latin America, and especially in Central America during the 1970s and 1980s (Lernoux 1982), corrective action would not be advocated by the institutional church.

Furthermore, the hot wars in Central America in the 1980s were judged by church traditionalists as taking place in an ideologically bi-polar, mostly political Cold War world; it was their belief that the poor socio-economic conditions of the region were not the root of rebellion. Therefore, when tensions existed between communism and capitalism, the institutional church sided with capitalism, regardless of the fight for human rights, social justice or democracy. Regrettably, the Pope's message of January 1999 came twenty years too late to effectively alter the religious, political, social and economic landscape in Nicaragua and Central America where social justice is concerned.

## **Evangelicalism**

In his groundbreaking study on Evangelicalism in Latin America, David Stoll (1990) raised the level of awareness, especially within the academic community, concerning the Evangelical phenomenon taking place in Central and South America. Indeed, one can no longer discuss religion in Latin America simply within a Catholic context; the growth and importance of Protestantism demands a wider study of Latin American religious life. And, on a daily basis, the religious landscape of Central America is becoming more

Evangelical.<sup>3</sup> Protestants have been in Central America for over one hundred years, and today comprise close to twenty percent of the population (Kirk 1992). The greatest growth has occurred roughly during the last generation. Cleary and Stewart-Gambino (1997) estimate that Pentecostals account for seventy-five to ninety percent of Protestant growth in the region. Chestnut (1997: 3) suggests that Pentecostals have been most successful in recruiting "the poor and disenfranchised." No doubt, Evangelicals have found a very fertile environment in poverty-stricken Latin America for Evangelical penetration. Fleet (1997: 310) suggests that there are three religious foundations or tenets of Evangelicalism: "1) the reliability and final authority of the Bible; 2) the need to be saved through a personal relationship with Jesus Christ; and 3) the importance of spreading the message of salvation to every nation and person."

Why the recent growth in, and conversion to, Evangelicalism in Central America? Berryman (1994: 158) suggests the following nine points: 1) Catholic inability to reach the people; 2) extensive use by Evangelicals of personal contacts, family networks and house visits; 3) mass evangelical campaigns, with complementary use of radio- and tele-evangelism; 4) liveliness of worship (especially Pentecostals); 5) alienation from recent trends in Catholicism (such as the relaxation of tradition [e.g., Mass in the vernacular]); 6) witnessing of local miracles and wonders such as healing, prophecy and speaking in tongues; 7) strict and clear moral codes; 8) the ability to tap into the popular culture (e.g., songs based on the melodies or tunes of pop music, transformed with appropriate church lyrics); 9) connections with the U.S. and modernization. Berryman (1994) also asked Evangelicals in Nicaragua (primarily Pentecostal in faith)<sup>4</sup> why their numbers had grown; he found that Evangelicals considered it the "will of God." Other factors uncovered by Berryman which might have influenced conversion include a personal relationship with the pastor, ongoing outreach and evangelization, intense study of the Bible, the grass roots nature of the church, and the simplicity of the fundamentalist message. Furthermore, many Evangelicals listen to national Evangelical radio broadcasts, as well as religion-based popular music. The Evangelical church may especially appeal to women who support the strict moral code that requires mates to be faithful and financially responsible.

Pastor Juan Sepúlveda (1994: 72), director of the *Misión Iglesia Pentecostal* [Pentecostal Church Mission] in Chile, suggests that growth in the number of Pentecostals in Latin America is attributable to "pentecostalism itself and in the way of salvation it announces." Pastor Sepúlveda (1994: 72-73) outlines four reasons for the success of Pentecostalism in Latin America: 1) "pentecostalism offers a new experience of God" which allows for a "direct

encounter with God without mediation;" 2) "the encounter with God is intense;" 3) "the Pentecostal experience does not happen alone," that is, Pentecostalism occurs within the religious community; and 4) "the experience of God that pentecostalism proclaims is announced in the language [everyday language] of the people."

Other scholars have suggested further reasons for the increasing popularity of Evangelicalism. Davis (1997) and Miranda Sáenz (1994) add that the political opening under the Sandinista government (1979-1990) allowed for relatively unfettered Evangelical organization. Fleet (1997) argues that the key to the increase in membership of the Evangelical church has been the success of these organizations in recruiting pastors from the local population. Chestnut (1997: 6) argues "that the dialectic between poverty-related illness and faith healing provides the key to understanding the appeal of Pentecostalism in Brazil and much of Latin America." In addition to the competitive edge of local recruitment and faith healing, the theological training time for Evangelicals is relatively brief, so the intense shortage of clerics facing the Catholic church (in part due to the lengthy training period for priests) is absent in the Evangelical church. Thus, the ample number of Evangelical pastors, coupled with the passion and intensity of Evangelical church services, has drawn many away from "conventional" Catholicism.

## **CASE STUDY: TEOTECACINTE, NICARAGUA**

Teotecacinte, Nicaragua, constitutes the case study on which this research is based.<sup>5</sup> The case study is offered in four parts: historical background and borderlands milieu; religion in Teotecacinte; research design and instrumentation; and a discussion of the survey results.

### **Historical Background and Borderlands Milieu**

Teotecacinte, Nicaragua, offers an interesting backdrop for the study of religion. This village of 2,500 people is nestled in one the most productive agricultural regions in Central America, located four miles from the Honduran border in north-central Nicaragua. Teotecacinte became the farthest northern military outpost of the Nicaraguan government in its fight for survival against the counter-revolutionary elements more popularly known as the "Contras." This conflict began shortly after the popular revolutionary government took power in July 1979, under the direction of the Sandinista party, led by Daniel Ortega. The Contras, primarily under the leadership of deposed and publicly despised military leaders of Somoza's



National Guard, fought to overthrow the Sandinista government from 1981 to 1990.<sup>6</sup> Teotecacinte became a centerpiece and a pawn in military attacks and reprisals throughout the Contra War, with the aid and knowledge of the U.S. and Honduran governments.<sup>7</sup> With the war nearly ten years in the past, Teotecacinte is slowly diversifying its economic base by developing cash crops such as coffee, fruits, vegetables and tobacco, as well as a few small-scale service related shops.

Nevertheless, Teotecacinte still relies almost exclusively on subsistence agriculture, based primarily on the production of such traditional staples as corn and beans. This is often supplemented by weeks of migrant labor flows to southern Honduras to pick coffee. Yet the community remains impoverished; the estimated per capita cash income is \$60 per year (Sánchez 1996). There are no telephones in town, no marketplace, no central square (*plaza*), no gasoline stations and less than a dozen mechanized vehicles (tractors, bulldozers and automobiles) in working order.

The border with Honduras serves as a daytime conduit for trade in basic products – snacks, drinks, agricultural staples, intermediate agricultural products (fertilizers, pesticides, irrigation pipes, etc.)– and inexpensive consumer goods (boom boxes, portable television sets, etc.). The governments of Honduras and Nicaragua are currently engaged in discussions to open the border as an official "port of entry", in order to allow the free flow of goods, services and people. As of this writing, the border near Teotecacinte was only open during daylight hours, and only to the transport of light goods (those which can be carried by hand).

### **Religion In Teotecacinte<sup>8</sup>**

Exact census counts are difficult to obtain within the distant and rural areas of Nicaragua. The mayor of Teotecacinte estimated that there were 2,500 inhabitants as of January 1996 (Sánchez 1996). Catholicism is the primary religion of Nicaraguans –roughly 80% of the total population are, at least nominally, Catholic. Teotecacinte is no different; it only seems that there are more Protestants (called Evangelicals in Nicaragua) because of the frequency and vociferousness of their meetings. According to the Evangelical minister in Teotecacinte, Miguel Olivares, the Evangelical (Pentecostal) church has an active local membership of 306, or 12.2% of the overall population (Olivares 1999). This is an enormous increase over 1997, when there were only 95 members, according to Pastor Olivares. The remaining 87.8% of Teotecacinte's population are nominally Catholic, or do not identify with a religious persuasion. Teotecacinte's church-going Catholics are organized around a Christian Base Community (CBC), under the daily direction of a lay Catholic

leader (delegate of the word) trained to offer the full range of church services other than the sacraments. There is no priest permanently stationed in Teotecacinte.

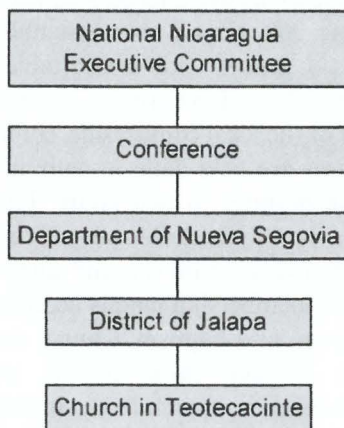
The Evangelical church has had a presence in the community since 1977.<sup>9</sup> Traditionally Pentecostal, the Evangelical minister serves as a fundamentalist bulwark in the community. Pastor Olivares spent three years training to become an Evangelical minister. The church fills local pastoral vacancies through a "calling" by the local membership to the greater church. That is, the church laity "call" upon God to bring the congregation a pastor and, "God-willing," a pastor becomes available for the local congregation. Once situated, most Evangelical pastors enjoy a close relationship with their congregation. Berryman (1994: 154) estimates that there are 2,200 Protestant pastors in Nicaragua ministering to 203,000 church members, in a pastor-to-member ratio of one to ninety-two. Because of the close pastor-member relations, the church prefers that ministers rotate and not stay longer than two years in a given community. The arrival of a "new" pastor allows for continuous "rebirth" within the local church.

The Evangelical church in Teotecacinte is located at the southern end of town, and from the outside looks like a large, well-kept warehouse. Inside the church, space for about 300 allows the Assembly of God Pentecostal congregation to meet as a group, with comfortable benches available for those arriving early. The chancel consists of a simple podium, an audio system and a large mural of the local countryside, complete with tropical flora and fauna. Church services are held daily, usually in the evenings, and last anywhere from forty-five minutes to two hours. Each day of the week, a different target group is proselytized: Mondays, children; Tuesdays, men; Wednesdays, women; Thursdays, Fridays, and Sundays, all members; and Saturdays, teenagers. Full membership entails acceptance of Christ, a three-month Bible study program, and baptism. Church members are responsible for public declarations of their faith, private prayer, regular church attendance, participation while in church (e.g., singing), charitable contributions (10%), upright moral conduct (no smoking, drinking, dancing, swearing, gambling, or extramarital sex) and visitation of church members who are ill or in jail. The mission of the church includes: prayer; proselytization; social work; preservation of the environment; fighting against prostitution, alcoholism, drugs, blasphemy and crime, and assisting those involved in such activities to overcome these acts; maintenance of apolitical positions;<sup>10</sup> and the promotion of participation within the church (local church leaders, other than the pastor, are chosen by secret ballot).<sup>11</sup>

In a broad sense, the Evangelical church is connected to sister institutions within Nicaragua and across the border in Honduras, yet the church and

pastor maintain a significant amount of local autonomy. This is similar to what Martínez (1989: 29) observed in his study of Nicaraguan Pentecostals, that Pentecostals "organize into predominantly small local congregations with a high degree of autonomy, preferring to focus on developing local interpersonal relationships" (authors' translation).<sup>12</sup> Although the connection with the local church in Las Trojes, Honduras (the town adjacent to Teotecacinte on the Honduran side of the border), is informal, with membership interaction and combined services on an *ad hoc* basis, the internal structure within Nicaragua is much more defined (see Figure 1). A group of churches forms a district, several districts constitute departments (similar to counties in the U.S.), and departments are governed by the executive body in Managua. Periodic Evangelical national conferences empower the ministers and provide a forum for national planning.

Figure 1 — **Organizational Chart: Evangelical Church in Teotecacinte, Nicaragua**



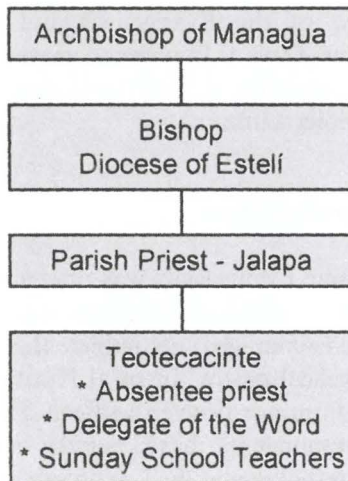
The Catholic Church has had a presence in Teotecacinte since the community was founded at the turn of the century (*circa* 1900). The local Catholic church operated in traditional fashion until the establishment of the Evangelical church (1977) and the triumph of the revolution (1979). The revolution brought about a public split within the Catholic Church between those that followed tradition, supported by the Archbishop of Managua (and later Cardinal) Miguel Obando y Bravo and Pope John Paul II, and those who favored the "preferential option for the poor" – Liberation Theologians.



In Teotecacinte, Liberation Theology became the direction of the local Catholic Church through the organization of a Christian Base Community.

Nicaragua, like most of the Catholic world, suffers from a shortage of priests. Berryman (1994: 154) estimates that the ratio of Catholic priests to Catholics in Nicaragua is 1 to 3,190. For Catholics in Teotecacinte, this means that the parish priest visits only every four to six weeks to perform Mass and other sacraments, afterwards proceeding to carry out his duties in other municipalities within his circuit. The presence of the formal Catholic Church, then, is very limited: roughly ten yearly visits from the priest, two annual visits from nuns to talk with children on the importance of religion, and one annual visit by the bishop of Estelí (see Figure 2). The church in Teotecacinte sends a portion of its donations to the office of the circuit priest; however, no money flows back to Teotecacinte for local church projects. Local estimates of church membership show that 77.6%, or 1,939, are Catholic (about 349 of the estimated 450 households in town). However, only 120 members are classified as being very active in church concerns (Blandón 1999). Nonetheless, the local delegate of the word reported an increase in religious activity over the past year, including ten church marriages and thirty-two members receiving first communion.

Figure 2 — **Organizational Chart: Catholic Church in Teotecacinte, Nicaragua**



The Catholic church is located near the middle of the village. Spartan in décor and run down by years of neglect and war, the sanctuary seats about

seventy-five people uncomfortably. The grounds comprise almost two lots, and are nicely tended, with trees, bushes, flowers and roses. The church hopes to build a new sanctuary with the assistance of a "sister" parish in the United States, since local and diocesan funds are insufficient to complete the project.

In lieu of the priest, Vidal Blandón serves as the daily lay leader of the Catholic community. Blandón has served in Teotecacinte for the last six years as delegate of the word. Delegates of the word are trained to lead services and generally serve the parish in the absence of a priest. Nonetheless, they cannot administer communion, an indispensable sacrament for Catholics. At the diocesan offices in Jalapa, all delegates of the word from the region receive continuous training, which basically involves reading and interpreting the Scriptures, as well as renewed personal commitment and interaction with the formal church through visits with priests and nuns. Delegate of the word Blandón meets with his communicants publicly three times a week, on Sunday afternoon and Thursday evening for services, as well as early Sunday morning for catechism class, and once a month for planning church events and discussing church needs.

The mission of the CBC in Teotecacinte, as defined by Delegate Blandón, includes giving preferential treatment to the poor; working toward greater proselytization and spirituality; reflecting upon the moral issues currently facing the community, such as drugs; and maintaining the local sister-city program.<sup>13</sup> As part of the conversion process, new members are required to attend eight meetings where church teachings are discussed, and participate in a three-day instructional retreat to consolidate their understanding of church teachings. An overview of the Evangelical and Catholic churches in Teotecacinte is provided in Table 1. In order to garner a better understanding of religion from the membership, a behavioral survey was conducted with each church group in Teotecacinte.

## **Research Design & Instrumentation**

A sample of seventy-four Evangelicals was drawn from a Thursday night service, in January 1999, to which all members were welcome. Those aged fourteen and above were encouraged to complete the questionnaire, with the "blessings" of the Evangelical pastor. In rural Nicaragua, children typically are considered "adults" from age twelve to fifteen. Fourteen was selected as the minimum age for respondents, based on the assumption of sufficient religious maturity. The respondents, then, represent about half of the adult church membership. Since most Evangelicals in the community attend church (and only make up 12% of the general population), it was felt that the most

**Table 1: An Overview of the Evangelical & Catholic Churches in Teotecacinte, Nicaragua**

Status	Evangelical	Catholic
Church Established	1977	Circa 1900
Presence of full-time Pastor/Father	Yes	No (Father visits every 4 to 6 weeks)
Closeness of Pastor/Father to Congregation	Very close	Distant
Presence of Lay Leaders	Yes	Yes
Closeness of Lay Leaders to Congregation	Very close	Very close
Frequency of Church Services	Daily	Thursdays and Sundays only
Liveliness of Service	Lively / Impassioned	Ritualized
Church Membership	306	-1,939
Active Church Members	70 Daily; 50 Sundays	120 Weekly
Physical Church Structure	Modern, well-kept, comfortable	Old, in need of repair, uncomfortable
Mission	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Prayer</li> <li>✓ Proselytization</li> <li>✓ Social work</li> <li>✓ Preservation of the environment</li> <li>✓ Fight against prostitutes, alcoholics, drugs, blasphemy and criminals; assisting such individuals to overcome these acts</li> <li>✓ Maintenance of apolitical positions</li> <li>✓ Promotion of democracy within the church</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Preferential treatment for the poor</li> <li>✓ Work toward greater evangelization and spirituality</li> <li>✓ Reflection on the moral problems currently facing the community, such as drugs</li> <li>✓ Maintenance of the local sister-city program</li> </ul>



effective method for obtaining responses from this group was through a direct survey of those in attendance at an open all-member church session.

A random sample of seventy-three Catholics (or 3.7% of all Catholics) within the community was conducted over a three-night period in early January 1999. Every eighth house in Teotecacinte was selected for completion of not more than two surveys. If the eighth house consisted of only Evangelicals, then a replacement house was substituted from neighbors, first to the right and then to the left. Only those aged fourteen and above were targeted for response. For the Catholic survey, there was no problem of non-response bias. Rural families in Nicaragua are rooted in the land and are nearly always available in their homes in the evening.

The instrument utilized was identical for both groups, except for one specific question regarding participation in church activities for Catholics: the delivery of communion and other sacraments. In all, the one-page survey contained thirty-four questions (thirty-five questions for the Catholic survey).<sup>14</sup> Seven questions solicited demographic information and twenty-seven (twenty-eight for Catholics) covered behavioral issues concerning religion, modeled after Hewitt (1996). The survey was originally completed in English (and adapted from Hewitt [1996] in English), translated into Spanish and translated back into English. To ensure readability and clarity, as suggested by Brislin (1980), the translation and the translation back were completed by a bilingual graduate student and a bilingual university professor at a small regional border university in the United States. Minor differences in survey semantics were then resolved. The demography questions included age, gender, education, family income, marital status, family size, and occupation. Behavioral questions on religion included belief in Christ, participation in church activities, including attendance, understanding of the benefits of church membership, and belief in the ability of the church to resolve personal and community problems. Again, the survey was intended to uncover both similarities and differences between Catholics and Evangelicals in the border village of Teotecacinte, Nicaragua.

## Survey Results

Demographic data for Evangelicals and Catholics were similar, for the most part (see Table 2). Independent t-tests were conducted to compare the means of the two sample groups. Only family size was found to be significantly different for the two groups. Catholics, on average, had one more member in their household sample than Evangelicals. Average age for the samples was 34.8 for Evangelicals, and 35.3 for Catholics. Monthly family income was higher for Catholics (575 Córdoba [\$51.25]) than for Evangelicals (552



In Teotecacinte, Catholics tend to have been members of the Catholic church longer than Evangelicals in the Evangelical church. Catholics reported years of church membership as follows: 0 to 5 years, 15%; 5 to 10 years, 47%; and over 10 years, 38% of the sample. This is primarily due to the long-standing presence of the Catholic church within the community. Evangelicals reported years of church membership as follows: 0 to 5 years, 30%; 5 to 10 years, 62%; and over 10 years, 8% of the sample. However, the numbers for the Evangelicals do not seem to match the information provided by the Evangelical pastor, who claimed that 200 new members had been inducted into the church during the previous year. The discrepancy, in part, may be due to overestimation of new members during the last year, or it may reflect the "re-entry" of previously inactive members into the church over time, possibly due to the semi-frequent change of pastors within the Evangelical church.

To test whether demographic variables could accurately predict membership in either the Catholic or Evangelical church, a logistic regression was run. Logistic regression was chosen because of the loose assumptions,<sup>16</sup> multiple independent variables, as well as the dichotomous nature of the dependent variable (Catholic or Evangelical). The logistic regression exhibited a good overall fit and predictive ability using the independent variables of length of church membership, family size, marital status, education, and income listed in order of predictive power.<sup>17</sup> Gender and occupation had a deleterious effect on predictive power and were therefore removed from the model. Overall, the model predicted 73.47% of church affiliations correctly, indicating a "hit ratio" of 47.5% better than chance alone.<sup>18</sup>

This is a significant finding, albeit for a small sample from a single community. These results suggest that the variable "years of church membership" alone (nearly a 66% hit ratio) is a good predictor of church affiliation: that is, the longer a person has been a member of a congregation in Teotecacinte, the more likely the individual belongs to the Catholic church, and conversely, the less time a person has been a member of a church, the more likely that individual is Evangelical in Teotecacinte. The other independent variables (family size, marital status, and education) add marginally to the predictive power of the logistic regression, so that an overall profile of Evangelicals and Catholics begins to emerge: Catholics tend to have been in the church longer, have larger families, earn a higher family income, and are better educated than their Evangelical counterparts. Evangelicals, on the other hand, tend to have been members of their church for a shorter period of time, have smaller families, earn more on a per capita basis, and are less educated than their Catholic peers.



Attendance statistics reflect that 93% of Evangelicals are very likely to attend a church session at least once a week. Active church members have a choice of several church sessions during the week, thus facilitating members' ability to attend church. The sessions are lively, filled with moments of intense jubilation, shouting, singing and prayer. In contrast, Catholics indicated that they do not attend church on a weekly basis (99%). This may, in part, be due to the absence of a full-time priest, as well as the monotonous one-way delivery style of the Catholic lay leader.<sup>19</sup> Thus, the Evangelical church overflows with about 150 people every night, while the Catholic church may receive only one hundred parishioners weekly.

As was to be expected, the work status of both samples was primarily agricultural in nature (see Table 3). More Catholics were engaged in non-agricultural activities (small in-the-home stores and providers of basic needs such as carpentry, brick-laying, baking, etc.) than Evangelicals. Also, Evangelical women had a higher propensity to work outside the home (53%) than Catholic women (33%), perhaps because Catholic women had more children to care for in the home.

Table 3: **Occupational Status (in %)**

Work \ Status	Evangelical			Catholic		
	Male	Female	All	Male	Female	All
Agriculture	86	53	69	85	30	30
Non-Agriculture	3	0	1	13	3	8
Don't Work	11	47	30	2	67	32
Total (%)	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

The Evangelical respondents indicated a high degree of church participation, be it Bible study (99%), civic projects (100%), charity (99%), conscientization (97%), or reflection (92%).

Although there is little disagreement as to what Bible study, civic projects and charity entail, conscientization and reflection require some definition. Conscientization, which began in the Catholic CBCs but has since been broadened to include Evangelicals, entered the literature with the work of Paulo Freire (1970), who defined the term as a sense of political, social and economic awareness through education. A more penetrating view of conscientization applied to the poor, especially within CBCs, that would transform the environment of awareness into an environment of liberation – that is, to know is to be able to act. However, as Liberation Theologians such as Gutiérrez have warned, it is not enough to act; one must reflect on that

action, and that is the point at which Christianity is most pertinent. On reflection, Sabia (1997: 32) adds that "Christians are asked to see their reality and to judge it by connecting the conditions of their world with reflections from the holy gospel. From their reflections and judgments about their reality, they are then guided to act in a Christian way to alleviate the suffering they witness around them." Humans, by nature, and especially in Gutiérrez's theology, must act, but they must also evaluate their actions against the background of the Christian tradition. Gutiérrez and most Liberation Theologians feel that it is a sin, based on their understanding of this tradition, to do nothing in the face of the horrible poverty and social injustice prevalent in most Latin American societies.

The high rate of Evangelical participation in Bible study, civic projects, charity, conscientization, and reflection could be attributed to the fullness of the involvement of Evangelical church members. However, little institutional evidence has been observed for Evangelical members engaged in the true sense of conscientization, as understood from Paulo Freire. The Evangelical church in Teotecacinte holds as a basic tenet an apolitical stance in local politics, while conscientization requires not only awareness of the poverty in the community, but also social, political and economic action to help correct the structural poverty in Teotecacinte. Yet some members of the Evangelical church have sought to better the community through personal involvement – for instance, Elida Salinas was recently elected (January 1999) to the town water board to oversee the quantity and quality of the community's potable water system. Thus, it seems that individual Evangelicals do play a role within the local community structure.<sup>20</sup>

The Catholic survey indicated nearly the same rates of church participation as those for the Evangelicals, including widespread participation in the preparation of mass and the sacraments. The Catholic responses to participation in church activities are recorded as follows: Bible study (100%), civic projects (100%), charity (97%), conscientization (100%), reflection (99%), preparation of mass and other sacraments (87.5%). However, the authors are somewhat skeptical of these participation rates, since the Catholic sample revealed very low church attendance rates where most of these activities are held. Nonetheless, Catholics claimed high rates of participation in Bible study, civic projects, charity, conscientization, and reflection. Berryman (1994) suggests that low rates of visible Catholic participation in church activities in Central America are not uncommon, and he cautions against debunking the Catholicism of parishioners based on public observation alone. This suggests that, perhaps for the Catholics of Teotecacinte, private observance in the form of prayer, Bible reading, and

---

quiet charity constitutes church participation, whereas for the Evangelicals, a higher degree of visibility is required.

## CONCLUSIONS

This study has sought to introduce contemporary religion in rural, north-central Nicaragua through a comparative analysis of Catholicism and Evangelicalism. The evidence suggests that in the village of Teotecacinte, as in other Latin American communities, Evangelicalism is growing in importance for many of the same reasons, as suggested by Berryman (1994) and Stoll (1990). Although Martin (1990) asserts that Liberation Theology and Pentecostalism are in direct competition across social classes throughout Latin America, with Pentecostalism beginning to achieve the upper hand, our findings are more in concert with Stoll's (1990: 311) observation which "call[ed] attention to the possibility that evangelical Protestantism is more successful [than Liberation Theology] on the popular level" in Latin America. Martínez (1989: 176) adds his view of Pentecostalism in Nicaragua: "*the religious demand of the popular classes has been profoundly transformed. No longer can one find spiritual awakening in the staid and unchangeable offering of Catholicism*" (italics in the original, authors' translation). We believe this is clearly represented in Teotecacinte by the fact that the village's small Protestant minority greatly surpasses their Catholic counterparts in active participation. Specifically in Teotecacinte, the growth of Evangelicalism is most likely due to the lively nature of Evangelical services and the charisma of the local pastor. For instance, the Evangelical pastor often speaks in tongues, the Evangelical theology stresses a close personal relationship with God, and the Evangelical church has a full-time, full-service minister in Miguel Olivares, who consistently visits and energizes Evangelical homes. In contrast, the Catholic church in Teotecacinte has a basically absentee priest who comes to the village only once a month or so to perform sacraments and is supported by a delegate of the word who is capable, but not nearly as charismatic, as his Protestant counterpart.

This shift in support for Evangelicalism may have a political effect on Teotecacinte as well. Although the Catholic church in Teotecacinte does include a Christian Base Community, which theoretically, at least, supports Liberation Theology, it now has a rival in the Evangelical church, which concerns itself with some of the same causes, including social work, preservation of the environment, and attacking the most notorious problems in society, including drugs, prostitution, and crime. This does not necessarily mean that Liberation Theology itself is on the decline (that question is beyond the scope of the survey and this study), but rather that it has found a



compatriot in Evangelist principle. Both groups would like to see some changes made in their society, and indeed the first author has observed members of both denominations working cooperatively on civic projects and civic councils. Evangelicals often consider themselves to be apolitical, but recent studies have proven otherwise (Chestnut 1997; Smith and Haas 1997; Smith 1994). Given the fact that the Evangelical church is highly participatory by nature, this may lead to an outgrowth of political activism among Evangelicals in Teotecacinte, particularly in the case of women, who find in Evangelicalism, as in other branches of Protestantism, the opportunity to express themselves more freely (see, for instance, Smith 1994; Martin 1990).

Brusco (1995), in her recent anthropological study of Pentecostalism in Colombia, noted an improved socio-economic environment for women following the Evangelical conversion of the household. That is, in populations living on the margin (such as in Teotecacinte), "no longer is 20 to 40 percent of the household budget consumed by the husband in the form of alcohol" (Brusco 1996: 5). In concert with Brusco's (1995) findings in Colombia, the first author of this study has also observed an increase in the well-being of women in Teotecacinte following the household's conversion, since the household budget is no longer constrained by rural *machismo* (e.g., expenditures on alcohol and women) and becomes available to meet the basic human needs of the entire family (e.g., food, clothing and shelter). As Brusco (1996: 123) so succinctly states, Evangelical conversion "reinstates the household's role as the locus of consumption." In Belém, Brazil, Chestnut (1997: 108) found women and the family as a whole to be "direct beneficiaries of the new moral code" where "women whose husbands or amigos have adopted the [Pentecostal] faith find their men investing more money and time in the domestic domain." Thus, the strict moral code practiced by Evangelicals has a powerful and positive socio-economic consequence for both females and for households.<sup>21</sup>

Burdick (1998) also found Pentecostalism empowering for black women in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. For example, women found, by virtue of belonging to the congregation, a greater selection in potential mates along color lines; a greater sense of self-worth; and a new perspective on beauty – the importance of inner beauty (the purity of one's soul) over outer beauty (physical appearance). More importantly, Burdick (1998: 128) revealed that this empowerment transcended the church environment and women were able to "carry this [sense of] self-worth into their interactions outside the church." Future research should explicitly study these phenomena.

Also, the results from the logistic regression suggest that the most important identifier of church affiliation is length of church membership,

where long-term church-goers of the same church tend to belong to the Catholic congregation whereas short-term church-goers tend to belong to the Evangelical church. Additional independent variables, although of lesser importance, also made a slight difference in predicting church affiliation – family size, marital status, education and income also assisted in correctly identifying church membership. This finding merits further investigation throughout the region.

It is worthy to note that increased border interactions may alter the future religious landscape in Teotecacinte. Although the current border regime between Nicaragua and Honduras is best characterized as a coexistent borderland (Martínez 1994), the eventual opening of a full-service border crossing point between Teotecacinte, Nicaragua and Las Trojes, Honduras, will create a major conduit for the interdependent movement of goods, services and people. This "new" and peaceful transnational gateway between Nicaragua and Honduras will inevitably foster socioeconomic change in Teotecacinte as economic resources are repositioned to take advantage of the opportunities accorded by secondary boundary enhancements. The Evangelical and Catholic churches may seek to reposition their congregations to support, guide or deter the border activity associated with the new border checkpoint. To be sure, Teotecacinte will no longer be a remote outpost along the Honduran border, but instead could easily become a promising player in the transit of goods within the Central American economy.

Of course, case studies, including this one, are limited to the area in which they were made and cannot be generalized to the larger population. Therefore, further research should be conducted in other communities in Nicaragua, and the other countries of Central America, to better understand the relative strengths of the Evangelical and Catholic churches, the relationship between the two sects, and the political impact that their changing relationship might have upon their constituents, including women. Likewise, a follow-up study in Teotecacinte should explore the ability of the Evangelical church to maintain congregational integrity, document the institutional affiliations of the Evangelical church and qualitatively study more hearth-centered activities, such as faith healing and familial ties and networks. Also, the "non-political" nature of the Evangelical church requires more study and investigation. Once this has been completed, then we may be better qualified to broadly generalize about the laity of Teotecacinte and the laity of Nicaragua as a whole, as well as the laity of the other countries of Central America.



## NOTES

1. It should be noted, however, that the Pope was not against social justice in general, but rather he fought against the kind of social justice undertaken by what he perceived as Marxist environments –such as that found in part of the Nicaraguan Church and in Nicaragua more generally in the 1980s.
2. Berryman (1994: 33) defines the popular church as "new forms of expression of the church taking place in popular milieus as a result of new pastoral initiatives, particularly base communities. It [the term 'popular church'] could be used polemically, however, to imply that some were seeking to form their own church, whose criteria would be political and ideological."?
3. In the Latin American context, "Protestant" and "Evangelical" are virtually interchangeable.
4. Hallum (1996: 131) suggests that "over one hundred Protestant denominations are active in Nicaragua" and "about 60 percent of them are Pentecostal."
5. Teotecacinte, Nicaragua, was selected as the site for the study because the first author had access to the Catholic and Evangelical congregations as well as to the Catholic and Evangelical leaders in the village. Through his years of community development fieldwork in the village during the 1990s, the first author had developed an invaluable rapport with the community. The authors of the study felt that an intimate knowledge of the community was necessary to solicit a community response based on trust rather than skepticism of an academic outsider invading the religious privacy of rural inhabitants.
6. The Contra War came to an end with the election of Nicaraguan President Violeta Chamorro in 1990. President Chamorro was supported by the Bush administration in the U.S. and her victory paved the way for normalized relations between the U.S. and Nicaragua (Close 1999). Once the war ended, antagonisms between Nicaragua and Honduras (which harbored most of the Contra combatants) slowly faded away as well.
7. Supporters of the Sandinistas and the Contras were a heterogeneous lot. Horton (1998: 8), in her qualitative study of the small town of Quilalí, about 40 miles south of Teotecacinte in the Nicaraguan highlands, found considerable local peasant support for both groups resulting from "a series of dramatic transformations and dislocations, brought not by capitalism, but by a revolutionary government and war." For Teotecacinte in the 1980s, it has been estimated that the village split eighty (percent)/twenty (percent), with majority support for the Sandinistas (Sánchez 1996). Like Quilalí, peasants in Teotecacinte divided over the distribution of scarce resources (primarily land) and the sacrifices brought about by the war.
8. This background discussion of the presence of the Catholic and Evangelical Church within Teotecacinte has been culled from interviews conducted by the first author with full-time local church leaders, Delegate of the Word Vidal Blandón (Catholic lay leader) and Evangelical Minister Miguel Olivares.
9. Pentecostals, however, have had a longterm presence in Nicaragua. The first Nicaraguan Pentecostal church was established in 1912 (Stewart-Gambino and Wilson 1997).
10. Although Evangelicals (Pentecostals in the case of Teotecacinte) oppose political involvement in much of their rhetoric, it is a well formulated myth that Evangelicals "are always and inherently apolitical" (Stewart-Gambino and Wilson 1997: 232). Notably, the 1996 Nicaraguan presidential elections included an Evangelical party, the Christian Way party, which garnered enough national votes to win four seats in the national Legislative Assembly (Deann 1997). The party leader, Evangelical Pastor Guillermo Osorno, ran third in the presidential race with 72,621 votes, or 4.1% of the total vote (Close 1999: 176), earning the pastor one of the four seats for the Christian Way in the Legislative Assembly. The Christian Way Assemblymen hold important committee posts –human rights, education, and governance– representing, at least nominally, Evangelicals at the highest political levels (Deann 1999). However, Pastor Osorno's victory was somewhat diminished by his poor



showing among Evangelicals generally, where he tallied only five percent of the estimated 600,000 Evangelical votes (Deann 1997: 23).

Furthermore, Gambino-Stewart and Wilson (1997) and Martínez (1989) argue that Evangelicals actively assert themselves politically when the timing is right—that is, generally speaking, when religious concerns supercede political ones. Deann (1997: 60; 1999: 23) suggests that the political platform of the Christian Way party revolves around bringing "biblical values to the country's executive and legislative branches" as well as addressing the social issues of "hunger, illiteracy, lack of health care, unemployment, poverty, and rising violence."

11. Martínez (1989), in his now somewhat dated study of Pentecostalism in Nicaragua, found a similar religious milieu in his observation of seventeen Pentecostal churches in three regions of revolutionary Nicaragua. Specifically, Martínez (1989: 77) noted "a lively worship [laden with] song and clapping [and] vigorous prayer where everyone chants in a chorus that is simple and repetitive" (authors' translation).
12. Martínez (1989) notes that this local autonomy greatly empowers the local pastor vis-à-vis the institutional church. Martínez (1989) suggests that the institutional church recognizes this potential power disparity and thus periodically rotates pastors to diminish the influence of pastors in their local communities vis-à-vis the institutional church. This rotation of pastors is clearly evident in Teotecacinte, Nicaragua.
13. Teotecacinte, Nicaragua, is the sister city of Glenwood Springs, Colorado (USA). This bond has existed since 1990 (officially recognized in 1991) and was created when a group of concerned citizens from Glenwood Springs visited Teotecacinte in 1990. Thus, the sister city concept was born out of active community involvement and came to be facilitated by the Friendship City Exchange (FCE) in Glenwood Springs and the *Junta Comunal* (city council) in Teotecacinte.

Operating as a non-governmental organization (NGO), the FCE is very involved with community development in Teotecacinte. Since 1991, the FCE has facilitated many community projects in Teotecacinte, including a potable (safe) water system, a permaculture farm, solar ovens/cooking, elementary and high school education, and, most recently, micro-loans. The projects in the community are facilitated year-round by a full-time FCE liaison based in Teotecacinte. More importantly, the sister-city relationship bars political interference in Nicaraguan affairs and is non-denominational in character.

14. The one question difference between the two surveys resulted from an extra question asked in the Catholic survey. This question queried respondents as to whether or not they had participated in the preparation of Communion, a non-issue for Evangelical church members, and thus it was not asked of Evangelicals.
15. In January 1999, the exchange rate between the Nicaraguan Córdoba and the U.S. dollar was 11.22 Córdobas to 1 dollar. The discrepancy between the previously mentioned per capita income of \$60 derives from in-kind income versus cash income. The surveys reveal total income.
16. The relaxed assumptions concern heteroscedasticity and multicollinearity (Hair, Anderson, Tatham and Black, 1998).
17. Statistical measures for the logistic regression were all within acceptable standards: -2 Log Likelihood = 167.186; Goodness of Fit = 147.167; Chi-Square = 36.592; significance level = .0000; R = .0000 to .2770 (indicating a low degree of multicollinearity); and the ratio of predictors to observations = 14.6:1.
18. The specific hit ratios for Catholics was 50 out of 73, or 68.49% correct, and the hit ratio for Evangelicals was 58 out of 74, or 78.38%. In addition, a multiple discriminant analysis (MDA) was run to validate the model. The MDA results were in line with the logistic regression, validating the model run as a good predictor of an individual's church affiliation.

19. The first author attended several Catholic services presided by Delegate Blandón over a period of six years. In the opinion of the first author, the services conducted by Delegate Blandón are lacking in vitality, dynamism and rapport with the congregation.
20. Political involvement has also been uncovered in other Pentecostal congregations in Latin America. Burdick (1998) found, in his ethnographic study of Pentecostalism in a couple of poor, predominantly black neighborhoods in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, numerous instances of socio-political involvement, mostly revolving around the issues of racism and social justice. Burdick (1998: 145) noted "a surprising number of efforts on the part of black pentecostals to make defense of black ethnic identity and the fight against racism ongoing projects of their churches."
21. However, in general, the conversion process for men also has a large bearing on lessening their masculine identity (or "male prestige complex") in the community, as detected by Chestnut (1997) in his study of Belém, Brazil. Interestingly for Teotecacinte, Nicaragua, many of the older male converts also participated valiantly throughout the Contra War, protecting the village on many occasions from direct Contra assault. In essence, this allows many converted males in the community to maintain their masculine identity, based on their wartime heroism. The coat-tails of masculine legitimacy of the older converts has led to a greater acceptance of younger male Pentecostals in the community, as observed by the first author of this study.

## REFERENCES

- Berryman, Philip. 1994. *Stubborn Hope: Religion, Politics and Revolution in Central America*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Blandón, Vidal. 1999. Personal interview by first author. Teotecacinte, Nicaragua. (7 January).
- Bowen, Kurt. 1996. *Evangelism and Apostasy: The Evolution and Impact of Evangelicals in Modern Mexico*. Montreal, Canada: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Brislin, Richard W. 1980. "Translation and Content Analysis of Oral and Written Material." Pp. 398-444 in *Handbook of Cross Cultural Psychology*, Harry C. Traindis and William W. Lambert, eds. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.
- Brown, Robert McAfee. 1990. *Gustavo Gutiérrez: An Introduction to Liberation Theology*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Brusco, Elizabeth E. 1995. *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia*. Austin, TX: University of Texas Press.
- Burdick, John. 1998. *Blessed Anastácia: Women, Race, and Popular Christianity in Brazil*. New York, NY: Routledge.
- Chestnut, R. Andrew. 1997. *Born Again in Brazil: The Pentecostal Boom and the Pathogens of Poverty*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press.
- Clary, Edward L. and Hannah W. Stewart-Gambino, eds. 1997. *Power, Politics, and Pentecostals in Latin America*. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Close, David, 1999. *Nicaragua: The Chamorro Years*. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Davis, Charles L. 1997. "Religious Transformation and Partisan Polarization in Latin America: The Case of the Urban Informal Sector in Nicaragua," *The Journal of Developing Areas* 31 (Winter): 183-202.
- Daudelin, Jean and W.E. Hewitt. 1996. "Approaches to Studying Churches and Politics in Latin America: A Review and Critical Assessment," *Canadian Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 21 (42): 311-337.
- Deann, Alford. 1997. "New Evangelical Party Gains Political Power," *Christianity Today* 41 (3): 60-61.

- Deann, Alford. 1999. "Evangelical Press Political Leader to Focus on Poverty Issues," *Christianity Today* 43 (1): 23.
- Duncan, William B. 1995. "The Political Philosophy of Gustavo Gutiérrez." Ph.D. Thesis (Political Science), Texas Tech University.
- Flannery, Austin. 1992. *Vatican Council II*, Vols. 1 and 2, Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.
- Fleet, Michael. 1997. "Religion in Latin America." Pp. 295-320 in *Understanding Contemporary Latin America*, Richard S. Hillman, ed. Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Froehner, Manzar. 1989. *The Catholic Church and Social Change in Nicaragua*. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.
- Freire, Paulo. 1970. "Conscientizing as a Way of Liberating." Pp. 5-13 in *Liberation Theology: A Documentary History*, Alfred T. Hennelly, ed. 1990. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. 1983. *The Power of the Poor in History*. Translated by Robert McAfee Brown. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Gutiérrez, Gustavo. 1988. *A Theology of Liberation: History, Politics, and Salvation*. Revised edition. Translated and edited by Caridad Inda and John Eagleson. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Hair, Joseph F. Jr., Rolph E. Anderson, Ronald L. Tatham, and William Black. 1998. *Multivariate Data Analysis*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Hallum, Anne M. 1996. *Beyond Missionaries: Toward an Understanding of the Protestant Movement in Central America*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.
- Hennelly, Alfred T., ed. 1990. *Liberation Theology: A Documentary History*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Hewitt, W. E. 1996. "The Changing of the Guard: Transformation in the Politico-Religious and Behaviors of CEB Members in São Paulo, 1984-1993," *Journal of Church and State* 38 (Winter): 115-136.
- Horton, Lynn. 1998. *Peasants in Arms: War and Peace in the Mountains of Nicaragua, 1979-1994*. Athens, OH: Ohio University Center for International Studies.
- Kirk, John M. 1992. *Politics and the Catholic Church in Nicaragua*. Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida.
- Lernoux, Penny. 1982. *The Cry of the People: The Struggle for Human Rights in Latin America. The Catholic Church in Conflict with U.S. Policy*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.
- Lernoux, Penny. 1989. *People of God: The Struggle for World Catholicism*. New York, NY: Penguin Books.
- Levine, Daniel H. 1993. "Popular Groups, Popular Culture, and Popular Religion." Pp. 171-225 in *Constructing Culture and Power in Latin America*, Daniel H. Levine ed. Ann Arbor, MI: The University of Michigan Press.
- Martin, David. 1990. *Tongues of Fire: The Explosion of Protestantism in Latin America*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell Publishers.
- Martínez, Abelino. 1989. *Las sectas en Nicaragua: Oferta y demanda de salvación*. San José, Costa Rica: DEI (Departamento Ecueménico de Investigaciones).
- Martínez, Oscar J. 1994. *Border People: Life and Society in the U.S. Mexico Borderlands*. Tucson, AZ: The University of Arizona Press.
- McGovern, Arthur F. 1989. *Liberation Theology and Its Critics: Towards an Assessment*. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Miranda Sáenz, Adolfo. 1994. "Nicaragua: Political Metamorphosis of Evangelicals." Pp. 190-201 in *New Face of the Church in Latin America*, Guillermo Cook, ed. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Olivares, Miguel. 1999. Personal interview by first author. Teotecacinte, Nicaragua. (6 January).
- Polakoff, Erica and Pierre La Ramée. 1997. "Grass-Roots Organizations." Pp. 185-201 in *Nicaragua Without Illusions: Regime Transition and Structural Adjustment in the 1990s*, William W. Walker ed. Wilmington, DE: SR Books.



- Ratzinger, Joseph. 1983. "Ten Observations on the Theology of Gustavo Gutiérrez." Pp. 348-350 in *Liberation Theology: A Documentary History*, Alfred T. Hennelly, ed. 1990. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Sabia, Debra. 1997. *Contradiction and Conflict: The Popular Church in Nicaragua*. Tuscaloosa, AL: The University of Alabama Press.
- Sánchez, Gumercindo. 1996. Personal interview by first author. Teotecacinte, Nicaragua. (2 January).
- Schwaller, John F. 1987. *Church and Clergy in Sixteenth Century Mexico*. Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press.
- Sepúlveda, Juan. 1994. "The Pentecostal Movement in Latin America." Pp. 68-74 in *New Face of the Church in Latin America*, Guillermo Cook, ed. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books.
- Smith, Christian. 1994. "The Spirit and Democracy: Base Communities, Protestantism, and Democratization in Latin America," *Sociology of Religion* 55 (2): 119-143.
- Smith, Christian and Liesl Ann Haas. 1997. "Revolutionary Evangelicals in Nicaragua: Political Opportunity, Class Interests, and Religious Identity," *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* 36 (3): 440-454.
- Stewart-Gambino, Hannah W. and Everett Wilson. 1997. "Latin American Pentecostals: Old Stereotypes and New Challenges." Pp. 227-246 in *Power, Politics, and Pentecostals in Latin America*, Edward L. Cleary and Hannah W. Stewart-Gambino, eds. Boulder, CO: Westview Press.
- Stoll, David. 1990. *Is Latin America Turning Protestant: The Politics of Evangelical Growth*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Tamayo, Juan O. 1999. "At Mass in Mexico, Pope Calls for Dignity for All and Decries 'Intolerable Evils'," *Miami Herald*.  
<http://www.herald.com/americas/mexico/digdocs/030921.htm>).