FINDING SUCCESS AND HEALTH THROUGH GOD:

A STUDY OF CULTURAL MODELS AND

HEALTH AMONG BRAZILIAN

PENTECOSTALS

by

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ABSTRACT

This dissertation investigates the influence of religious cultural consonance on well-being. In particular, I ask if religious conceptions of ideal acolyte identity and behavior buffer daily stressors experienced by socially and economically marginalized Brazilian Pentecostals. Between 1960 and 1985, the Protestant population of Brazil quadrupled. This expansion however, is disproportionately among Brazil's poor, disenfranchised, and minority populations. This research posits that Pentecostal communities offer an alternative cultural-landscape to create identity, power, and status—which may contradict, compensate, and even challenge the dominant norms. Thus, religious cultural consonance may be a specific mechanism that marginalized Brazilian Pentecostals utilize to mitigate the physiological and psychological stress of their daily lives.

This mixed-methods research is conducted in Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo, Brazil. The project utilizes two specific communities: The *Assembléia de Deus* (AD) and *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* (IURD). The AD is theologically more sectarian than the IURD, advocating a greater separation between their faith and the secular world. This cross-cultural comparison is valuable for examining potential differences in the interaction of religiosity and sectarianism in the appraisal and embodiment of psychosocial stress. Research therefore focuses on: (1) the construction and distribution of religious cultural models of ideal personhood and lifestyle; and (2) evaluating well-being through psychological health measures in relation to religious models.

This research offers an understanding of how religion influences psychological well-being. More specifically, this research empirically shows how religion is a cultural institution that can offer an alternative and attainable set of life goals and identities. By conceiving religion as composed of a series of cultural models, differential adherence or cultural consonance with religious and secular ideals can be evaluated by their influence on mental well-being. Ultimately, this research will contribute to understanding the ways culture and religion shape psychological health.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to Henri Dengah and Rick Brown II,

whose insight, intelligence, and wisdom were taken from us too soon.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND SYMBOLS

AD	*Assembléia de Deus*
AIDS	acquired immune deficiency syndrome
ANS	autonomic nervous system
ASC	altered states of consciousness
β	beta, standardized coefficient
BMI	body mass index
CCT	cultural consensus theory
CES-D	Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression Scale
CRP	C-reactive protein
df	degrees of freedom
DSES	Daily Spiritual Experience Scale
DUREL	The Duke University Religion Index
EBV	Epstein–Barr virus
EEG	electroencephalography
FAAP	Fundação Armando Alvares Penteado (university in Ribeirão Preto)
FFM	Fundação Fritz Muller (university in Ribeirão Preto)
GAS	general adaptation syndrome
HADD	hyperactive agency detection device
HIV	human immunodeficiency virus
HPA	hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis

IURD	*Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus*
M	mean
MCI	minimally counter-intuitive ideas
MRI	magnetic resonance imaging
MDS	multidimensional scaling
N, n	number, sample size
PROFIT	property fitting
p	probability of results or outcome
PSNS	parasympathetic nervous system
PSS	Perceived Stress Scale
QAP	quadratic assignment procedure
r	Pearson product moment correlation
R^2	multiple correlation coefficient
SAM	sympathetic adrenal medullary axis
SES	socioeconomic status
s.d.	standard deviation
SIMSS	Single Item Measure of Social Support
SNS	sympathetic nervous system
t	computed value of t-test
TB	tuberculosis
UNAERP	Universidade de Ribeirão Preto (university in Ribeirão Preto)
UNIP	Universidade Paulista (university in Ribeirão Preto)
USP	Universidade do São Paulo (university in Ribeirão Preto)

=	Equal to
>	Great than
≥	Greater than or equal to
<	Less than
≤	Less than or equal to
±	Plus or minus
~	Approximately

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CHAPTER 1: Introduction

It is a warm and humid Monday night in Ribeirão Preto, one of Brazil's most prosperous and rapidly growing cities. Standing outside the cast iron gates of a large, domed building, I witness a steady stream of *crentes* (Pentecostal acolytes or "believers") arrive by foot and by bus, alone or with friends on motorcycles, and in every make and model of automobile—from the popular VW beetle to shiny new Mercedes SUVs. A three hour drive north of the state capital of São Paulo, Ribeirão Preto is often referred to as the California of Brazil for its sunny and warm climate, and its wealth compared to the rest of the country. In contrast, however, the material landscape of high-rise condominiums which cast long shadows onto the numerous *favelas* (shanty towns) belies the popular narrative of this city's opulence. Within this context of wealth disparities, steady streams of Pentecostal Brazilians filter into the local church. What draws a diverse crowd to this church and other Pentecostal institutions? The answer lies somewhere in the glossolalic utterances and the upbeat hymns that spill out of the church and fill the air. People go for the relief that the religion offers them from their daily struggles. They go for the promise of salvation and the hope of future security. They go to personally interact with the Holy Ghost that can help them achieve these imagined futures.

Ribeirão Preto represents a microcosm of a rapidly changing Brazilian religious landscape. Over the past 30 years, Pentecostals—who are known for their emphasis on the Holy Ghost aspect of the Christian Trinity—have grown from a small dispersed population of 3.2 million to over 25 million. New members range from impoverished farmers to the urban upper-classes (IBGE 2010). Though Pentecostals are considered unique in Brazil—a country which has

long been described as the most Catholic place in the world (Mariz 1994)—Catholic catechisms and sacrament are slowly being replaced with the glossolalic utterances of the Holy Spirit and healing blessings. *Crentes* seek an active and direct relationship with God, mediated through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In doing so, they aim to redefine themselves in opposition to a world and Brazilian society that they view as corrupt and sinful. By eschewing popular dress, drink, and cultural institutions such as Carnaval, samba, and *futebol*, *crentes* challenge what it means to be "Brazilian" through their concerted efforts to bring God's Kingdom to this nation.

This research asks what it means to be a faithful *crente* within a modern urban Brazilian setting. More specifically, what constitutes a successful Pentecostal life? How do these Christians conceive of the ideal lifestyle and what knowledge, behaviors, and rewards does it entail? As many *crentes* will readily explain, it is not easy to be a member of a minority religion that demands substantial commitment from members even as they are viewed with skepticism by other Brazilians. For example, male *evangélicos* (Protestants) who eschew certain Brazilian institutions (e.g., *machismo*, *futebol* (soccer), and *cerveja* (beer)) because of their faith often experience sanctioning from the larger community. Some are excluded from social networks (and the associated political and economic capital) because of their asceticism, whereas other *crentes* are chastised for being part of a cult lead by charlatans. Conversion to and participation in an *evangélico* faith is thus not free from broader social, political, and economic consequences. Yet, the numbers of Brazilians who are filling the pews and converting to Pentecostalism are out-pacing every other religion.

What is the appeal of a faith that demands so much? Various researchers have addressed this question by highlighting the positive health and social impacts of religious community life (Brusco 1995; Chesnut 1997; Mariz 1994; Smilde 2007). Religious studies scholar R. Andrew

Chesnut (1997) describes the appeal of Pentecostalism through its ability to mitigate the discomforts and stresses of "dis-ease." That is, through a pneumatic, charismatic style of Christianity, Pentecostalism instills a greater internal locus of control in its members. By encouraging an individual relationship with the divine, *crentes* can invoke power and agency by wielding the Holy Spirit through glossolalia and other gifts of the Spirit, and through divine blessings of health and financial prosperity. The radical transformations that occur due to these *crente*-Spirit relationships cannot be understated. Testimonies that highlight how lives changed from pre- to post- conversion occupy a central place within Pentecostal discourse. Such discourse serves to reify the church's orthodox narrative while it transmits the faith's cultural logic to potential neophytes.

Though ethnographic insights are valuable, research has not empirically tested whether adherence to the ideals of the Pentecostal faith results in decreased "dis-ease." This study addresses this lacuna by examining whether religion buffers daily stressors experienced by socially and economically marginalized *crentes* (Pentecostal believers or acolytes). Fundamentally, this project is based in cognitive anthropology, which views culture as shared structures of knowledge that shape thoughts, values, and behaviors. I aim to identify particular *crente* cultural models that shape conceptions of an ideal life. While these models are "limitedly distributed" in the sense that they are isolated to a subcultural community, I hypothesize that they alter the influences of more widely distributed models in dominant society.

This dissertation investigates whether limitedly distributed Pentecostal models moderate or replace more widely distributed Brazilian cultural models of a successful lifestyle. I consider how the ideal Pentecostal lifestyle—what *crentes* refer to as *A Vida Completa*—shapes mental health in relation to two broader societal models of success (ideal family life and ideal material

lifestyle). I focus on two congregations of Brazilian *crentes* that occupy opposite ends of the Pentecostal spectrum (Freston 1999). On one end, the *Assembléia de Deus* (AD) is known for sectarianism, ideological self-distancing from worldly and secular influences, and an emphasis upon the Pentecostal gift of tongues (i.e., glossolalia). On the other end, the *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* (IURD) is a neo-Pentecostal congregation that uses a Health and Wealth gospel to emphasize the acceptance of worldly blessings (e.g., material prosperity and health) in exchange for obedience and faith. The IURD also applies the Spiritual gift of exorcism over demonic forces that cause illness and suffering. In general, scholars view the discourse and cultural practices of the AD as more traditional and conservative than neo-Pentecostal denominations, such as the IURD, who do not enforce behavioral taboos or monitor members (Birman and Lehmann 2005; Chesnut 1997; Freston 1995; Oro 2004). In this study, I focus on the traditional AD and the neo-Pentecostal IURD churches to better understand shared and divergent understandings of the ideal *crente* religious lifestyle. Comparison between the religious communities will show how limitedly distributed models interact with dominant culture models in shaping psychological health and well-being.

This research hypothesizes: (1) Regardless of denomination, Brazilian Pentecostals share a model of an ideal religious lifestyle; (2) Consonance with Pentecostal cultural models correlates with increased well-being; (3) Religious models will exert a greater effect on well-being than secular cultural models; (4) Limitedly distributed religious cultural models will interact with dominant cultural models in shaping patterns of psychological health.

In order to test these arguments, this research is separated into two phases. The first phase establishes a limitedly distributed model of *A Vida Completa*. An additional goal of cultural domain analysis is to understand variation of the limited model—both how the model differs

conceptually among Pentecostals and how it is differentially distributed. A combination of qualitative and quantitative methods will be used. In the second phase, I examine the relationship between secular and religious consonance and measures of psychological distress. This final hypothesis testing stage is conducted through structured interviews and psychometric scales.

The validity of my arguments and findings will be assessed by situating my research project within the larger Brazilian Pentecostal cultural landscape. Discussion of relevant theories for conceiving religion within a cognitive anthropological framework will facilitate a nuanced understanding of how religion-as-culture connects to physiological and psychological health. This study is presented in the following chapters:

Chapter 2 provides an essential background of Brazilian cultural history. The unique historical conditions that gave rise to Brazilians continue to reverberate through modern perceptions of race, class, and gender. Some of the cultural institutions that are cornerstones of the "imagined" Brazilian community are targets for Pentecostal critique. Such conscious distancing from dominant society results in the creation of a unique "Other" identity.

Chapter 3 reviews the major traditions that comprise the crowded and complex Brazilian religious marketplace. Brazil is home to Christian and spiritualist faiths which compete with one another for participants and new members. Brazilians have a broadly pluralistic approach to religious belief. They opportunistically participate in various faith-based rituals, which often occur as a response to diverse daily stressors. Major Brazilian religions, including neo-Pentecostals and Charismatic Catholicism, combine aspects of other faiths to attract and retain converts. Within this milieu of exchange and competition, I examine the roles of two Pentecostal denominations, the AD and IURD. These two congregations are more fully described through historical and contemporary accounts.

In Chapter 4 I focus on the connections between culture, stress, and illness. This section reviews stress research that involves potential stressors, the physiological and psychological manifestations of stress, as well as coping resources which buffer the effects of stressors. I specifically highlight the role that society and culture play in exposing individuals to different degrees of stress. Using a mixture of primate and human studies, it is clear that social status, resource inequality, cultural incongruence, and cultural dissonance result in stress and associated psychological and physiological manifestations. Moreover, I show how this view of psychosocial stress is the underlying mechanism of cultural consonance theory and a crucial link between religious adherence and measures of psychological well-being.

Chapter 5 provides an overview of research that investigates the correlations between religion and health. This section begins with a discussion of early theories and approaches to the study of religion—including its origins, functions, and hypothesized selective advantages. Next I review studies that investigate religion and health linkages. This body of work is derived largely from psychology, which is the most prolific social science field to investigate the topic. Throughout this review, I address common findings as well as deficits that hinder the advancement of the study of the religion-health interaction. I next highlight important anthropological research on the religion-health connection, including ethnographic studies which help to identify the roles of knowledge transmission, identity, and meaning response (also known as placebo-response) in incidences of religious healing. I conclude by offering several ways in which a cognitive anthropological approach to religion can yield new insights and research agendas.

In Chapter 6, I provide an ethnographic description of Ribeirão Preto, its people, and two important AD and IURD religious rituals that occurred on a Saturday in September. Importantly,

I describe some of the discourse, doctrine, and rituals that enable comparison and contrast between the two religious communities. Interviews with church members provide a glimpse into their daily lives, their trials, and their successes. Often, *crentes* discuss their religion in 'before' and 'after' terms, or their lives pre- and post- conversion. By doing so, they weave their biographies into narratives that reflect the major promises of their faith: to heal and radically change the emotional and financial lives of its members. It is a reification of what they view as the good Pentecostal life, or *A Vida Completa.*

Chapter 7 outlines the methods used in this dissertation research project. I first provide a detailed description of the two main phases of data gathering. The methods of each phase and their benefits and drawbacks are discussed in detail. Cognitive anthropological methods of cultural consensus and cultural consonance are discussed as they pertain to this study. For example, I consider some of the unique methodological challenges of studying two religious communities concurrently. Finally, I discuss my ambiguous position as an agnostic researcher who wishes to build rapport and participate in (as well as observe) religious rituals, as I maintain ethical integrity.

Chapters 8 and 9 focus on the cultural domain analysis of *A Vida Completa.* In Chapter 8, I review the findings of the first phase of research. Through pilesorts and ranking tasks which are analyzed through multidimensional scaling and cultural consensus analysis, I show evidence of a shared model of the ideal Pentecostal lifestyle and evaluate its constitutive components. Using a novel form of residual agreement analysis, I dig deeper within the cultural consensus data to find evidence of shared deviation of each church away from the aggregate answer key. As a result, I show that perceived differences within these two congregations are a matter of emphasis rather than kind.

In Chapters 10 and 11 I show the results of the second hypothesis testing phase used here. In these chapters I lay out the data and show how cultural consonance can be used to measure the influences of religion on patterns of stress and depression among *crentes*. Further, I investigate whether these limitedly distributed Pentecostal models interact with the more widely distributed models of dominant society. As stated in my hypothesis, I expect that religious models will be more highly valued than the models of dominant society. Thus, religious more than secular models will be more highly correlated with psychological health. Importantly, however, because these *crentes* still occupy spaces within dominant society, they are still subject to dominant models which exert an influence as *habitus*. Therefore, I suspect that religious models will moderate the influence of secular models on well-being. I explain my findings by offering a model that is informed by the work of Marshall Sahlins and Louis Dumont and that shows how religion operates as high-level schema which reorganizes the meanings and relationships of subordinate cultural models.

In the final chapter, I review my research findings and evaluate its theoretical and methodological contributions to anthropology and the study of religion. I also consider some of the limitations of this research, and how these confines provide rich avenues for further ethnographic and scientific inquiry into the role of religion on well-being. I emphasize that this study is not the final word concerning the health effects of faith; rather my research outlines a novel way to study religion. The use of these cognitive methods promises to provide many more new insights and questions into one of the most studied, debated, and misrepresented cultural institutions.

CHAPTER 2: The Historical and Cultural Context of Brazil

The story of Brazil is one of contradictions. It is a nation of joy and sensuality but also of *saudade*, a Brazilian term with no English equivalent, but approximates a sense of melancholy, sadness, and longing. It is a country that believes in a "racial democracy," but defers to the innate differences between classes. Brazilians are a people with a devotion to family, but a *machista* attitude that threatens to undermine the marriages. While others may see incongruence of opposing cultural institutions, Brazilians revel in their *caminho do meio* (middle way), which allows for a fluid mixing that aptly describes the social body as it does the individual bodies of Brazilians. Embodied in their national dish, *feijoada*, Brazilians maintain that the mixture of black beans, red meat (e.g., beef and pork), and white rice is representative of the three *raças* (races: African, Indigenous, and European) that make up their national identity. It is a recipe, Brazilians contend, that creates a product greater than their constituent parts.

This *caminho do meio* extends outward into the religious landscape as well. Brazil, which has long been described as the most Catholic place in the world, also houses one of the fastest growing Pentecostal populations in the world (Mariz 1994). Catholic catechisms and sacrament are being replaced with the glossolalic utterances of the Holy Spirit and healing blessings. These Christians seek an active and direct relationship with God, mediated through the gifts of the Holy Spirit. In doing so, they aim to redefine themselves in opposition to a world and Brazilian society that they view as corrupt and sinful. By eschewing popular dress, drink, and cultural institutions such as Carnaval, samba, and *futebol* (soccer), *crentes* ("believers") challenge what it means to be "Brazilian" through their concerted efforts to bring God's Kingdom to this nation.

Thus, the *história* (both "history" and "story") of Brazilian Pentecostals must begin with Brazil itself—its history and people—in order to understand how *crentes* are both a product of their nation's past, but relentlessly aim to change its future. This chapter provides a brief background on Brazil. Focusing on Brazil's rich yet complex cultural milieu this chapter first discusses the country's 'discovery' and settlement as a European colony. Since the earliest days of Portuguese control, Brazil has exhibited characteristics that came to define the nation. The chapter then explores the role of race and slavery in the creation of Brazilian identity. Many of the unique characteristics of Brazilian culture are derived from the mixture of European, Indigenous, and African cultural groups. This chapter then considers how Brazil's social hierarchy developed and how classism absent of class consciousness prevails in the minds of many Brazilians. Finally, gender is examined through the pan Latin American ideals of *machismo* and *marianismo*. Discourses of gender and sexuality have been key aspects of Brazilian nation building. Thus, these behavioral scripts are the location, more than any other, for Pentecostals efforts of societal change.

"Discovery"

The story of modern Brazilian people begins in 1500, when Portuguese explorer Pedro Álvares Cabral made landfall with his fleet on the uncharted northeastern coast of South America after being "blown off-course" on route to India. Whether this discovery was accidental or intentional is still a matter of debate; a few years earlier, the Treaty of Tordesillas (1496) granted all lands west of 42°30'W longitude to Spain and those lands east of the meridian to Portugal. While the treaty conceded most of the known Western Hemisphere to Spain, it left the undiscovered South American bulge to Portugal. Regardless of whether Cabral's landing was intentional or not, he and his fleet ultimately took harbor in what is now the state of Bahia. When

he wrote to the Portuguese king, the ship's scribe, Pêro Vaz de Caminha described the land and its inhabitants thusly:

> In appearance, they are dark, a bit reddish, with good, well formed faces and noses. They go naked, without any covering…and in this they have as much innocence as in showing their face…And one of those maidens was completely dyed, both below and above her waist, and surely was so well made up and so round, and her shameful part (that had no shame) so gracious, that many women from out land, seeing her countenance, will feel shame in not having theirs like hers… And as we walked across the river many of them were dancing and rejoicing…And they did it well.
>
> It seems to me that people of such innocence if we understood their speech and they ours, would soon be Christians…I believe it was not without cause that God has brought us here.
>
> But the land itself has very good air, fresh and temperate. There waters are many; infinite. And if the King approves, we can take advantage and give (the land) everything. (my translation, Caminha 2012 [1500])

Although Caminha certainly wrote from a colonial perspective, painting an unrealistic Garden of Eden, his prose reified themes that colored Brazilian consciousness for the next 500 years: a sensuality and exotic beauty that would come to define a *mistura raçial* (mixed-race) nation (Parker 2009); a land of unrealized potential; and fertile ground for Christianity to flourish. In practice, this "new world in the tropics" both lived up to and fell short of initial impressions. Later accounts of the native inhabitants of Brazil were more antagonistic, focusing on their savagery and cannibalism. After indigenous peoples failed to meet labor the demands of European

Figure 2.1 Depiction of indigenous women and children performing cannibalism. Bry 1592/Art Resource, NY

masters, Brazil engaged in a slave trade unmatched in the world. And the mixed race, Christian nation came about not through fraternity, but through forced penetrations and compulsory conversions. Furthermore, the boundless productive capacity of the land and its people has never been fully realized in the eyes of modern Brazilians. It is not so surprising that Brazilians also embody great sadness, and longing—*saudade.* It is a yearning for an idealized past that never quite existed and that does not quite match the realities of the present. *Saudade,* as such, is the essence of the *história da Brasil.*

Slavery

Brazil's history is one of underdevelopment; a condition that led to a prolonged dependency on a slave-based agricultural system, patron-client style relationships, as well as the wealth disparities the country suffers from today (Parker 2009). For instance, the first colony was not established for 30 years after Portuguese "discovery," and the first printing press was not delivered for another 300 years in the mid-1800s. The underdevelopment of Brazil was in line with Portugal's mercantile economy and approach to colonization. Compared to European colonial powers of the time, the Portuguese population was a fraction of the size of other naval powers (i.e., the English, Spanish, and Dutch). Lacking the resources of manpower, Portuguese colonization focused on setting up trading and military posts, minimally manned, in order to procure and trade resources, and to protect Portuguese interests (de Abreu 1997). To supplement the limited Portuguese manpower on the continent, colonialists did what many other Europeans in the Americas did—they utilized indigenous and African slave labor to extract and produce resources. Under this Portuguese model, expansive or extensive bureaucratic and cultural institutions were unnecessary in a colony that was comprised primarily of slaves and that existed solely to generate wealth for the Portuguese crown. In effect, this mercantile colonialism stymied

economic development and perpetuated an agricultural slave based economy. It had the additional effect, however, of setting the conditions for a unique melding of disparate peoples and cultures, a melding not seen elsewhere in the Americas.

The early colony was separated into 13 captaincies that extended from the Atlantic coast to the unexplored jungle interior. *Donatários* (grantees) who received the captaincy land holdings were largely wealthy merchants and petty nobility. The new Brazilian colony was viewed by Portuguese elites as backwards and primitive, so few were willing to take the economic and personal risks associated with relocating to the Americas. As a result, many of these captaincies were run in absentia, and struggled with limited resources, absentee leadership, and hostile indigenous groups (Skidmore 2010). Out of 13 original captaincies, only two became economically viable. Despite this early setback, the economy of Brazil improved in the early 17th century when sugar, produced on vast *latifundias* (plantations), supported 90 percent of the economy. Soon, Brazil became the principle sugar supplier to Europe. First focusing on sugar and then coffee, Brazil's early economy centered on plantation-based agriculture, and required substantial physical labor to tend fields and orchards. To meet these labor demands, Brazil installed human slavery on a scale that surpassed systems anywhere else in the Americas. Indigenous populations were first to be enslaved by the Portuguese, who often employed *bandeirantes* (raiders) to sack and pillage native villages (Monteiro 1994). While Indigenous populations provided an accessible supply of slaves, their susceptibility to European diseases, and a resistance to forced labor made them unattractive to many plantation owners. European masters were forced to look elsewhere for their human labor.

Around 1550, Brazil became involved in the trans-Atlantic slave trade (Skidmore 2010). Though superficially similar to other slave-based colonial economies in the Caribbean and North

America, a variety of factors characterized Brazilian slavery as incredibly brutal and yet oddly fraternal between master and slave. These characteristics contributed significantly to the future social structure of the nation (Freyre 1986). Portuguese imperial wealth in Western Africa and the country's relatively short distance from Africa resulted in the forced enslavement of over 8 million Africans between 1550 and 1888. This was more than any other American colony and accounted for 35 percent of total slave trade in the Americas (Conrad 1972). Within a matter of decades, the slave population in Brazil ballooned so that those in bondage outnumbered the free population. New slaves were so easy to acquire that many Brazilian landholders did not concern themselves with the presence of a sizable female slave population to produce new slaves. It was cheaper to obtain new Africans than to rear a child to working-age (Skidmore 2010). The almost effortless replacement of slave-labor made the working conditions significantly more brutal for Brazilian slaves than for their North American counterparts. The harsh demands of sugar cultivation, along with brutal rapes, whippings, mutilations, and amputations made each individual slave a temporary investment. Whereas the life expectancy of an American male slave was 90 percent of the age of his master, Brazilian slaves only lived 60 percent as long (Skidmore 2010).

Brazil also practiced slavery longer than any other country in the Americas. The abolition of slavery was conducted slowly over time, starting with a series of unenforced laws that banned the importation of new slaves in the 1830s and 1840s. The Law of the Free Womb declared all children born after 1871 free. In 1885, slaves over the age of 60 were granted freedom. It was not until 1888 that all slaves were given freedom, though without indemnities to either the former slaves or their masters (de Azevedo 1995). The result of Brazil's massive involvement in the trans-Atlantic slave trade was a population that includes the greatest number of people of African

descent in the world outside of Nigeria (Skidmore 2010). Additionally, the drawn-out and intermittent emancipation of slaves left many with no skills or opportunities for social and economic advancement. As such, they remained tied to the sugar and coffee *fazendas* (plantations) essentially living and working as serfs, resulting in a disproportionate number of Brazilians of African descent living in poverty today (Holston 2008).

Race and Miscegenation

The combination of mercantile colonialism and a massive slave-based economy lead to Brazil's current ethnic and racial composition. During its nascent years, colonial Brazil had a dearth of white European women. Portugal made no efforts to engage in widespread or extended colonization of Brazil. In line with mercantile doctrine, the colony was treated as a place to extract resources in order to enrich the Portuguese crown. As such, individual Portuguese men made the journey across the Atlantic to seek their fortunes in the service of the Empire. Unsurprisingly, European colonists and landholders, indigenous laborers, and explorers engaged in sexual relations (both consensual and nonconsensual) first with indigenous women and later with African slaves. Unlike elsewhere in the Americas, these mixed offspring were not necessarily relegated to the same status as their slave mothers (Parker 2009). At times, the mixed offspring became liminal members of the plantation "family" as *crias* (house-reared), *malungos* (foster-brothers), or *muleques de estimação* (favorite houseboys), or even born free (Parker 2009; Skidmore 2010). As such, these individuals became new (though liminal) additions to an emerging colonial society, whose biography of mixed heritage would become the national identity (and discourse) of the people.

The undefined and variable social position of these new Brazilians left many in penury but allowed some to rise in the ranks of colonial society. Because manufacturing was outlawed in

the colony, early *mulatos* (black + white) and *mamelucos/caboclos* (Indian + white) were required to sell their own labor in the few non-slaved dominated sectors of the economy. For many males, this entailed working as marauding *bandeirantes*, who sacked Indian villages and enslaved their denizens. These acts reproduced the slave-based economy and cycles of violence, in addition to producing more children with liminal identities (Skidmore 2010). Overtime, as the African slave trade increased, and production became possible in Brazil, many took jobs in semi-skilled professions in urban sectors. For a lucky few—who were the legitimate (or recognized) offspring of white landholders and their African or Indian slaves, mistresses, or wives—they were capable of inheriting land and property, thus opening access to social statuses unavailable to mixed-race individuals elsewhere in the Americas.

Ethnic mixing has caused a fluidity of possible "racial" classifications, which has led some scholars and commentators to describe Brazil as a "racial paradise" or "racial democracy" (Freyre 1986). In fact, this notion of the racial democracy between Brazil's "three races" is a key component of the *história da Brasil* that composes national discourse. In short, the narrative of racial democracy states all Brazilians are the product of the miscegenation of Indians, Africans, and Europeans. From this mix, a new, Brazilian body emerged, that is greater than its constituent parts. This perceived blurring of racial boundaries ensures that all Brazilians, regardless of ethnic background, are full and equal citizens under the law (Bailey 2009).

Today, Brazilian racial classifications often refer to *cor*, or the color of one's skin, and are extremely complex and malleable. One's racial classification is not only determined by the color of one's skin, but also by other physical characteristics (e.g., nose and lip shape, hair texture) and by social traits such as wealth and the appearance and status of a spouse. The Brazilian racial classification scheme thus lacks any real consensus for what racial term is most

properly ascribed to a large suite of individual traits (Harris 1964; Perlman 2010). For example, it is not at all uncommon for two children in the same family to identify as different *cores*, or for an individual to describe him/herself differently throughout life.

That is not to say however, that Brazilian notions of race are not hierarchically arranged. Those who are most characteristically European enjoy greater symbolic capital than those with darker skin. And those with more *negro* features are "abstractly regarded as innately inferior in intelligence, honesty and dependability" and seen to be "less desirable, less handsome or beautiful" (Harris 1964:21; see also Almeida 2007). Therefore, it is not unusual for expecting mothers to verbally express their desire for lighter-skinned babies (Burdick 1998), or for people to physically alter their appearance through hair treatments and plastic surgery, in order to appear more Caucasian (Edmonds 2010). As a social—rather than as a biological—reality, racial classifications can also be modified through other social markers of class, including profession, the neighborhood one inhabits, and of course economic wealth. The intersection of social capital and "race" is very much an institutionalized aspect of Brazilian society. For example, there exists the popular saying, "*o dinheiro embranquece*" ("money whitens") (see Harris 1964). Evidence of this *embrancamento* (whitening) appears as early as the 18th century in Brazil. Census records from the late 1700s indicate that *morenos* inherited land, married European (i.e., white) spouses, and then subsequently identified as "white" (Skidmore 2010). Thus, converse to the rule of hypodescent that governs American notions of race, Brazilian classifications of *cor* is built upon the prejudiced marks of race, more than the actual heritage of individuals (Wagley 1965).

The notion of *branqueamento* is not simply a Brazilian cultural policy; it was once a political plan that the government hoped would civilize Indians and blacks by diluting their genetic stock through interbreeding. In 1823, the Brazilian Minister of the Empire (Prime

Minister), José Bonifaácio de Andrada e Silva, wrote that miscegenation will "make of them all one sole body of the nation, stronger, better educated, and more entrepreneurial" (Holston 2008:68). It is thus unsurprising that only 5-6 percent of modern Brazilians self-identify as *negro* despite the African heritage of over 50 percent of the population (Skidmore 2010). The legacy of *branqueamento* has led many *branco* and *moreno* Brazilians to downplay or ignore their African heritage and identity, opting instead to identify as white or brown, utilizing whatever "whitening" that their physical features or social status can provide.

A Racial Democracy

Such racial fluidity has given rise to a national discourse that Brazil is a racial democracy whose inequalities are class distinctions rather than racial discrimination. Such discourse depoliticizes racial discrimination, affirms institutionalized inequalities, and ignores the historical conditions that disproportionately elevate the whitest Brazilians to a high social status and that condemns darker skinned Brazilians to wallow in abject poverty. The term "racial democracy" and the implied harmonious existence of Brazil's three races are commonly attributed to Brazilian anthropologist Gilberto Freyre. In *The Masters and the Slaves* (1933[1986]), Freyre argued that Brazilian slavery was more humane and gentle than slavery practiced elsewhere in the Americas. He described a fraternal or familial relationship between the *casa grande* (plantation house) and the *senzala* (slave quarters), suggesting that the intimacy between master and slave reduced social distance and encouraged cultural sharing. Writing of his own childhood, Freyre (1986:278) maintained, "[It was] our Mammy who rocked us to sleep, who suckled us. Who fed us…(Or) the mulatto girl who initiated us into physical love and, to the creaking of a cot, gave us our first complete sensation of being a man." As a result of this intimacy, Freyre (1986:181-182) claimed that the two races never "reached that point of sharp

antipathy or hatred" that characterized other slave regimes, and that any antagonism between whites and blacks and Indians, any racial "friction," was "smoothed by the lubricating oil of a deep-seated miscegenation." Freyre's influential arguments created an image of racial harmony embedded at the core of a 'humanistic slavery':

> The social history of the plantation manor house is the intimate history of practically everything Brazilian: of its domestic, conjugal life, under a polygamous and slave-holding regime; of the life of the child; of its Christianity reduced to a family religion and influenced by the superstitions of the slave quarters. The study of the intimate history of a people contains something of a Proustian introspection. It is as if one were meeting oneself (1986:xliii).

The idea that fraternity and intimacy between master and slave created a uniquely "Brazilian" people and culture came at a time when Brazil was desperately searching for a national identity. Freyre's thesis was quickly incorporated into national discourse, creating the mythical notion of racial democracy, a national charter that denies racial discrimination and strife. Burdick (1998:5) aptly describes the power of this discourse:

> …the myth of 'racial democracy,' which teaches Brazilians to interpret inequality mainly in class, not color, terms, remains powerful…[it removes the] conceptual scheme to interpret and analyze their experience of color prejudice… The poor black does not necessarily perceive the connection between his racial condition and his poverty.

Although Brazil did not experience the same degree of explicit institutionalized racism that marked segregation in the United States (for example, there were never laws banning miscegenation or the creation of separate public spaces), the myth of racial democracy covered up and depoliticized racial discrimination, ultimately removing any room for contestation and stymieing race consciousness.

Although Freyre's portrayals of Brazil's race relations have been resoundingly critiqued for depoliticizing racial inequities and ignoring the brutality of slavery (e.g., Scheper-Hughes 1992), his thesis that Brazilian slavery was different than elsewhere in the Americas is true

(Skidmore 2010; Wagley 1979). Inter-racial reproduction and the easy replacement of slaves resulted in more Brazilian blacks freed by their masters than their North American counterparts. By the mid-1800s, 40 percent of the population in some parts of Brazil was counted as emancipated slaves, though many merely traded enslavement for serfdom (Skidmore 2010). Brazilian slavery also did preserve more African heritage than elsewhere in the Americas because Brazilians sorted slaves according to *naçoes* (nations), cultures and languages (Mariz 1994). As long as they converted to Christianity, slaves were largely allowed to keep and practice aspects of their language and culture. Thus, as Freyre notes above, the proximity of slave and master did allow for the transmission of African (and Indigenous) folk beliefs to a white master and his (their) children. This cultural syncretism extended within folk Catholicism and enabled a piecemeal preservation of African and Indigenous beliefs. This resulting synergy has allowed all segments of Brazilian society to become (minimally) familiar with African and Indigenous belief systems, as they currently manifest in folk Catholicism and in various Afro-Brazilian faiths. These themes will be more fully explored in Chapter 3.

Patrimonialismo, Class, and Poverty

Patrimonialismo is based on the patron-client relationships that form the basis of the hierarchal social organization in Brazil and throughout much of Latin America (Campante 2003; Theobald 1982). In Brazil, the deference of the masses to the elite is a legacy of a weak centralized government, slavery, and continued economic inequality. The nearly non-existent development of central social institutions in Brazil for 300 years ensured that local landowner consolidated large amounts of political and social power (Parker 2009). This and Brazil's continued economic reliance on agricultural products limited opportunities for emancipated and free Brazilians, thus keeping the populace tied to land that they did not own for survival. The

patron-client relationship that developed between the *fazendeiros* (wealthy landowners) and the masses ensured the continued political consolidation of power for the elite, and the barest of necessities for the poor. In return for cheap manual labor, the *patrões* (bosses or patrons) supplied employment opportunities, meager living arrangements, and an occasional monetary advance or gift to buy food, medicine, a hospital visit, or funeral expenses (see Scheper-Hughes 1993). In other words, in return for abiding by the rules of the patrão and for legitimizing his power, the laborer received (a semblance of) protection and security. This relationship of unequal partners was a strategy of power consolidation for one side and a tactic of survival for the other.

The cycle of patrimonialism, which led lower status people to defer to and rely upon elites and their political apparatus, created a population that was passive to a hegemonic system (Linger 1993). Patron-client systems institutionalize vertical social relationships, naturalize class differences, and promote nepotism and an uncontrollable bureaucracy; vertical relationships further stymie (though they do not completely eliminate) the formation of horizontal relationships of solidarity and legal challenges to the system (Gay 1998). This system is one of several reasons that Brazil, unlike its counterparts elsewhere in Latin America, did not experience popular revolutionary attempts that seriously threatened the power or authority of the reigning elites. Even Brazil's independence from Portugal, which made the King's son, Dom Pedro I, the emperor of Brazil, was a calm affair that did little to challenge the existing socio-economic order. Similarly, the military coups of 1889 and 1964 served to prop up the status quo and to consolidate more power in the hands of privileged Brazilians (Perlman 2010; Skidmore 2010).The history of Brazil's revolutions, driven by elites for elites, ensured the entrenchment of

institutions (e.g., legal systems, naturalization and reproduction of social systems) which in turn diminished the empowerment of the lower classes and any sense of horizontal solidarity.

This strong sense of social hierarchy permeates Brazilian society: it is reproduced in the phrase "*você sabe com quem está falando*?!" (do you know who you are talking too?!); the j*eitinhos* ("dodges", corner-cutting, and the invocation of social connections) that elites easily employ to bypass rules, laws, and lines; the VIP parking and lounges that are in most restaurants and supermarkets; and the popular *telenovelas* (soap operas) that typically utilize class distinctions as a central plotline. These features of Brazilian society may seem strange to people living in the United States, where the myth of the American Dream has depoliticized class hierarchy. The myth of racial democracy similarly obfuscates integral features of Brazilian society, such as racial prejudices and inequalities; however, in contrast to the U.S. where the wealthy support a 'classless' society, in Brazil, the poor support the patrimonial system most vehemently.

Perhaps no scholar has done more to understand the Brazilian character than Roberto DaMatta. As a Harvard trained anthropologist, DaMatta has shaped many of the popular and academic understandings of Brazilian society. Through analyses of various public performances including *Carnaval*, the lottery, and *jeitinhos*, he identifies a fluid dyadic Brazilian cultural logic that creates distinctions between the individual (a faceless individual, equal under the law) and the person (whose biography and social networks confer preferential value) and the alternative spaces of the *rua* (a masculine place of strangers and individuals) and the casa (a feminized place for family and persons) which they occupy (DaMatta 1991). A recent sociological study tests some of the assertions of Brazilian culture put forth by DaMatta. Among his claims are a

Brazilian preference for a paternalistic style of government, and the acceptance of social hierarchies as a necessary part of society. As the lead researcher, Alberto Almeida finds:

> The results confirm many of DaMatta's conclusions…Brazil is a society organized principally on a logic of class hierarchy…They believe that the relation between *patrão* (boss) and *empregado* (employee) should ensure the patrão with a position of superiority, inside or outside of work….(For Brazilians) there is always someone on top of the hierarchy, be it a boss or the government; there is always a superior and inferior person and the former has more rights than the latter, precisely because they are socially superior. (my translation, 2007:92-93)

This belief is most prominent among Brazilians who occupy lower socio-economic status positions. Brazilians who are unemployed and who have lower levels of education are more likely to support patron-client relationships, as well as confer greater authority and superiority to those higher up among Brazil's socio-economic ladder.

Why do lower socio-economic status Brazilians approve of elite and governmental power? The socio-historical circumstances discussed above have certainly helped to normalize and institutionalize vertical rather than horizontal social relations. In fact, the *história* of Brazil's nation-making (both as history and discourse) has centered on themes of domination, submission, and hierarchy (Parker 2009). But for the day-to-day lives of many Brazilians, this capitulation to hegemonic patron-client style relationships has been forged out of necessity to combat poverty (Scheper-Hughes 1992). The GINI coefficient, a measure employed by international organizations such as the World Bank and the United Nations, is a measure of wealth income distribution. A number of 1 denotes absolute inequality, whereas 0 signifies perfect equality. A country rarely receives a score over 0.70; extremely stratified countries such as South Africa and Haiti have GINI coefficients of 0.65 and 0.59, respectively (CIA 2012). Brazil, despite recent improvements, is one of the most economically stratified nations in the world with a GINI coefficient of 0.54: people with the upper 10 percent of incomes control

nearly 43 percent of the wealth; the bottom 20 percent controls less than 3 percent of the wealth (World Bank 2009).

Despite this context of extreme social stratification, an upper-middle class has rapidly emerged, complete with the conspicuous consumption that accompanies such status. Advertisements for European fashions, American consumer electronics, and luxury automobiles contend for store fronts and billboard space in Brazilian cities. For many of the respondents in this study, these images are reminders of their marginalized position within Brazilian society while they also give hope for achieving a better lifestyle. On the peripheries of these cities are the homes of Brazil's poor, including those of some of my informants. These Pentecostals, largely from the IURD membership, locate themselves within *favelas* and government housing projects, known as *conjuntos*. *Favelas* are slum communities that are constructed on land that is co-opted rather than purchased. Houses are constructed over time, built piecemeal from purchased and castoff materials such as wood, cinderblocks, and corrugated sheet metal. *Conjuntos* are usually government housing communities comprised of humble one or two room concrete dwellings on small lots, built far away from the eyes of the city elites (Figure 2.3).

Figure 2.2 Home construction on a conjunto lot

Residents are often former *favela* denizens who have been forcibly removed from their homes and placed into government housing. Whether living in a *favela* or a *conjunto*, the general experiences of life are the same. Within these neighborhoods, the violence of poverty takes over, and residents must wage daily battles for income, while coping with the presence of drugs, alcohol, prostitution, disease, and physical and psychological violence.

Despite these hardships, poor Brazilians remain largely optimistic about life opportunities. In a 30-year longitudinal study of *favela* residents in Rio de Janeiro, Janice Perlman (2010) finds that a majority of research participants felt that their child had the same opportunity to succeed in life and to become a *gente* (a "person") as does the child of a businessman. Perlman (2010:335) explains,

> …the respondents had so thoroughly internalized the fiction of equal opportunity that to say their children had less than a fair chance would be to admit their failure as parents rather than the result of a closed and unjust system. That helps explain the absence of anger or rebellion among most community residents…they blame themselves [and the community] for any failure in upward mobility.

Indeed, the myths of racial democracy and the *telenovelas* that consistently portray kindly patrons and rags-to-riches stories are contrasted with images of poor Brazilians as thieves, gangsters, and murderers on *Brasil Urgente* and other news shows. These factors have all but naturalized Brazil's social hierarchy while simultaneously instilling false hopes for advancement.

Employment and advancement opportunities in Brazil are changing as the country goes through a massive modernization process. Driven by new economic treaties, not to mention the global spotlight of the Olympics and World Cup (both to be held in Brazil in the next four years), production and construction in Brazil are booming. This modernization project, however, is not without its consequences. The effects of globalization in Brazil, as elsewhere, have reduced the personalistic vertical ties that provided an important social connection to the laborer. Within this new system, writes South American economist Otto Wadsted (2006), "the worker's identity is now given by a *carteira* (registration card) with numbers and symbols, while formerly the patrão called his name and identified him as a person. If something goes wrong, social security is slow and inefficient; the *patrão* 'would have known better'." Thus, the rapidly changing economic position of Brazil has increased the wealth inequalities within the country while it has similarly limited the personal ties that the poor utilized for survival and advancement (Kottak 1992). Indeed, for many Brazilians, the social leveling mechanisms at work within extended kin networks make familial relations both a strategy for survival and an impediment to economic advancement (Kottak 1967). Thus, within a context in which modernity is disrupting traditional social structures, it makes sense for poor Brazilians to favorably view the patrimonial system. While many feel discontent with the government's current level of services, they continue to defer upwards for leadership and aid.

Within a vacuum of traditional patron-client relationships, which coincides with periods of rapid industrialization and modernization, Protestant churches have flourished in Brazil. It is possible that these churches, such as the hierarchically-oriented IURD church, reproduce patron-client relations that have been weakened in contemporary Brazil. Doctrine that focuses on health and wealth is particularly attractive for poorer Brazilians since it offers a means of circumventing institutions which have occluded them from prosperity. As will be explored Chapter 3, the personal relationship with God that Pentecostalism offers, and the promise of earthly rewards in return for faith and worship fills a psychological and social gap in the worldview of many Brazilians.

Figure 2.3: IURD youth leader, Maria, evangelizing in her *conjunto* neighborhood

Gender in Brazil

The historical conditions that brought about Brazilian racial miscegenation also shaped their gender and sexual identities. These characteristics, behaviors, and roles are tied to the socio-historical circumstance from which they were developed: a slave-owning society whose

political and economic power was concentrated within local plantation's *casa-grande*. Within this historical setting, the Brazilian prototype of the family emerged. As Richard Parker (2009:33) describes:

> (The family) consisted of a nucleus composed of the patriarch and his wife as well as their legitimate children, all living together under the single roof of the plantation's *casa-grande.* On the periphery of this core, however, there existed…(the patriarch's) concubines or mistress, his illegitimate children, his slaves and tenant farmers, his friends, and clients.

As such, the ideals of Brazilian gender and gendered relations are constructed out the notions of power and authority. This may make Brazilian gender norms seem banal, especially when compared to other countries in the global south. But in reality, what makes a Brazilian view of gender distinct is the manner by which it is integrated within an omnipresent Brazilian notion of authority and submission, celebrated by the entire nation during Carnaval, and embodied among the entire class spectrum.

Brazil society is rigidly carved out into gendered space. A centrifugal male orientation marks the *ruas* (streets), *praças* (squares), and *cidade* (city), and the actions which take place there (e.g., professional work, drinking), as masculine domains, whereas the centripetal female orientation feminizes the household (*casa*) and designates it as a site of reproduction and nurture, and as a place that protects from an outside world composed of individuals and strangers. The masculine and feminine gendered organization of Brazil—often referred to as *machismo* and *marianismo* respectively - shapes the thoughts, perceptions, expressions, and actions of Brazilians perhaps more than any other cultural force (DaMatta 1991).

Machismo in Latin America is attributed to the confluence of many historical, cultural, and social factors. *Machismo* has been defined variously, and includes both positive and negative traits. Commonly, the term signifies the desire to dominate others through competition,

aggressiveness, intransigence in male-male relationships, and sexual conquest in female-male relationships (Anders 1993; Hardin 2002). On the other hand, *machismo* can also take on aspects of masculine chivalry (i.e., *caballerismo*), such as supporting and defending the family, and having a strong ethical code (Arciniega et al. 2008; Mirandé 1988). While these characteristics apply to men in many societies, they are particularly valued in Latin America, and are institutionalized and reproduced across societal institutions. Male bodies and roles are given preference over women in both the domestic and public realms; and males preside over production and the material rewards of labor. However, the difference between traditional *machismo* and *caballerismo* shapes the outcomes of such behavior. Whereas a man demonstrating *caballerismo* will direct his attention to the safety and prosperity of his family, the *machista* male will direct his resources to the *ruas* and *barzinhos* (bars) where males compete for dominance against each other, and to sexually dominate *garotas* (young women). In the following discussion, I focus on the more negative side of *machismo*. These traits are more prevalent among lower socioeconomic classes of Latin America (Almeida 2007; Arciniega et al. 2008) from which the majority of Pentecostals are derived, and proscriptions against these anti-social *machista* behaviors are recursive themes within religious sermons.

According to Elizabeth Brusco (1995), the roots to such masculine behavior lie in the legacy of colonialism. Miscegenation was a normal part of society for early Iberian colonists. Unlike North American colonization in which entire families moved from Europe to the Americas, Latin American colonies suffered from a dearth of European women. As discussed above, these conditions encouraged Iberian colonists to initiate sexual unions—often through coercion and force—with indigenous and slave women. More bluntly, Iberian colonization differed from North American colonization through "the degree to which sexuality was made

part of the conquest" (Hardin 2002:6). Power meant permission to dehumanize Others, through the enslavement and subordination of Indians and Blacks, and the rape of women. Masculinity is thus tied to a dominant status over men and women, effeminizing the former and sexually conquering the latter.

In Brazil today, *machismo* continues to be based upon inter-male subordination and female sexual conquest. For poor men in particular, *machismo* enables status achievement despite alienation from production and the experience of resource insecurity (Brusco 1995). The few resources available to economically marginalized male are often invested in public displays of conspicuous consumption rather than in household needs. By and large, these public displays serve to communicate status and dominance. For example, drinking *cerveja* (beer) and *cachaça* (sugarcane rum) at *barzinhos* (street bars) that are carved out of the sides of buildings is a popular pastime for many Brazilian men. While drinking, men verbally joust with one another and use innuendos embedded in Portuguese to symbolically "feminize" and "penetrate" the other thereby gaining status by dominating (i.e., feminizing) others.

In fact, Brazilian Portuguese is rich with such gendered-slang. There are dozens of words to describe the penis, ranging from *madeira* (wood), *faca* (knife), *pau* (stick), *arma* (weapon), to *cobra* (snake). Such terms give the male genitalia an active, aggressive, if not violent quality. *Brasileiros* (Brazilian men) who are perceived to fail living up to such aggressive and domineering sexual behavior are subordinated and feminized. They are verbally minimized (and thereby penetrated) by being labeled a *pau-mandado* (lit. a controlled stick; pussy-whipped), *bicha* (lit. small animal; queer), or *viado* (lit. deer; effeminate or passive male). Similarly, terms for female genitalia, such as *boceta* (box), *perereca* (small frog), or *baratinha* (small cockroach)

serve to subordinate women by giving the vagina a passive, diminutive, and inferior quality (Parker 2009).

Given this need to demonstrate aggressiveness and avoid accusations of passivity, it is perhaps unsurprising that violence, substance abuse, and the pursuit of sexual conquests are endemic *Brasileiro* behaviors. Hyper-aggression sometimes erupts into physical violence between men, though it is more often displaced in the household through domestic violence, which is a national issue in Brazil. The physical and sexual conquest of one's wife is often not satisfying enough for the *machista* male, and many Brazilian men have girlfriends, mistresses, and/or prostitutes on the side. *Machismo* is not relegated to certain classes or races, but is rather found throughout the social spectrum. *Machismo* is however magnified in poorer communities in which men are excluded from other (e.g., material, professional) signifiers of success, and where poverty subordinates (i.e., feminizes) their status. A combination of poverty, alcoholism, sexual aggressiveness, and domestic violence provides a means for gender competition and conquest, with their associated status, that many Brazilian men have few means to do so otherwise. Though in some ways *machismo* can help poor men temporarily psychologically cope with impoverished conditions, it ultimately reproduces status insecurity through violence, squanders resources, and weakens the familial unit.

Identity for Latin American women is framed by *marianismo*, an ideal developed as both a response and accommodation to *machismo*. Latin American women are expected to be like the Virgin Mary: meek, virtuous, spiritual, self-sacrificing, and above all, a mother (Gill 1990). Women are exclusively associated with domestic rather than public space. The household is the ideal location for female bodies and activities, and is best seen as an accommodation to the social realities promulgated by *machismo*. *Machismo* behaviors lead men to seek status on the streets

through the subordination of men and women, but it also leaves women as the primary protector and provider for the familial unit and household. While *marianismo* does subordinate women to a patriarchal regime, in many ways, *marianismo* can provide empowerment as the spiritual and financial core of the household. For this reason, it is unsurprising that Latin American feminists do not view motherhood as detrimental to female empowerment, nor do they view employment outside the house (which many Latin American women do already) as a necessary goal. Rather than trying to fundamentally change *marianismo*, feminists focus on changing male roles, encouraging men to be more congruent with household goals (Brusco 1995)

Latin American women often view their familial and domestic roles as a source of power and support; however, these roles do contribute to female subordination, particularly when confronted with the unobtainable expectations set by *marianismo* ideals. The Latin American gender system affords women respect primarily through motherhood. Marriage and reproduction are driving motivators for women planning their lives. Many of my young female respondents would explain in some fashion, "I'm going to school to be a special education teacher, but then I want to get married and raise a family," or "Maybe I'll work a few years as a dentist, but then it's better to stay at home with the children, especially if Jorge makes enough money." Many poorer Brazilian women continue to work out of financial necessity, but many women who are currently pursuing degrees and careers view motherhood as their primary goal.

An emphasis on motherhood places women in a precarious position vis-à-vis *machismo* males. Like the Virgin Mary, mothers are ultimately viewed as non-sexual objects, with the emphasis on the womb rather than the vagina. The mother is thus not an object of *machista* conquest and subordination, but is rather an object, like the Virgin herself, of dependence and reverence. Similarly, a woman who does not wish to be a mother, who practices sex for reasons

other than procreation, or who challenges male authority or the *marianismo* norm in some other fashion, is cast as deviant and *uma puta* (a whore) or *sapatão* (literally "big shoes" or lesbian). Female roles in Latin America rest upon the unobtainable virgin mother-whore dyad: a woman who lacks sexual experience cannot be a mother whereas a sexually experienced woman cannot be virginal. By focusing on the womb rather than the vagina, this gender model constrains women by authorizing female sexual behaviors only within relationships of dependency and for reproductive purposes (Brown 2009). For men, however, the gender model is used to justify extra-marital affairs and domestic violence. *Putas*, those who do not live up to the Virgin Mary model, are deviants and threaten *machismo* and *marianismo* alike, and thus 'valid' targets for forced submission through sexual conquest or violence.

It is important to remember however, that Brazilians do not fully conform to either the *machismo* or *marianismo* gender role ideals. As a *caminho meio,* gendered cultural norms are both explicitly rigid, but have overlapping and ill defined boundaries allowing for their contestation, innovation, and multivocality. For instance, the transvestite Roberta Close was once widely considered to be the most beautiful woman in Brazil, despite being born a man. The purpose of this discussion is simply to generally consider the dominant discourses which shape much of Brazilian gender performance. In the following chapters, I show how Pentecostalism breaks with such models of gender identity and Brazilian identity. Simple acts, such as denouncing husbands who visit prostitutes, are enough for Pentecostals to shake the gendered status quo of this South American nation.

Figure 2.4: This photo pokes fun at the *machista* culture of young Brazilian men. The caption reads: "There arrives a moment in a man's life when he has to choose his path…but I only have 25km of gasoline, what will I do?" His choices are: friends-15km, beer-20km, the brothel-25km, and a serious girlfriend-99km.
Source: http://www.pacoquinha.com/tag/gente-namoro-e-muito-longe.

Multi-Cultural Urbanism in Brazil

Finally, a brief discussion of immigration and urbanism, particularly in the Southeastern region is warranted. Brazil has rapidly undergone (and is still experiencing) an urbanization and modernization movement. Within the span of just a couple of generations, the country has gone from a rural country to a modern urban country (Neves 2003 in Perlman 2010). Today Brazil, specifically the southeastern region, is home to two of the world's top 25 most populated cities: São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro. Prior to World War II, only 15 percent of Brazil's populations lived in urban centers. Today, over 81 percent of Brazilians live in cities (Perlman 2010). This rural-urban migration, completed by some 108 million people between 1960 and 2000, has largely been a movement of Brazil's poor. Today over 78 percent of the country's economically marginalized populations live in urban areas (Perlman 2010).

The rapid growth of Brazil's urban areas has resulted in a concentric organization of infrastructure and socio-economic neighborhoods. Many Brazilian cities undergo

peripheralization, where a centrifugal pattern of settlement follows the establishment of migrant communities in the urban periphery; over time this results in increased autoconstruction and investment; which then leads to forced eviction; with the cycle restarting as a new urban periphery takes root in the hinterland (Holston 2008). As a result, rich and poor neighborhoods may exist side by side. This is true for the megacities as it is for Ribeirão Preto. Construction and gentrification proliferate at the outer-bands of the city. The *favelas* previously occupying the area have been razed; its occupants forcefully relocated to *conjuntos* miles away from the city-center and miles away from their places of employment. It its place, giant high-rise condominiums and new shopping centers are taking form for the upper classes of the city.

But when there is economic growth, people from a variety of backgrounds flock to the area in attempts to take advantage of the perceived opportunities. As a result, the cities of the Southeastern Brazil are home to a mix of immigrants that would rival many in the United States. After the abolition of slavery, Brazil actively sought immigrants to fill labor positions in agricultural sectors. The early racist ideology of *embrancamento* made Brazilians particular eager to accept Europeans-migrants into their country (Page 1995). Early immigrants to southeastern Brazil included Germans, Italians, and Portuguese who found livelihoods in a variety of fields, from agricultural to production labor in textile and metallurgic manufacturing (Skidmore 2010). An aggressive development policy made São Paulo one of the fastest growing cities in Brazil and its economic backbone. People from other nationalities soon followed in the early 20th century, including those from the Middle East, Eastern Europe, Russia, and Japan. By 1960, this diverse megacity was home to the largest industrial park in the developing world (Skidmore 2010).

One of the more interesting immigration movements to southeastern Brazil were the Japanese. Known as Nippo-Brazilians, the first Japanese immigrants arrive in São Paulo in 1908 to work as agricultural labor in the state's many coffee plantations. Between 1908 and 1941, over 190,000 Japanese moved to Brazil. Immigration policies of the United States and Australia at the time imposed limits on the number of Japanese immigrants, thereby making Brazil an attractive alternative destination (Nakamura 2008). Nippo-Brazilian numbers and their economic power grew over time, so that by 1935 35 percent of the produce available in São Paulo came from Japanese farmers (Page 1995). Today, they provide over 70 percent of the city's fruits and vegetables, and are credited for introducing the kiwi to Brazilian plates. Currently numbering over 1.6 million, these Brazilians also make up the largest Japanese diaspora in the world (Nakamura 2008).

Chapter Summary

Brazilian society is complicated, comprised of a unique mixture of people from all over the world. Despite a land mass greater than all of Europe and a lack of infrastructure for mass transcontinental transit and communication until the mid-20th century, Brazil has developed a unique imagined community. Its history as a colony, the capital of the Portuguese Empire, the largest slave-based economy in the world, and an alleged racial democracy, Brazil is a country that moves firmly into the future while it laments missed opportunities and the ubiquitous poverty. The historical context included here provides a framework for Chapter 3, which considers how the most populous Catholic country in the world is also a fecund religious marketplace for competition and conversion.

This chapter has reviewed some of historical contexts and cultural institutions that shape and flavor Brazilian thoughts, behaviors, and customs. The early period of colonization was

stymied in underdevelopment due to Portugal's mercantile strategy. Brazil's emphasis on sugar and coffee exports required the slave labor of millions of Indians and Africans, bringing the "three races" into violent and intimate contact with one another. From these beginnings, a new world in the tropics was built—though one that never sought to expand political or economic power beyond the elites. Still today, class, *patrimonialismo*, and gender separate the world into distinct spheres of power, authority, and dominance. While this is found elsewhere in the world, Brazil is unique in celebrating these distinctions as part of their national identity.

The thread linking Brazilian culture and the socio-historic conditions from which it arose is framed by notions of dominance and hierarchy. From its founding, through colonialism and slavery, to the modernizing global power it is today, Brazilian society and its culture have been organized by the consolidation of power among authority, and the deference of those without. But, Brazil is also a place of contradictions. Through *o caminho meio* and *jeitinho* Brazilians tactically subvert and challenge order and hierarchy, imposing a fluidness that blurs boundaries, conflates categories, and makes "persons" out of "individuals."

This chapter provides a general overview of the historical and social conditions which make up the contemporary group of people known as "Brazilians." This discussion is not meant to be fully encompassing, nor does it address the myriad of variation and heterogeneity that make Brazil such an interesting location for social scientists. For example, unique aspects of Brazil's regions—from the past large slave plantations of Northeast; to the sparsely populated forested regions of the Central-West; to the German, Japanese, and U.S. Confederate immigrants in the South and Southeast—make Brazil one of the most diverse countries in the world. Rather, this chapter provides some of the essence of the characteristics that unite these people within an imagined community (see Anderson 1991). These historic contexts and cultural institutions are

necessary for understanding the larger cultural milieu that shapes religion in Brazil. However, this study seeks to provide local specificity to the study of Brazilian culture. By focusing on depth rather than breadth, and through employing a methodologically sophisticated comparative study of two religious communities, this research adds both nuance and a grounded behavioral reality to these broad generalizations.

In the upcoming chapters, this historical and cultural context will serve as the backdrop for the following points:

1. The history of ethnic and cultural mixing, in addition to a weak national government, makes Brazil open to foreign ideas and willing to adopt and incorporate them into existing cultural frames.
2. Limited governmental or clerical oversight in the early colony and Iberian folk Catholicism enabled traditional religions to remain and/or to become syncretized with Catholicism.
3. Patrimonialism created a cultural dependence on elites and others in high positions for favors and survival. Patrimonial structures also exist within religions, such as the Catholic institution of *compadres* (god-parents), and more recently in Protestantism through an individual patron-client relationship with God.
4. Gender roles exemplified by *machismo* for men and *marianismo* for women have led to domestic and social strife. Pentecostalism reformulates Brazilian notions of gender performance, particularly for men, making it an attractive venue for women wishing to change their domestic lives and that of their male family members and partners.

CHAPTER 3: The Brazilian Religious Marketplace

A basic understanding of the major competing faiths in Brazil's crowded religious marketplace is necessary to appreciate the growth of Pentecostal Christianity (see Finke and Stark 1998). Unlike most of North America and Europe, where nearly all of the major religious competitors derive from Abrahamic traditions, Brazil exhibits a heterogeneous religious landscape: powerful movements include Catholic and Protestant Christians, and spiritualist faiths of Afro-Brazilian *Candomblé, Umbanda,* and *Batuque*, and Kardecian Spiritism (Brown 1994; Greenfield 2008). Despite its diverse composition, traditions in this religious marketplace share common traits. Brazilian religions tend to be pneumatic, emphasizing a personal experience in the divine. And the religious discourse is dominated not by promises of salvation, but rather by guarantees of healing and prosperity (e.g., Brusco 1995; Chesnut 1997; Cohen 2007; Greenfield 2008; Oro 2004; Seligman 2005). Since the primary religious goods of many of these faiths are services and rituals that address health concerns, employment, and conflict resolution, Brazilians opportunistically engage in religious rituals depending on their problems and the perceived efficacy of a faith's solution. Indeed, what makes Brazil unique is not that non-Christian faiths flourish, but that religious pluralism is the standard rather than the exception (Greenfield 2008). The reason for religious diversity amidst a longstanding Catholic monopoly highlights the complex and contradictory "*caminho do meio*" of Brazil's social body. Due to a variety of historical conditions that were explored in the previous chapter and that will be more fully fleshed out below, religion in Brazil, like other aspects of society, is pluralistic and syncretic, denying rigid classifications. As such, the "conversion careers" of these acolytes are complex

and never fully realized (in the sense that conversion, as a complete worldview transformation, is difficult amid the hybridization of beliefs).[1] It is common in Brazil to have members of the same family identify with different religious styles: one family member might attend mass on Sunday, attend a Spiritualist healing ritual the next week with a father-in-law, and then consult a *Candomblé pai-de-santo* for employment advice with a neighbor.

The movement of Brazilian faithful in and out of diverse worship styles and communities simultaneously shapes the views of its members and links the faiths together. As Brazilians consume the diverse goods offered by religious competitors, they bring the expectations and cultural models of prior religious experiences to novel worship communities. Religious communities must acknowledge the diverse religious models held by potential converts (and members) while responding to acolyte and marketplace demands. In other words, Brazilian religions and their memberships engage in a dialectical relationship—each building upon and informing the other. Brazilian religions are all syncretic, borrowing forms, themes, and rituals from one another. As a result of this pluralistic religious landscape, religious competition has been relatively peaceful – though not necessarily conflict-free – when compared to the religious and political violence that gripped many South and Central American nations in the latter half of the 20th century (Brusco 1995).

According to Patricia Birman and David Lehmann (2005), this ecumenical religious landscape is under threat of dissolving. The meteoric rise of Protestantism, particularly

[1] Conversion careers, as conceived by Henri Gooren (2007), are the cyclical stages an individual enacts as part of the introduction to a religion, affiliation and membership, and possible disaffiliation. While these stages are fluid and multi-directional, a key axiom of conversion involves a radical change in cultural models. Conversion is conceived as "not only a change in values, beliefs and identities, but…the displacement of one universe of discourse by another" (Snow and Machalek 1984 in Garrad-Burnett 2007). Accordingly, religious pluralism characteristic of the Brazilian religious landscape fosters the syncretism and confluence of discourse, rather than displacement and replacement.

Pentecostal and more recently, neo-Pentecostal denominations characterized by a literal interpretation of the Bible, has led some researchers to question their impacts more broadly on Brazilian society and religion (e.g., Ireland 1991; Stoll 1990). Despite remaining the majority religion between 1980 and 2010, the number of Brazilian Catholics dropped from 90 to 65 percent while *evangélicos* rose from 6.6 percent of the population to over 22 percent, or over 42 million (IBGE 2010). And given Protestant's commitment, it is unsurprising that on any given week the churches and chapels across Brazil are more packed with *crentes* than Catholic bodies (Ireland 1998). Within this changing religious context, this chapter explores how the Brazilian *"caminho do meio"* is embodied through religious pluralism and syncretism, and how Protestantism may be changing the religious marketplace. This discussion presents essential background information for understanding the religious landscape in which members of the *Assembléia de Deus* and the *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* live while providing a context for discussion of the cultural model, *a vida completa*, which *evangélicos* use to organize their lives (see Chapters 8 and 9). Importantly, this chapter shows that despite claims to the contrary, *evangélico* denominations are just as syncretic and pluralistic as other Brazilian faiths, and that the IURD—quite possibly the most vocal instigator of inter-religious discord—is the most syncretic of them all.

Catholicism

Though it has lost traction in recent years, the influence of Catholicism in Brazil cannot be overlooked. For much of its existence, the Catholic Church was the *de facto* faith of Brazil. The country boasts more self-identified Catholics than any other, and is home to the Christ the Redeemer statue in Rio, one of the most iconic Catholic symbols outside of Rome. For Brazilians, national holidays often coincide with Catholic holidays (*Carnaval* is one of the

largest), use of Catholic phrases (such as the expression, *Nossa Senhora!*, "Our Mother!") is ubiquitous among social and religious groups, and the federal laws are regularly framed by Catholic politicians and supported by powerful Catholic lobbying groups.

These facts, however, belie the variation manifested both in the parishioners and in the Church itself. Brazil has never had a homogenous Catholic culture; ironically, the most Catholic country in the world has been characterized by a weak Roman presence, which has allowed various "folk Catholicisms" to flourish, as well as divergent views between more traditional and more progressive elements of the priesthood (Mariz 1994). The reasons for this lie within the Iberian folk-Catholicism brought over by the 16th century Portuguese, and the historical-political circumstances of the colony's founding. Iberian folk-Catholicism was influenced by centuries of Arab, Moorish, and Jewish occupation, despite the best efforts of the Inquisition to root out heretical and non-canonical beliefs (Mendonça 1996). This type of rural Catholicism emphasizes the veneration of the Virgin Mary and Saints within patron-client style relationships (Brown and Bick 1987). Iberian Jesuits, who were the first permanent clergy in Brazil, focused on evangelizing the colonized indigenous groups, rather than ministering to Portuguese colonizers. The Jesuits practiced assimilation conversion, accommodating Catholic rites into existing indigenous cultures. While this practice precipitated the expansion of many areas of Brazil's interior, it also resulted in limited Catholic leadership in many parts of both urban and rural Brazil. As anthropologist Sydney Greenfield (2008:97) notes, historically, there was often a shortage of priests in Brazil—rarely enough "to do more than present the catechism to slaves, say occasional masses, and perform baptisms, weddings, and funerals, (thus) Brazilians were little influenced by the clergy." In many cases, especially in rural areas and plantations, members themselves had to form *irmandades* (a type of lay clergy or brotherhood) in order to perform

basic Catholic rights (Brown and Bick 1987). As a result, Brazilian Catholicism began as a hybridization of Iberian folk, indigenous American, and North African belief systems. Today it is estimated that non-Romanized or folk Catholicism is practiced by 80-85 percent of Brazilian Catholics (Antoniazzi 1989).

Even within the priesthood, the Catholic Church is not homogenous, but is rather comprised of various factions, traditions, and approaches. Within Brazil (and more broadly in Latin America) the Church is historically characterized by two distinct movements: Liberation Theology and Charismatic Catholicism. As in other places in Latin America, a CEB (*Communidade Eclesial de Base*) style of Catholic worship and organization arose in the 1960s and spread rapidly during the 1970s, only to diminish in the closing decades of the 20th century. CEBs were a product of their time and place as these Catholic organizations incorporated Marxist ideas into Christian doctrine. Utilizing "Liberation Theology," the CEBs focused on poorer segments of the Brazilian population—often in response to what the clergy saw as oppressive and subjugating practices of militant and dictatorial regimes that were proliferating throughout Latin American. Through doctrine and group worship, the goal of Liberation Theology and the CEBs was to socially and politically engage the poorer classes by awakening a class consciousness (Mariz 1994). The focus of CEB attention was not toward individual behaviors that contributed to or arose because of poverty (e.g., alcoholism, prostitution), but rather toward the larger structural constraints and injustices of the state. The CEBs never enjoyed much success, as the macro focus of the clergy was more aligned with the liberal political agendas of the urban intellectual elite (Burdick 1993). As a result, the message of political liberation did not often connect with the masses who were more concerned with day to day survival than with the long and dangerous task of fighting against the system (Drogus 2000;

Mariz 1994). Consequently, after the decline of the military regime in the 1980s, participation in Brazilian CEBs fell off precipitously.

More recently, a new variant of Catholicism, Charismatic Catholicism, has become popular in Brazil. The movement traces its origins back some 50 years to grass-root activities in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and Bogotá, Columbia (Cleary 2007; Lane 1976). It was not until 1994 that Charismatic Catholics received the tepid blessing of Rome to practice as an official movement of the Church. Today they account for as many as 16 percent of practicing Catholics in Latin America, and are among the fastest growing styles of Catholicism (Cleary 2007). Inspired by Pentecostal theology and ritual, Charismatic Catholics emphasize an intimate experience of the Holy Spirit as chronicled in Acts 2: 1-13. Participants incorporate glossolalia and spiritual healing, which separates them from traditional Catholicism by focusing attention on the Holy Spirit aspect of the Trinity and by reframing acolytes as participants, rather than spectators, in worship. Similarities to Pentecostalism have made some Catholic leaders reticent regarding this style of service, fearing that it will provide worshipers with a direct experience of the Trinity that would diminish clerical authority (Cleary 2007; Steil 2006). However, the popularity of charismatic worship among the various pneumatic religions within Brazil likely influenced Catholic Church capitulation to popular demands. As a result, the official acceptance of the Charismatic Catholic movement represents both a strategic response or stop-gap to Pentecostal inroads and an example *par excellence* of a religious institution modifying its theological tenets in response to acolyte demands.

Afro-Brazilian Faiths

The unique history of Brazil has led to the syncretism of religious faiths and has helped preserve traditional African beliefs despite the deculturative and acculturative forces of slavery.

Brazilian researchers estimate that there are more than 30 million followers of Afro-Brazilian faiths, many of whom are black Brazilians of lower socioeconomic status (Steigenga and Cleary 2007). According to the 2010 Brazilian government census, however, only 0.3 percent of the population identifies as a practitioner of *Candomblé* or *Umbanda*, the most popular Afro-Brazilian faiths (IBGE 2010). This discrepancy between academic and government numbers lies in the widespread acceptance of religious pluralism; in other words, while a large population of people may follow aspects of Afro-Brazilian traditions, many of these people are nominally Catholics or Evangelicals. These Brazilians are tactically utilizing the variety of goods offered by Brazil's religious market.

Several distinct characteristics of Brazil's slave-trade enabled African cultures and beliefs to survive the drudgery and acculturation of slavery. First, the extended duration of the slave-trade, which continuously brought large numbers of new slaves, created an uninterrupted cultural link to the continent. Second, Brazilians uniquely separated slaves into *naçoes* (nations) according to culture and language, which permitted the preservation of beliefs and rituals (Mariz 1994). Finally, a weak Catholic presence that favored assimilation resulted in the superficial conversion of many slaves to Christianity. Slaves were able to continue African traditions, often through syncretically incorporating their pantheon within the litany of Saints and martyrs (Brown and Bick 1987). While these processes helped preserve aspects of the cultural traditions and religious practices that the first Africans brought to Brazil, over time they have also altered many characteristics. The contact of numerous African cultures with European and Indigenous cultures, through forced and tactical syncretism, resulted in new cultural systems. As Sydney Greenfield (2008:119) explains:

> The descriptive details of the history of the interplay between Christianity and the multiple African traditions have been mostly lost. What survived…came to be

> known by many names in different parts of the country, each practice shaped by the specific cultural background of the African nation from which the forbearers of the local population had come.

These diverse religious fusions—composed of Indian, African, and Catholic beliefs—are generally known as the Afro-Brazilian faiths, including *Candomblé* (the most African-centric), *Catimbó-Juerma* (which integrates both African and Brazilian Indian belief systems), and *Umbanda* (a synergy of African, Indian, Catholic, and Kardecist beliefs and practices).

Despite being multivocal and protean, Afro-Brazilian faiths share several general, unifying characteristics (Cohen 2007). Traditionally appealing to poorer segments of the population, these faiths are rapidly making inroads among the more affluent middle-class as they seek aid and solace (Brown 1994). Acolytes practice their services in church buildings, yards, and living rooms, where *orixas and exús* (deities and spirits) are communed with through ritual sacrifices and possession-trance. These supernatural entities may be culturally combined with Catholicism, and many carry a Christian persona of a Saint, apostle, or even Christ. Rituals of *Candomblé* and *Umbanda* primarily center on individual illness and psychological distress. Those seeking aid will visit an Afro-Brazilian center, where a *pai-* or *mãe-de-santo* serves as a vessel for possession by elderly Indian or African spirits (such as *caboclos or pretos velhos*), saints, or lower deities, who act as intermediaries to higher forces. Practitioners can appeal to these supernatural characters for help in a variety of ways, but are commonly required to make a material sacrifice (e.g., alcohol, tobacco, or animal) as a form of payment. Occasionally, these spirits identify the source of affliction as a latent spiritual ability and prescribe that the appealing party learn to become mediums themselves (Seligman 2005). After the appeal has been made and if a resolution is offered, future involvement in the faith is limited, at least until the next crisis. Brown and Bick (1987:77) provide the following description of an Umbanda service:

> Leaders and initiates, dressed in white nurses' uniforms…begin the service with homage to the Umbanda deities and spirits in the form of hymns... handclapping… and drums. Gradually they become possessed, exchange ritual greetings, and dance, each adopting the persona of the spirit received. The second part of the ceremony is devoted to *consultas,* spiritual consultations in which the spirits still act and speak through mediums and give assistance to members of the congregations, most of whom have attended for this reason. Clients consult about illness, unemployment, family conflicts, and other practical concerns. The spirits give spiritual cleansings (*passes*), prescribe…remedies...and other practical advice. Spiritual aid… (is) an important attraction and a basis of recruitment to more active participation in Umbanda and to initiation as a medium.

The religious good of health and healing provided by the Afro-Brazilian faiths, its syncretism with aspects of Catholicism, and biomedicine (e.g., nurses' uniforms) has encouraged these faiths to flourish throughout Brazilian society. Although few Brazilians exclusively identify as practitioners of Afro-Brazilian faiths (Cohen 2007), the features that these religions share with Catholic beliefs enable clients to consult the spirits with minimal cognitive dissonance. The Catholic Church has not, however, developed an ecumenical relationship with Afro-Brazilian faiths. Afro-Brazilian faiths are regularly labeled as cults, devil-worship, and have at times faced government persecution (Cohen 2007; Oliveira 2003). Tensions between Afro-Brazilian faiths and the Catholic Church have lessened in recent decades as local Catholic leaders recognize the importance of African cultures in the lives of members. Catholics have slowly begun to begrudgingly accept a degree of pluralism in exchange for continued membership within the competitive religious market (Mariz 1994).

Spiritism

The contradictions and ruptures in Brazilian society that allow for various Christianities and Afro-Brazilian faiths have similarly enabled the introduction and growth of Spiritism. Spiritualism is a generalized term for a belief system which emphasizes the communion of believers with the souls of deceased, who in turn act as guides and intermediaries with more

divine forces. Therefore, Afro-Brazilian faiths can generically be subsumed under this category. For most Brazilians, Spiritism (as compared to the umbrella-term of Spiritualism) refers more specifically to Kardecian Spiritism, a faith that superficially shares much in common with *Candomblé* and *Umbanda*, but whose origin and discourse appeals to a distinct level of Brazilian social hierarchy.

Kardecian Spiritism began in 1857 under the guidance of French schoolteacher Léon Dénizarth Hippolyte Rivail, better known as Allan Kardec (Greenfield 2008). Kardec was influenced by a rationalist movement that was sweeping Europe during the nineteenth century, and thus sought to understand psychic phenomena through scientific-oriented studies of spirits, mediums, and the afterlife. At the time, the scientific study of psychic and supernatural phenomena was extremely popular in Europe and the United States. Kardec was not content to present empirical evidence for the existence of such phenomena (this was accepted *a priori*), but was rather motivated by the moral messages of past enlightened souls. Kardec's Spiritism maintains that the universe is comprised of a physical realm and a spiritual realm (Greenfield 2008). These realms continuously interact with one another, as both corporeal and incorporeal bodies seek to evolve into a state of perfection and terminate the cycle of birth and death. Similar to Afro-Brazilian practices, a Kardecian Spiritist may become possessed by the souls of the deceased, who then intervene and assist in the troubled lives of people. Frequently, the aim of such assistance refers to physical and psychological healing; the possessing spirit is often a deceased physician found in the annals of history. As a result, Kardecian Spiritism uniquely combines scientific concepts, derived from evolution, biomedicine, and psychology, with religious messages of enlightenment and charity. This combination of concepts and messages appeals to both educated and lay people. Spiritism was particularly attractive to nineteenth

century Brazilians because the elite—many of whom were schooled in France— looked towards that country, and especially to Paris, for cultural, political, and scientific inspiration. The most recent national census indicates that Kardecian Spiritists have higher socio-economic status than any of the other major Brazilian religions, with nearly one third holding college degrees (IBGE 2010).

Similar to Afro-Brazilian religions, Kardecian Spiritism enjoys a small, dedicated membership (less than 4 million, or 2% of the population) comprised of believers, regular clients, and part-time medium practitioners. The majority of the clientele identify nominally with another religious tradition such as Catholicism, which results in clients who bring religious models derived from other faiths. During healing ceremonies, these various cultural models may be integrated within Spiritist cognitive frameworks. Kardecian Spiritism utilizes two main types of rituals during curing: disobsession, which psychologically addresses errant spirits that cause mental illness by indoctrinating Kardecian morality, and spiritual surgery, which involves the literal incisions and removal of bodily tissue by a Spiritist possessed by an enlightened spirit (often a deceased physician) (both of these rituals are more fully explored in chapter 4, which discusses how religion heals). Through disobsession rituals, it is possible to see the syncretism that is characteristic of Brazilian culture. First, the errant spirit causing misery is ascertained. The wayward soul is often identified as "a victim of black magic, but sometimes it is a (Catholic) priest or an arrogant intellectual…(or) a Protestant, sex maniac, gambler, etc." (Hess 1989:186). Afflicted individuals thus bring with them previous religious cultural models, which are then recast by the Spiritist as misguided and confused spiritual entities. Through the enculturation of these errant spirits with Kardecian Spiritist models, the spirits (and the client) are enlightened and everyone is healed. As David Hess (1989:186) further explains,

> Catholics discover that there is no hell, materialists are surprised to find that there *is* an afterlife, recalcitrant earthbound spirits learn Christian forgiveness and agree to study in celestial schools, and victims of black magic (often attributed to Afro-Brazilian rituals) respond to spiritual shock treatments or offer to let the spirits of light ferry them away to spiritual hospitals. The disobsession session therefore gives voice to rival points of view in the religious system, but it does so in a way that lets Spiritism encompass these other discourses in an evolutionary scheme which poses Spiritist doctrine as the apex of human thought.

Disobsession requires the acknowledgement and engagement of other religious models, which are then subsumed under Spiritist discourse. Competing religions are not so much demonized (as in neo-Pentecostal rhetoric), but are rather viewed as incomplete truths, which are made complete by the wholeness of Spiritism. Kardecians believe in the existence of Christ (often portrayed as the most enlightened spirit), and they openly integrate Christian morality with Spiritist moral teachings. Thus, many lay Brazilians view Spiritism specifically, and Spiritualism generally, as a complimentary addition rather than a complete replacement for prior held religious beliefs and affiliations.

Evangelicals

While traditional Protestant faiths such as Lutherans, Baptists, and Methodists have been in Brazil since colonization, the arrival, growth, and influence of Pentecostals in the 20th century has exerted a significant effect on the nation. Within the span of thirty years, self-identified Protestants grew from 8 million (including 3.2 million Pentecostals) in 1980 to 42.3 million in 2010—the majority (25.4 million) of whom belongs to Pentecostal denominations (Kramer 2005; IBGE 2010). As such, the term *evangélico* is used synonymously within Brazil to refer to anyone adhering to a Protestant faith, but most commonly to Pentecostals. Pentecostals refer to themselves as "*crentes,"* or "believers." While Baptists (3.7 million), Adventists (1.5 million), Lutherans (1 million), and Presbyterians (1 million) do have a sizable presence in the religious marketplace, they are dwarfed by the *Assembléia de Deus* (Assembly of God) (12.3 million),

Congregação Cristã (Christian Congregation) (2.3 million), the *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* (Universal Church of the Kingdom of God) (1.9 million), and *Evangelho Quadrangular* (Church of the Foursquare Gospel) (1.8 million). The section of this chapter below will focus exclusively on the historical background and belief systems of Pentecostalism, with special attention given to the IURD and AD, the denominations whose members served as the focus for this research.

Pentecostalism is well-known for its literal reading of scripture, strict prohibitions against alcohol and tobacco use, and the incorporation of Apostolic spiritual gifts during worship (Robbins 2004).[2] These spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit, described in Chapter 2 of Acts, take the form of glossolalia (speaking in tongues), prophecy, interpretation (of tongues or prophecies), spiritual healing, and exorcisms. The public signaling or expression of these gifts marks an acolyte's place within the congregation and solidifies his/her *crente* identity in relation to others. As a result, these behaviors (e.g., glossolalia, literal interpretation of the bible), badges (i.e., adornments, such as dress codes), and bans (e.g., dietary and behavioral taboos), constitute *costly* signaling that identify devoted, conforming, and contributing members of the group (Bulbulia and Sosis 2011; Sosis 2006). Being that many Pentecostal denominations rely on individual members to produce the religious goods (e.g., lay leadership positions, volunteers, choir and orchestra members) consumed by the congregation, it is to the group's advantage to identify and discourage free-riders as well as increase the perceived value of their faith by making participation more costly and membership more exclusive (Cronk 2005; Festinger 1957; Mauss

[2] Apostolic Christianity focuses on the practices and teaching of the Apostles. In particular, it gives emphasis to the charismatic gifts of the Spirit, particularly glossolalia, that have their origin in the Apostolic acts described in the Bible.

1994). The ideal characteristics and frequencies of these signals, however, vary by denomination and the faith's integration with larger society (Mauss 1994).

Conversion to the Pentecostal faith usually involves three steps (see Chesnut 1997). The first step is to publically accept Christ into one's heart. This is often done at the closing of church services, when neophytes and backsliders (those who have fallen away from the church) are called up to the front to publically declare their intentions. Following this and special Sunday school classes, one is baptized by immersion in water. The final step of conversion, and one that is continuously sought by converts and long-time members alike, is baptism in the Spirit. In this type of baptism available only to the faithful, the Holy Spirit is said to "fill the body," which results in glossolalia, prophecy, miraculous healing, or other manifestations of the Spirit. In my own field work, both AD and IURD members followed the same pathway to become integrated within the community, as well as to be "saved."

Besides their doctrinal emphasis, Brazilian Pentecostals differentiate themselves from other religious believers through their behaviors. *Crentes* emphasize an essentialized religious identity (compared to Brazilian's tendency for religious pluralism), and a conscious separation from important secular cultural institutions such as *Carnaval*, *samba* (and dancing in general), *futebol*, and [women's] fashion. The means and motivations by which Pentecostals form their evangelical identity in relation to secular models will be more fully explored in later chapters. The present discussion will instead focus on the diverse ways by which Pentecostalism both reproduces the Brazilian religious tendencies for pluralism, syncretism, and an emphasis on healing, while simultaneously enforcing an essential identity that is positioned at odds with key modes of *Brasileiridade* or "Brazilian-ness."

The growth of Pentecostalism in Brazil is chronicled through three general stages or waves (Freston 1995). Between 1910 and 1950, the initial wave of expansion occurred when Brazil became one of the first locations for Pentecostal charismatic Christianity after the movement was founded on Azusa Street in Los Angeles, California. First wave congregations, including the *Assembléia de Deus* (AD) and *Congregação Cristã*, are noted for their sectarianism, ideological self-distancing from worldly and secular influences, and an emphasis upon the Pentecostal gift of tongues. The second wave of Pentecostalism coincided with Brazilian urban development between 1950 and 1970. Second wave churches, such as the E*vangelho Quadrangular*, are noted for introducing tent revivals to Brazil that focused on divine healing crusades, as well as pioneering the use of mass media for evangelism (Chesnut 1997). Finally, third-wave Pentecostalism, also called neo-Pentecostalism, was developed in the 1980s and was shaped by concurrent modernization and economic processes in Brazil. Third wave churches, such as the *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* (IURD), are known for their Health and Wealth gospel that emphasizes the acceptance of worldly blessings (e.g., material prosperity and health) in exchange for obedience and faith. These Pentecostals also emphasize the Spiritual gift of exorcism over the demonic forces that are viewed as the cause of all illness and suffering. Generally, the first and second wave congregations are considered more traditional and conservative than third wave denominations, who enforce few behavioral taboos or the institutional monitoring of members (Birman and Lehmann 2005; Chesnut 1997; Freston 1995; Oro 2004).

History of the *Assembléia de Deus* in Brazil

In 1984, when David Stoll (1990) was compiling his research for his seminal volume, *Is Latin America Turning Protestant*, the Assemblies of God, based in Springfield, Missouri,

claimed nearly 13 million members worldwide in its network of affiliated Pentecostal churches. Today, there are that many members in Brazil, which makes it the most Catholic country in the world and the country with the most *Assembléia* members (Assemblies of God 2012; IBGE 2010; Sites 2012). The AD's success in Brazil is reified in their omnipresent churches—a prominent feature in nearly every Brazilian neighborhood. And this past year, the *Assembléia de Deus* celebrated its centennial in Brazil, marking them as a national institution. Remarkably, this brand of Pentecostalism, which dominates Brazil's religious marketplace, traces its roots to very simple beginnings with two Swedish missionaries.

In the opening years of the 20th century, Daniel Berg and Gunnar Vingren were serving at a Pentecostal revival church in South Bend, Indiana and received a revelation during a prayer-meeting. This revelation instructed them to spread a new form of worship, the Pentecostal awakening, to a place called "Pará". Unsure of where Pará was located, Berg and Vingren visited a local library and discovered that it was a city located in the Northeastern Brazilian state of Belém. Over the next several years, the duo saved money for third-class tickets on a steam freighter from New York to Brazil. The Swedes arrived in Pará, Belém on November 19, 1910, with no Portuguese language training and few material possessions. Fortuitously, they encountered a Methodist minister who directed them to an English-speaking Baptist preacher, who agreed to temporarily house the two Swedes. Over the next several months, the two participated in Baptist worship and intensive language training. At some point, they began to lead unofficial prayer meetings that were temporarily tolerated by the Baptist minister--at least until the Swedes Pentecostal charismatic leanings were revealed (Chesnut 1997; Stoll 1990).

Writing in his journal, Gunnar Vingren (1991:36) describes the impetus for the creation of the *Assembléia de Deus* in Brazil:

> During that week we had prayer meetings every night in a sister's home who had an incurable illness on her lips. We felt sad. We were saddened because she could not attend services at church. The first thing I did was to ask her if she believed that Jesus could cure her. She said yes. So we told her to get rid of all the medicine she was taking. We prayed for her, and the Lord Jesus healed her completely. At the ensuing prayer meetings she began to pray for baptism in the Holy Spirit. On Thursday, after the service, she continued praying at home…And at one o'clock in the morning, sister Celina began to speak in new tongues and spoke for two hours. (in Chesnut 1997: 27)

After several prayer meetings, many more Baptists began to speak in tongues, despite the Baptist theology to the contrary. The Swedish missionaries were soon excommunicated along with 18 followers. Undaunted, Vigren and Berg immediately founded a new church in 1911 which they called *Missão de Fé Apostólica*. Seven years later the name was changed to *Assembléia de Deus*.

Despite the title, the *Assembléia de Deus* in Brazil has been largely independent of the North American organization of the same name. And *Assembliéia* members are quick to remind that the Brazilian church developed largely independently from North American oversight. According to acolytes, while the Brazilians looked toward the North Americans for doctrinal and teaching advice, they remained a separate entity. As Pentecostal historian Walter Hollenweger (1972:82) states, "In the mission statistics of the North American Assemblies of God, the *Assembléia de Deus* figure as their mission church. In contrast, the Brazilian Pentecostals regard themselves as an independent church." If anything, the AD was under the auspices of Swedish pastor, Lewi Pethrus, and the Scandinavian Pentecostal movement, both of whom provided early monetary and missionary support to Vigren and Berg. Outside assistance was crucial to the early survival of the Brazilian *Assembléia* church. During these nascent years, the young church struggled, gaining only 13 new members its first year (Chesnut 1997). In its second year, the church managed 190 new converts; however, the majority of these new members came from the bottom of Brazil's social hierarchy and a lack of funds became a perennial issue for the AD. As

such, the congregation was often reliant on door-to-door bible sales for the rent on their church building.

Despite these early difficulties, the church grew quickly and steadily. David Stoll (1990) identifies several characteristics of the AD that allow it to survive and to flourish. First, the church was incredibly successful among rural Brazilians in the Northeast. The appeal of Pentecostalism to these Brazilians varies, but the region has a long history of messianic movements and charismatic religious leadership that has captured the hearts and minds of the poor and underprivileged. Additionally, the northeast of Brazil has historically been under-industrialized – immigrants from rural areas flooded urban centers as the consolidation of land holdings, fluctuating cash-crop prices, and environmental conditions led people in search of stable and secure livelihoods. The *Assembléia de Deus* capitalized on these processes by setting up chapels along migration routes, preaching a gospel that provided cures from common "pathogens of poverty," and by promoting an ascetic lifestyle that facilitated immediate results (Chesnut 1997). On this point, Stoll (1990:108) writes:

> (T)he Assemblies learned to fish in the streams of rural-urban migration across Brazil. After starting churches in the towns, it extended them into the surrounding region and harvested bountifully from the migratory flow. Poor people felt at home in the informal, rhythmic services. When they went to strange cities, sister churches provided fictive kin and served as a referral agency. Assisted by a strict moral code and fervent exhortations to improve oneself, many poor members and their children were able to move upward in the social structure.

In addition to these socioeconomic factors, the church became particularly popular because it was composed largely of a lay clergy that expected the participation and evangelization of all of its members. The participatory aspect of Pentecostalism (as compared to Catholicism) was an effective recruitment tool. Lay leadership positions, from Sunday school teacher and band/choir leader, to *obreiros* (volunteer support staff) and pastors, provided status in an alternative social

structure (compared to the low status that many members held in society), and the basic skills that were necessary for urban employment. Finally, the independence of Brazil's *Assembléia de Deus* enabled the church to develop on its own terms. Due to weak support from Scandinavia (who granted the church full autonomy in 1932) and limited oversight from North American churches, the Brazilian *Assembléia* had to develop its own strategies and characteristics to survive, flourish, and be applicable to the Brazilians whom they wished to serve. According to Stoll (1990:109), "without much in the way of subsidy from the United States, Brazilian pastors were forced to find enough believers to support themselves. That made them alert to responsive areas and led to considerable emphasis on the duty of believers to tithe." Moreover, the Apostolic faith's "strict moral code and fervent exhortations" was successful at increasing its members' status and redirecting their economic/consumer energy from the *rua* back into the *casa*, and at ensuring that 10 percent of *crentes'* incomes were correctly distributed into the Lord's coffers.

Though successful, the *Assembléia de Deus* of Brazil has suffered from internal discord and conflict. While the church's loose episcopal polity structure does allow for substantial congressional variation (e.g., manifestations of the Holy Spirit, leadership positions for women, etc.), it also permits these differences to become institutionalized to a degree that at times results in schisms and fracturing. The General Convention of the Assemblies of God of Brazil (CGADB) is the largest group of churches who identify as AD; they were formed in 1930 as part of the official transfer of power from Swedish to autonomous Brazilian leadership. Between 1930 and the late 1980s, this group remained the *de facto* AD organization. In 1989, a *ministério* (i.e., diocese) located in Rio de Janeiro cited a leadership schism of pastors and broke with the convention, forming the *Assembléias de Deus Ministério Madureira*. Later, another

ministério in Rio de Janeiro became unhappy with church tenets (prohibitions on drinking, dancing) that they believed had no doctrinal basis and formed the *Assembléia de Deus Betesda*. Depending on local circumstances, these brands of the AD may be antagonistic towards one another and fight for converts from opposing street corners (e.g., Stoll 1990:110), or they may cooperate in ecumenical brotherhood. In his explanation about this complex relationship, the head pastor of the Ribeirão Preto congregation explained to me: "I have people ask me all the time, what is the difference between the types of *Assembléia*? *Medureira, Missão, Betesda*? They are all the same. It's just names for different neighborhoods. We have some different traditions, customs. But so do different congregations within *Missão*. We are all brothers and sisters, united by Christ."

AD Field Site

The main *Assembléia de Deus* building in Ribeirão Preto, known to members as *Templo Sede* (a play on words that means both "headquarters" and "thirst," as in, "thirst for the Holy Spirit"), is located not far from the main bus terminal. Situated in the solidly middle-class neighborhood of *Vila Tibério,* the church stands out among the cobble-stone streets, corner stores selling snacks and soft drinks, and modest, single family houses that line the maze-like networks of streets. The *Assembléia* church building is the largest in the area, and its stucco golden chalice that decorates all three stories of the building can be seen from blocks around, especially when it lights up the night by the church's bluish-purple lighting. Despite the neighborhood's proximity to the bus station, and the discount shopping district immediately surrounding it, *Vila Tibério* remains a safe place to live and raise families, and church members will drive, ride, and walk from around the city to attend the thrice weekly evening meetings.

Figure 3.1: *Assembléia de Deus*, Ribeirão Preto. Source: Fernando Braga 2010

While each neighborhood in Ribeirão Preto has small *Assembléia* churches that are capable of holding roughly 100 parishioners, *Templo Sede* is the main (*missão* tradition) building and has a capacity that comfortably exceeds 500. The church is often filled to capacity during important holidays (e.g., Easter and Christmas), monthly *Santa Ceias* (Lord's supper, similar to communion or sacrament), or quarterly baptisms. Typically, a dozen or so male pastors sit on a stage at the front of the sanctuary and they face the congregation. Many of these pastors are in unpaid positions, finding service as a calling rather than a profession (some of the pastors do find employment in business, medicine, teaching, and psychiatry). A 50-person orchestra, comprised

of a complete brass section, woodwinds such as flutes and saxophones, and a plethora of string instruments that include several guitarists, cellists, and a dozen violinists, flanks the pews to the left. The orchestra provides nearly all of the music despite the numerous and complex hymns and the youth of many of the musicians (the average age is about 21). To the right of the pews sit members of the choirs. The main choir consists of men and women of all ages. There is additionally a young women's choir that is made up of members who are less than 30 years of age, as well as teenager, and children's choirs that are made up of even younger *crentes*.

Members often arrive in families and groups of friends or neighbors, greeting one another with "*O Paz do Senhor*! (The Lord's peace)" Few arrive on time, as is typical in Brazil, and they trickle in for the first half hour after the official start of the meeting. For this reason, the first 30 minutes of any 90 minute service is almost exclusively hymns, and songs performed by the various choir groups. Men, dressed in suits and collared shirts, and woman, in high heels and fashionable dresses—but no jewelry (including earrings), kneel at the pew in personal prayer before taking their seat. Services fully begin when the elderly head pastor, Jorge Santana, leads the congregation in an opening prayer. Typically, a worship service consists of a pastor reading a passage of the bible while the congregation follows along; a series of hymns sung by the entire congregation, the choir, or individuals; a short period for placing tithes and donations in sacks carried by ushers; a reading of specific prayer requests which is immediately followed by an invocation; a sermon given by one of the pastors; a call to Christ during which members publically accept Jesus as their Savior; and the end with a closing prayer. After any *culto* (church service), members hang around the church entrance, conversing with one another. Pastors can be seen joking with young band members, women catch up on the latest gossip, and people make plans to meet up with one another later in the week.

There is a decidedly familial atmosphere in this congregation and within its neighborhood satellite missions. Neophytes and visitors are quickly identified by door greeters and ushers and are welcomed by name in front of the entire congregation. Individuals are encouraged to participate within the church—as *obreiros*, or members of the choir and band—thereby producing some of the very religious goods that they consume as well. Members go out of their way to help one another. Prayer requests are read aloud, allowing for the congregation to be aware of hardships within the community, and to come to a member's aid if possible. For example, a group of eight young *crentes*, all in their 20s, decided on their own (as they did not know one another well prior to this decision) to learn Brazilian sign language so that they could serve as interpreters for the small but growing deaf membership within the church. In sum, the *Assembléia* of Ribeirão Preto functions as a fictive familial unit, in which individuals come together in worship and devotion, and work together to improve their religious experiences and the quality of each other's lives.

Figure 3.2: AD congregation

Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus

No Pentecostal congregation embodies the third-wave more so than *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* (IURD). In fact, other than the *Assembléia de Deus*, no other Pentecostal church

is as well-known throughout Brazil as the *Universal* church. Unlike other Pentecostal denominations, the IURD does not eschew worldly and secular participation. Its fame (or infamy) is due in no small part to its media empire that reaches all strata of the Brazilian public (Birman and Lehmann 2005; Freston 1995). This public presence strongly extends into politics when the church instructs acolytes how to vote and elects its members to public office. Such political involvement is a divergence from the historically limited formal political presence of Protestants in Brazil (Ireland 1991; Stoll 1990). Doctrinally, the *Universal* church focuses on Prosperity Theology and the attribution of demonic spiritual forces (often recognized as *Candomblé* and *Umbanda* spirits) in illness and malady. Achieving health and financial prosperity are the central focus of the church, in addition to the liberation (or exorcism) of acolytes from the demonic causes of their illnesses and misfortunes.

Founded in 1977 by former state lottery employee Edir Macedo, the IURD was once one of the fastest growing churches in Brazil. This growth has stalled, with the church actually losing a quarter of a million members between the 2000 and 2010 censuses. The decline is largely attributed to the rise of "generic evangélicos"—nominal *crentes* who may not feel alliance to any one church. The IURD retains, however, a large public profile and an international presence as the only Brazilian church exported to over 180 countries on 6 continents. Since the church was formed relatively recently, members and church leaders are made up almost exclusively of converts. The IURD combines a syncretic combination of faith—while it is based on Apostalic Pentecostal beliefs and places emphasis upon the Holy Spirit personage of the Trinity, it also liberally incorporates Jewish symbols such as menorahs, the Star of David, the Temple of Solomon, mezuzahs, and yarmulkes to provide a historical framework for a nascent religion. Throughout its ceremonies, the IURD similarly includes Afro-Brazilian talismans, such as fire,

salt, crystals, keys, and cloth in ritualized invocations, and Catholic-style exorcisms of Afro-Brazilian and Spiritualist entities that are thought to be minions of Satan. According to one pastor, this amalgamation of practices and symbols helps the IURD represent "the only church that fully realizes all of God's works and blessings," and is unapologetic about the attacks and accusations against other Brazilian faiths, including Protestant competitors: "It's a war (for souls)… War isn't pretty or gentle." The use of various religious symbols and discourse does appeal to church members however. It allows members from diverse religious backgrounds to establish a cognitive foothold within the IURD faith by not requiring them to fully relinquish prior held religious discourse. This does not necessarily mean, however, a continued allegiance to former religious beliefs. Rather, priorly held religious models are not thrown away but are rather assimilated into the authorized cultural models of the church—either as Divine sanction or demonic adultery. Therefore, the *Universal* church simply demands an upending of worldviews that place everything IURD within the space of God, and everything else as devil-worship and paganism (Garrad-Burnett 2007).

Most IURD churches in Brazil are mega-churches insofar as members worship several thousand at a time (Thumma 1996). Meetings take place in large halls and auditoriums, or in multi-million dollar facilities that include television cameras, internet conference rooms, and helicopter pads. The local leadership consists of paid charismatic professionals, often a head pastor and half a dozen lower pastors, who exist within a strict hierarchal relationship with Bishop Macedo. On average, the IURD holds four to five meeting per day, seven days a week. Each day has a specific focus: Monday meetings focus on prosperity; Friday meetings focus on liberation from vices; Saturday congregations are devoted toward addressing problems of the heart. The acolyte thus has a range of worship choices, depending on his/her needs. As a result,

there is generally little disciplinary oversight of individual members, and little familiarity of the larger church community. Likewise, there is limited accounting of any individual's "standing" within the church. The IURD does not incorporate rigid proscriptions against alcohol consumption or the use of cosmetics and fashionable dress (as compared to other Pentecostal churches), rather it defers to the individual to choose for him/herself (Chesnut 1997). In sum, the IURD's use of mass-media, its lax social regulations, and its array of worship times and themes have been attractive to lower and middle-class acolytes who may have been "turned off by traditional (read Catholic) religion," who want to make religion work *for them*, and who may not want to "retreat from the world" (Thumma 1996).

Figure 3.3: IURD drive through blessings in São Paulo. Source: Luciana Christante 2010

Pastors and members alike repeatedly charge one another to, in their words, "make their faith work for them." The IURD seeks to make worship convenient and applicable in the lives of its members through multiple meetings per day, local radio and television broadcasts of nightly sermons, and drive-through blessings. In an effort to attract potential converts, the church offers

a sliding scale of involvement. Little is requested from individual members other than a 10 percent tithe. Active members are encouraged to attend frequently, even daily, and to exercise their faith through "sacrifices"—additional monetary contribution above and beyond tithe. Those who wish to practice their faith in other ways or more intensively can become *obreiros* (church volunteers), participate in evangelizing groups, or they can join the enthusiastic *Força Jovem* (Youth Force), a youth group that engages IURD members in worship, fellowship, and play. These avenues of participation, however, are undertaken by only a small fraction of the overall congregation. Consequently, most evangelizing takes place on the steps of the church rather than in urban neighborhoods as they attempt to bolster attendance of sparsely attended days (e.g., Saturdays) and membership in the faith's auxiliary groups.

The lack of institutionalized participation by many members leads to a low degree of individual investment in the community, and as a result, the church suffers from a high number of backsliders and a high rate of member turn-over (and may play a part in the church's declining membership). It is not uncommon for members to suddenly disappear and to return months later or never again. An additional complication is the pastors. IURD pastors are often young men without families since the church hierarchy regularly rotates a head-pastor in and out of a city every year. As a result, pastors are held at a distance from their congregation, and they neither have the time nor familial relations to make many permanent connections. Within the context of varied worship times, a large membership composed of both core and peripheral members, and rotating leaders, it is not necessarily surprising that social networks, while present, are fragmented and inchoate. Unlike at the AD, IURD members quickly leave after services. There are often empty seats that serve as buffers between worshipers. As one elderly woman explained

to me, “I don’t come here to socialize. I am here to practice my faith, to feel the Spirit. I don’t need anyone else here for that, it’s between me and God.”

According to members, the biggest draw of the church is the IURD’s claim to change lives. As one member puts it, “other churches talk about the Bible. But they don’t live it. They forget that the Bible is full of examples of Jesus performing miracles. The (IURD) church is the only one who still performs the miracles of the Bible.” This “health and wealth gospel” promises blessings of well-being and financial security to the faithful. The aforementioned specialty meetings—for prosperity, liberation, and love—are focused on setting one’s life and soul in a position to receive blessings and to radically improve a particular life deficiency. Indeed, through their “prosperity theology,” the IURD arguably breaks away from traditional Christian theology which “gives positive value to suffering or charismatic status to poverty" (Martin 1995:115). Rather, the founder and leader of the church, Bispo Macedo (Lopes 1990:5) states: "Jesus was never poor, He said "I am the Lord of Lords and King of Kings." Accordingly, the IURD elevates material and financial wealth to the center piece of their faith, and as a primary motivation among acolytes.

In order to accomplish such wealth, the church promotes a combination of self-help and positive affirmation. Pastors regularly warn about anti-social behaviors, emotional decision making, and financial consequences of drug-use, prostitution, and alcohol. They lecture members on the necessity of optimism, self-esteem, and conviction, and they caution against self-doubts and negative emotions which are propagated by Satan and block ambitions, stymie life goals, and prevent prosperity. IURD pastors preach that while God can provide the means, individuals are responsible for taking action to invoke change in their lives. In other words, instead of passively waiting for divine intervention, IURDians regularly talk about “*doing* their faith” as a means of

actualizing their prayers. The primary means of "doing" faith is through a sacrifice. The church teaches that a monetary sacrifice, in addition to a 10 percent tithe, is necessary to actualize blessings and miracles from God. These sacrifices, which acolytes view as a covenant with God dating back to Abraham, are often given in conjunction with some other form of ritual. For example, money may be placed in a consecrated personal sack or box, in an envelope with written appeals for blessings, or it may be deposited with an *obreiro* after walking through a sanctified gate-way or portal. The final step to fully realizing the church's health and wealth gospel is through the liberation of demons. Demons are viewed as the ultimate cause of all suffering, including injury, poverty, or illness—and they are constantly infesting the bodies of all members. Liberation meetings, typically held on Fridays, serve to exorcise, or "liberate" members from the subtle and overt influence of the devil. Since all members—regardless of their level of involvement or faith—are at risk, Fridays are among the most important and well attended worship sessions. These 'Liberation Meetings' are a cacophonous event, filled with singing, praying, and the occasional screams of the possessed and the other-worldly growls of their possessors. Use of music, sound, and repetitive prayers, in addition to the physical strain of standing and arm-raising make these meetings an environment ripe for altered states of consciousness.[3] These states range from low-level dissociation to possession-trance. Such

[3] Dissociative states may be activated by stressors. Under normal functioning, the parasympathetic nervous system is cross-regulated by sympathetic arousal. That is, one system is balanced by the response of the other. However, under intense stimulation of the sympathetic nervous system, the balanced response of the autonomic nervous system can break down, leading to a state of parasympathetic dominance (Winkelman 1986:177). Acute stress and trauma are well-known triggers of altered states, such as in post-traumatic stress disorder. Other stress states, including self-induced stress and "exposure to excessive or extremely low levels of stimulation" also precipitate dissociative states (Lynn 2005:27). For example, rhythmic auditory or visual stimuli, not unlike some of the cacophonous IURD worship sessions, can induce a drive state, wherein the stimulus literally imposes an electrical synchronization on an individual's brain (Winkelman 1986). Thus, rituals and behaviors that produce an acute

religious services serve to reify demonic dangers, and to highlight the power of God's will to vanquish evil and His ability to heal the sick and raise up the poor. (This combination of discourse and ritual is more fully discussed in the Chapter 4.) Liberation meetings instill within IURD members a sense that while the danger of demons is everywhere, they have an ally in Christ, and that together, they can vanquish evil and overcome life's trials and tribulations. This empowered identity is particularly appealing to Brazil's poor and those who feel marginalized within the social system and excluded from opportunities of economic advancement.

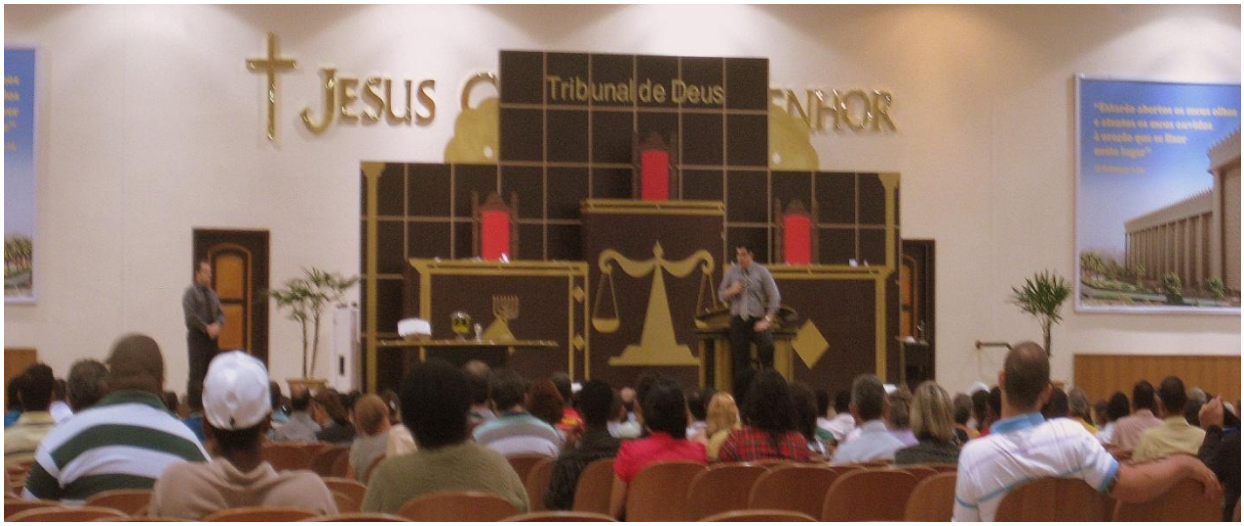

Figure 3.4: IURD prosperity meeting, God's court issuing out economic and social justice

Not all of Brazil is fond of the IURD church, however, and it is regularly the focus of media scrutiny (such as *Globo* news) and government investigations. Brazil and several European countries have investigated the church for using deceptive and manipulative tactics to extort money and goods from acolytes with promises of divine cures and opulent wealth, or through threats of tragedy and damnation. Church officials are regularly charged with money

activation of the sympathetic nervous system can be overcompensated by a hyper-parasympathetic response, leading to dissociative experiences. These states may lead to increased physical and psychological well-being by blunting chronic sympathetic arousal (Winkelman 1986).

laundering and embezzlement - including the leader Edir Macedo. None of these charges have held up in courts. The church and its members, though, do not eschew this negative attention. Rather, they seem to relish it. In the IURD view, this "war of persecution" is evidence of Satan's attempts to stop the church from doing "God's work." The attention has fed into an IURD "chosen" identity as members seek to engage in daily battles against the forces of evil.

The IURD Field Site

On any given night, a steady stream of Brazilians can be found climbing the marble steps into the large IURD church, *Templo Cenáculo* ("Upper-Room," a name which describes both its constructional layout and its proximity to God). The church is truly a cross section of Brazil. Business men in suits stand next to illiterate street cleaners from the *favela*. A young woman who wears the nursing garb of her daily job chats with a much older woman, whose clothes and weathered face reflect a much different and harsher lifestyle. The downstairs parking area mirrors this cross section of the city's inhabitants, showing Mercedes parked next to VW beetles, next to legions of cheap motorcycles. Entering the worship hall, one's gaze is immediately drawn toward the large velvet colored stage and the words "*Jesus Cristo é o Senhor*" (Jesus Christ is the Lord) that are emblazoned above in three foot tall gold letters. To the left of the stage is the keyboardist and lead musician, who also happens to be a pastor, playing hymns as people take their seats. To the right of the stage is a 12 foot tall Star of David, with lights embedded in the sides, large enough for three people to pass through abreast (this structure is constantly replaced with other oversized "gateways," such as staircases, or a walkway flanked by 10 foot crooks). It is impossible not to notice that the three thousand available seats are already filled by people who match every one of the dozen or so skin color classifications commonly used in Brazil. This

is hardly unusual, as Monday prosperity meetings are the most heavily attended *cultos* that the IURD offers.

There are about a dozen pastors serving the Ribeirão Preto IURD. The head pastor, known as Pastor Carlos, is young and radiates a charisma that is both authoritative and loving. As this religious shepherd prepares to address his flock, he jumps up on the main stage and begins with an upbeat hymn that is accompanied by the keyboardist and the combined voices of the congregation. The song, which is about casting out demons, does not come to an end before the pastor delves into an opening prayer. While standing, members of the congregation hold their arms and hands out above their heads, a common practice among Evangelical groups that signifies adoration and willingness to surrender and be filled by the Holy Spirit. Concurrently, the pastor and the three thousand acolytes say their own prayers, often repeating simple mantras: "Glory to God, fill me with the Spirit, Glory to Jesus, I put myself in Your hands." The combined noise of thousands of people simultaneously speaking, the pastor praying over the loudspeaker, and the musical accompaniment, creates a cacophonous soundscape. The electricity in the room is palpable, and one cannot help feel a connection to a large presence and unity during these moments.

At this point, the pastor begins his sermon on prosperity, the topic on all Monday evenings. The sermon proceeds through several typical stages. The Pastor first affirms that God wants his followers to be strong and healthy, not only spiritually and physically, but financially as well. Utilizing economic language such as "investments" and "returns," the pastor emphasizes that "for God to invest in your economic well-being, you first have to invest in Him." Afterwards, "God will return double, triple, or even quadruple your sacrifice." The pastor also mentions tithes, specifically dictating that congregants must donate not just ten percent of their

incomes, but rather the *first* ten percent of their incomes. The difference is that the primary position of God in one's life is acknowledged, and that other monetary obligations must be made with this in mind. At this point in the service, the pastor will usually elicit testimonies of prosperity blessings received. During this meeting, a middle-aged woman named Michelle stood and addressed the congregation:

> I was making only R$5 (~$2.50) a week as a seamstress, with 2 children to support. I had debt over R$50,000. Thanks to the *Fogueira Santa* (blessing of the Holy Spirit), my life has changed, I now own my own business, I have 4 cars, my marriage is beautiful, and I no longer have depression. God transformed my life.

Such dramatic testimonies are highly sought after during meetings and are reproduced in the newspaper, periodicals, and websites of the church. Sometimes the testimonies are less dramatic, as in the case of David, who joyously shared his own answered prayer for prosperity:

> God answered my prayers last week. I finally found a new job! While I'm not making as much money as my old job in construction, it's easier work and more room for advancement…My new job? I'm working at the athletic club cleaning the pool, getting people towels, things like that.

After providing evidence of the power of God to transform the financial lives of the faithful, the pastor asks individuals to publically make a sacrifice. Beginning with a call for sacrifices over R$500 and then decreasing to R$200, 100, 50, and so on, the pastor invites people to come to the front of the stage, place the monetary sacrifice onto an open bible, and then to collect a "gift" from one of the dozen member-volunteers flanking the stage (see Medeiros 2005; Swatowski 2007). The gift at this meeting is a book entitled, "*Fogueira Santa: Os mistérios do sobrenatural*," (Holy Fire: The Supernatural Mysteries) which documents extreme examples of prosperity blessings. At other meetings, gifts include copies of church magazines or newspapers, and items that aid in the daily practice of faith, such as cloth wallets aimed to increase financial prosperity or pens that elevate one's ability to negotiate contracts, even crystals that heal.

After the call for sacrifices, the pastor brings out a giant Star of David and directs the congregants to step through the star and to leave pieces of paper inscribed with specific requests for blessings at the foot of the Star-portal. While the 3,000 people line up for this task, the pastor once again leads a hymn that bounces back and forth between prayer and song. As with the other prayer-song worship event, it is a raucous auditory experience. This time, however, there is more emotion, as many mantras have changed from adoration to pleas for help: “Help me God, answer my prayers, bring the Holy Spirit to help me, put the power in my hand.” As the individuals walk through the star, many hold up material items that they want blessed, including wallets, purses, cell-phones, account ledgers, and text-books. The pastor and assistants are happy to oblige, smearing a bit of holy oil on individuals and their objects as they pass through the star.

Figure 3.5: Star of David gateway

As the mass of bodies slowly file through the star and back to their seats, the members pray individually with their arms raised while the pastor prays over the loudspeaker. Despite spending an hour and a half on their feet with their arms raised above their heads, few parishioners—including some very feeble men and women—show any sign of discomfort or

physical exhaustion. The prayers and meeting eventually end when the pastor reminds the congregation about future meeting times and bids everyone a "*boa noite*" (good night). As the mass of people slowly head for the doors, there is an odd silence in the building. Some people remain to speak with one another, but the room seems silent compared to the last hour and a half of prayer. People have a largely peaceful look on their faces. Rejuvenated, the congregation disperses into the night, each person making his/her way back to the desperate geographic and social locations of daily life.

Pentecostal Gender Models

In the previous chapter, the secular gendered roles ascribed to men and women, known as *machismo* and *marianismo,* respectively, were discussed in terms of how they intersect with race, class, and poverty. In much the same way, Pentecostals seek an entrenchment from secular society by avoiding *Carnaval, samba*, and drink, so do they eschew many of the central characteristics of normalized Brazilian gender. This cultural separation equates to a dramatic dissolution of former identities, as members reinterpret their former and future selves through their new *crente* paradigm. For instance, the esteem given to female *crentes* receiving gifts of the Spirit, combined with a critical stance of secular male gender roles (i.e., *machismo*), has challenged and in some ways, subverted traditional Brazilian conceptions of gender (Chesnut 1997). That is not to say, however, that Pentecostals take a liberal view of gender roles. In fact, they hold a conservative view of women's place in relation to men, which reproduces the patriarchal system that subjugates and subordinates women and children worldwide. In particular, Pentecostals follow the discourse of the Apostle Paul, which expounds that women are divinely ordained to serve their husbands and bear their children. Despite the egalitarian

nature of the Spirit conferring the gifts of the Pentecost to both men and women, men hold most of the official positions of authority within Pentecostal denominations.

Pentecostal male roles are significantly more separated from dominant societal norms than are those of women. *Evangélico* males must eschew all types of drinking, gambling, extra- and pre-marital affairs, domestic violence, and drugs. As such, the male spheres shift from the *ruas* and *barzinhos* to the female space of the *casa*. Similarly, male prestige shifts from public conquests to domestic and religious esteem. Pentecostal men achieve status, not from material consumption and female conquest, but through familial success and gifts of the Spirit (Smilde 2007). *Evangélico* women, while forbidden to wear revealing and "popular" fashions, are liberated from isolation in their *casas*, and have access to social networks, spiritual gifts/powers, and semi-leadership positions within the Pentecostal community. As Birman (2007) and Chesnut (1997) argue, this sectarian stance not only challenges the dominant gender paradigm of Brazilian culture, but breaks some of the crippling pathogens (e.g., alcoholism, domestic violence) of poverty.

Brusco (1995) argues that this conservative Pentecostal view of gender does not necessarily change women's roles, but rather elevates the status of the domestic, making it a salutogenic sphere worthy of male participation (see also Mariz and Machado 1997). As such, the male role is domesticated or feminized, resulting in a reorientation of focus and resource investments from the *ruas* back into the *casas*. The alignment of male and female aspirations toward the household diminishes the space available for behaviors related to the vices and violence (e.g., alcoholism, extra-marital affairs, domestic violence) and provides opportunities for domestic and conjugal cooperation (Brusco 1995; Drogus 1997). It is therefore unsurprising that Brazilian women convert to Pentecostalism, in part to seek healing from the pathogens of

poverty and *machismo*, while at the same time making efforts to save and convert their husbands (Burdick 1990; Gill 1990).

Finally, it is important to acknowledge the internal variation of gender role proscriptions among Pentecostal denominations. Unlike first and second wave churches, third wave Pentecostals (or Neo-Pentecostals), which were established in the 1970s and 1980s, do not seek a definitive rupture from secular society; as such, they do not have rigid gender roles that create an oppositional identity. For instance, the *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* suggests modes of behaviors rather than enforcing rigid gender-role proscriptions on alcohol consumption or the use of cosmetics and fashionable dress (Chesnut 1997). This is in large part due to the middle-class acolytes that the IURD seeks out. Rather than offering them an *alternative* model for identity and success, third-wave denominations attract individuals who are invested in the status quo, but who desire a greater (divine) control over their secular successes and status.

Chapter Summary

Brazil has a fecund religious market that draws from diverse doctrines that derive from Abrahamanic, indigenous, and spiritualist faiths and yet are all rooted in therapeutic, pneumatic traditions. Brazilians have clamored for a religious market that promises not only salvation, but perhaps more importantly, healing. Curing afflictions of this earthly state in the form of physical distress of illness or the psychological distress of poverty is necessary for Brazilians to find satisfaction through their faith. This may be in part because of a weak biomedical presence in Brazil until well into the 20th century. Many Brazilians lack easy access to hospitals and clinics, not to mention services for the treatment of psychological disorders. Religion has historically filled this void and continues to do so today (Hess 1987).

Religious tolerance in Brazil can vary— all of the non-Catholic faiths have faced persecution from the government at different times and to varying degrees. Pentecostal churches have been the subject of governmental inquiry and Spiritualist churches have been required to register with the local police. Nonetheless, Brazilians uphold a greater degree of religious open-mindedness than in many other Latin American countries. An innate quality of modern Brazilian identity derives from a unique ability to take disparate cultural institutions and combine them in a way that creates a fluid "*caminho do meio.*" Religious syncretism and pluralism are the standard and their effects can be seen in both the views and attitudes of the faithful as well as in the religious institutions where citizens worship.

Despite a longstanding historical presence in Brazil, *evangélicos* still represent an enigma within the religious landscape. Their meteoric growth during the closing decades of the 20th century has continued unabated into the 21st, and promises to change the character of the marketplace. How this will be done and its effects upon the marketplace are unclear. Pentecostalism, the largest of the evangelical faiths, is benefiting from theology that centers on a direct, individual communion with divine forces to achieve earthly (and eternal) blessings. Pentecostals also bring an essentialized identity that looks down upon and often forbids participation in other religious traditions. Within the churches such as the IURD, this identity is amplified by teachings that assert that Catholicism and its exaltation of Saints is polytheistic, and that Spiritualist faiths are devil-worship.

The Pentecostal stance against other religious traditions isolates the religious movement from others within Brazil. Sermons and teachings encourage acolytes to separate themselves from more "worldly" affairs, traditions, and demands. The church thus purposely positions itself outside of and in direct competition with the secular standards and cultural practices of the

dominant Brazilian social milieu. As the above discussion of the AD and IURD religious communities demonstrates, Pentecostal churches incorporate a shared theology, but differ in how they practice their faith, and in the religious goods that they derive from ritual and worship. The degree to which these churches differ will be considered in this research. Both of the churches actively seek to create a cultural space that is distinct and apart from what they perceive as the norm of Brazilian society. This cultural positioning of dominant models on the one hand and religious models on the other creates a besieged but "chosen" identity. How these models compare, and the influence they have on acolyte well-being is the focus of this study. In the following chapters I address how religion shapes the health and well-being of Pentecostal Brazilians by exploring the complex relationship between mental health, religion and cultural models.

CHAPTER 4: Stress and Illness—A Sociocultural Perspective

At its core, this study of religion and health among Brazilian Pentecostals examines how culture shapes patterns of well-being and illness. Culture has driven the history of human disease and illness. Epidemiologists have categorized stages of the disease profile of general human history into three distinct transitional phases (Omran 1971). These transitions go from high parasitic loads of hunter and gather populations, to endemic infectious disease associated with animal husbandry and sendentism, to sanitation and germ theory aiding in the decline of infectious diseases, but increased life expectancy giving rise to chronic and age-related diseases, and finally, to a reemergence of contagious, drug-resistant, diseases. As a society's modes of production change along with patterns and habitat characteristics (e.g., population density, pollution) so does the disease profile of the community. Medical anthropologist, Paul Farmer (1998) argues that human society at large is entering a third transition towards the reemergence of infectious diseases, including HIV and drug resistant TB. Driven by human encroachment into new ecological areas (allowing for novel zoonotic diseases), globalized human contact made possible by mass transit and regular intercontinental flights, and drug resistant diseases arising from the evolutionary arms race between pathogen and treatment, these pathogens have become a global health issue.

These stages are in reality more of a heuristic model and reflect only roughly the medical problems that face most populations. For a vast majority of people, these epidemiological transitions did not eradicate the parasites and infectious diseases of the past, but rather added additional disease and illness to already strained bodies (Armelagos 1991; Farmer 1998). In

Brazil, a rapidly industrializing and modernizing country that has the sixth largest economy in the world, there is a rise in the incidence of chronic diseases such as anxiety, depression, diabetes, and heart disease, while infectious diseases such as dengue, schistosomiasis, and Hansen's remain endemic in many parts, and HIV and TB disproportionately afflict poorer areas (Uchoa et al. 2000).

This study addresses how religion can buffer stress resulting from social incongruence. This chapter will focus on how the stressors of modernity shape the incidence of chronic diseases. Important to this chapter is the concept of syndemics, which emphasizes that when two or more stressors (biological, social, economic, political) interact, the combination of influence exacerbates the disease burden exponentially (Singer and Clair 2003). As a result, allostasis—the ability for the body to adapt and achieve stability through change—becomes increasingly difficult and costly. This allostatic load is the cumulative burden to the system of constantly adjusting to change (i.e., stressors) (McEwen 2000). Contrary to biomedicine that tends to view diseases within closed systems of singular host-pathogen relations, or as "discrete boundable entities," syndemics theory considers diseases and their hosts to exist within an open system of multiple interactions of biological, cultural, and political-economic systems. Poverty, which is an integral characteristic of broader Brazilian society, is a foundation for syndemics to develop. As a form of structural violence, poverty invites a chain-reaction of diseases to form, including but not limited to stress, malnutrition, violence, drug and substance abuse, and HIV/AIDS. While discussion of Brazilian Pentecostals will center on psychosocial stress deriving from cultural incongruence, the inclusion of other syndemic diseases, including cancer, HIV/AIDS, alcoholism, spousal abuse, and other forms of violence are crucially linked together. More often

than not, a Pentecostal challenged in maintaining familial harmony and supplying the basic material needs of the household is stricken by a host of other illnesses and tragedies as well.

Within this epidemiological framework, this chapter examines the interactions of and contact points for disease, culture, and stress. The role of chronic and degenerative diseases, particularly as they are manifested in mental health, will be central to this discussion. First, I provide fundamental concepts and definitions of disease and stress. Next, I consider how stress relates to cultural status and integration, including both theory and evidence of the means by which culture is literally embodied in physiology and psychology of individuals. These discussions will provide the foundation for later discussions of how religion, as a cultural construct, is capable of influencing the distribution and incidence of health and illness.

The Social Environment and Stress: A Brief Epidemiological Review

Stress is a ubiquitous concept that is regularly used in common parlance as well as in academic research and discourse. The concept is used to describe a range of phenomena, from psychosocial demands (and worries) that many of us are familiar with, to ecological pressures that drive adaptations and evolution. In order to better understand the concept of stress and to provide an operational definition for research, it is important to consider how the social environment became known as a purveyor of stress.

In epidemiology, the prevalence of a pathogen and one's susceptibility to the disease is understood through the triad of host, agent, and environment. This cornerstone of epidemiological thinking is often attributed to John Snow, who investigated the incidence of a cholera outbreak in London in 1847. Without the benefit of germ theory, Show identified patterns in the social behaviors of both the sick and healthy individuals affected by cholera. He examined the geographic distribution of the disease and correctly identified a specific

contaminated water well as the source of the outbreak. People who lived and worked nearby and who regularly drank water from the contaminated well showed increased prevalence of the disease. Laborers who worked at a nearby brewery, and who drank beer rather than water while working, were safely exempt from the disease. In another ground-breaking study, Wade Hampton Frost, a medical officer in the American Public Health Service during late 19th to early 20th centuries, charted the outbreaks of numerous pathogens, including typhus, polio, and influenza. He demonstrated that the incidences of these diseases were not only determined by exposure, but rather through a combination of exposure and an impoverished environment. These observations earned Frost the title of the founder of modern epidemiology. Importantly, these early epidemiologic studies provided a foundation for understanding the interaction between individual and disease within a broader environmental context that included cultural behaviors and societal constraints (Morabia 2004).

Also fundamental to the study of society-disease relationships is Emile Durkheim's (1951 [1897]) study of suicide rates across Europe. In his study, Durkheim views the environment not as a passive backdrop that channels the behaviors of individuals, but as being interactive with the hosts—jointly creating the pathogenic agent. According to Durkheim, suicide is not the result of individual psychologies, but is rather related to how the individual is configured within society and its norms. The dominant values, norms and institutions that shape individual behaviors are social facts that exist independently of the individual's values and beliefs. In Durkheim's view, suicide occurs when the status of the individual comes into conflict with the social facts of the larger societal whole.

In *Suicide*, Durkheim highlights four individual-society configurations that can lead to the act of suicide. Egoistic and altruistic suicides result from either too little or too much

integration of the individual into society. Egoistic suicides occur in communities characterized by organic solidarity and low integration or, high individual autonomy and loose social networks. Altruistic suicide, on the other hand, is typical of mechanical solidarity societies and is the result of undifferentiated, hyper-integration of an individual into the group. Moreover, altruistic suicides are often portrayed as self-sacrifices. Anomic and fatalistic suicides stem from too little or too much societal regulation. Societal regulation configures an individual's goals and desires with that of the whole. Thus, anomic suicide is the result of dissonance between collective and private ambitions and expectations. Fatalistic suicide, while not as developed as Durkheim's other categories, results from overly oppressive societal expectations and discipline. Since these regulations are omnipresent, suicide is the only means of release.

Durkheim's early epidemiological studies of suicide are foundational for later studies on the epidemiology of stress and chronic diseases. That is, the ultimate causal agent of disease is necessarily not located in a microbial pathogen, but is rather situated in the relationship of the individual, or host, to the social environment, as Cassel (1976) came to argue much later. As I discuss later in this chapter, research that focuses on the relationship between the individual and his/her disease-causing social environment has only received renewed attention in the past 30 years. The methodological and theoretical advances in this field of inquiry emphasize two concepts: the role of individual status (and status incongruence) in the distribution of morbidity; and the consonance (or dissonance) of individuals to societal norms. In each relationship, "stress" plays a crucial role. These concepts form the foundational basis of this study's theoretical and methodological orientation.

Understanding "Stress"

While the epidemiological triad approach to pathology works well for many infectious diseases, it becomes increasingly muddled when applied to chronic and degenerative illnesses that are the overwhelming ailments of contemporary populations. For many diseases of the 2nd epidemiological transition, there is not a single agent responsible, but rather a number of stressors that act in concert as a "smoldering infectious process," and that later manifest into overt symptoms of pathology (Cassel 1976:108). While the research of Frost, Snow, and Durkheim helped identify the social conditions which can exacerbate or cause morbidity, it does not explain the lack of etiological specificity of the degenerative and chronic pathologies that are endemic in developed and urban areas. Nor does it explain how the interaction of individuals and social pressures can manifest in a myriad of psychological and physiological illness, such as suicide.

Hans Selye is largely credited with addressing the lacuna in previous research through his formulation of stress and generalized adaptation syndrome (GAS) (Selye 1946; see also Mason 1975). Selye brought the concept of stress – first defined as nonspecific physiological responses to generalized evocative agents – to the attention of physiological sciences (Selye and Heuser 1956; Mason 1975). In 1915, Walter Cannon in his book, *Bodily Changes in Pain, Hunger, Fear, and Rage*, first used the term "stress" to describe the homeostatic changes in the neuroendocrine system in response to perceived threats, what he dubbed the "fight or flight" response. In contrast to Selye, Cannon initially perceived stress as a beneficial adaptation to acute stressors. While Selye agreed that stress can be an adaptive physiological state, he recognized that prolonged stress results in deleterious physiological changes. In the 1930s, Selye investigated the effects of hormonal signals in rats and found that rats injected with an experimental hormone as well as a

control group injected with saline developed the same peptic ulcers, enlarged adrenal glands, and compromised immune systems. He acknowledged that the procedure of injections was not a benign affair; Selye often dropped the rats, only to subsequently chase them down (Sapolsky 2004; Selye 1979). Selye reasoned that the rats' physiological changes had more to do with the trauma of the injections than with the experimental hormone. He followed the initial injection experiment by exposing rats to other noxious stimuli, or stressors, such as hot and cold extremes, physical exhaustion, surgery, and a variety of pathogens. In each case, he found the same generalized physiological changes he first observed in the hormone experiment. Several decades later, Selye (1959:406-407) wrote:

> The principal contribution of stress research was precisely to show that if we abstract from these specific reactions, there remains a common residual response that is nonspecific as regards its cause and can be elicited with such diverse agents as cold, heat, x-rays, adrenalin, insulin, tubercle bacilli, or muscular exercise. There is so despite the essentially different nature of the evocative agents themselves and despite the coexistence of highly specific adaptive reactions to any one of these agents.

Originally, stress was conceived as a state in which external stimuli disrupt homeostasis and which results in physiological changes in the pituitary-adrenal cortical system; in other words, stress was understood as the body's attempt to cope and respond to the noxious stimulus (Mason 1975). This early model was entirely physiological or biochemical, focusing on how noxious physical stimuli create stress on bodily cells and which then invokes a response in specific organs. Ironically, while Selye was influenced by Cannon's concept of homeostasis, he did not recognize the role of emotional appraisals as a stressor, nor did he understand that the sympathetic nervous system is the first stage of the general adaptation syndrome. John Mason later reflected (1975:25):

> The unrecognized first mediator in many of Selye's experiments simply may have been the psychological apparatus involved in emotional arousal, which is

> commonly activated when animals are exposed to "noxious," unpleasant, novel, or arousing conditions in the laboratory. Of all the known responses of higher organisms, emotional arousal is certainly one of the most ubiquitous or relatively "nonspecific" reactions common to a great diversity of situations…this is not to imply that psychological processes are not physiological, nor that there is any fundamental biological distinction…but is only to call attention to the important question of the general levels within the central nervous system at which neuroendocrine responses to diverse stressors are integrated.

For Mason and other psychological stress researchers, the psychological and emotional appraisal of stress, rather than the physiological stimulus (e.g., hot, cold, pain), is partly responsible for stress response. In particular, Mason (1975) argues that stressors that are novel and unfamiliar increase an individual's feeling of uncertainty and helplessness. While Selye's study of the generalized stress response of rats brought the concept to the forefront of physiological sciences, it was only when stress researchers incorporated roles of psychological states, emotional appraisals, and the responses of the central nervous system did the field fully develop.

Research shows that the interaction of psychological appraisals of social environmental conditions and coping shape the patterns of stress. As such, studies of stress in both humans and animals indicate that individuals do not uniformly identify stressful experiences. Life histories, environment, personality, and resources all influence the impact of any environmental challenge. In other words, what constitutes a "stressor" is based on individual appraisals and coping mechanisms that are used to confront and deal with the everyday challenges of the environment. Richard Lazarus (1966) is credited with introducing and developing the concepts of stress appraisal and coping within stress theory. Appraisals are cognitive dispositions, such as goals, motivations, values, expectancies, predictability, and controllability, which shape how a stressor is perceived. The ways in which an individual appraises a stressor can influence if it is viewed as a threat, as benign, or as a salubrious challenge. Coping strategies can include appraisals, and are defined as "the cognitive and behavioral efforts made to master, tolerate, or reduce external and

internal demands and conflicts among them" (Folkman and Lazarus 1980:223). Accordingly, they encompass a wide range of phenomena, including but not limited to social support (Schwarzer and Leppin 1991), optimism (Scheier and Carver 1992), repression (Freud 1926), and cognitive dissonance (Festinger 1957). These and other coping strategies may be used sequentially or in tandem, comprising what Lazarus and Folkman (1984) term "coping episodes."

Appraisal and coping strategies in response to stress are fundamental for understanding how religion influences health. My research on Brazilian Pentecostals predicts that religious cultural models occupy a prominent place in one's cognitive hierarchy, thereby allowing religious cultural models to exert a significant influence on well-being. Religions may also allow an individual to cope with stress better by providing a suite of strategies to draw from, including social support, explanatory cognitive models (e.g., why bad things happen to good people), models promoting cognitive dissonance (e.g., denying the negative impacts of a stressor), and dissociative-inducing rituals that alter the workings of one's physiological response to stress. These mechanisms of the religion-health interaction are taken up in the following chapter.

The Biology of Stress

The exact physiology of the stress response cannot be generalized as Selye predicted in his initial formulation of the general adaptation syndrome. Variations depend on the type of stressor and an individual's unique characteristics, including existing allostatic load, appraisal, and coping strategies. Generally however, stressors do involve the same neuroendocrine cascades and changes to allostasis (see Mason 1975). An appraisal of stress first activates the sympathetic (SNS) part of the autonomic nervous system (ANS). In other words, the effect of stressors bypasses conscious control of the brain which results in automatic physiological stress

responses and potentially subconscious appraisal of stressors. Activation of the SNS decreases the influence of the parasympathetic nervous system—a subsystem of the ANS largely responsible for physiological growth, upkeep, and repair. Stress also activates the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal axis (HPA) to release glucocorticoids, including cortisol, into the bloodstream. Acting in concert, the sympathetic-adrenomedullary axis (SAM) through the adrenal medulla releases epinephrine and norepinephrine hormones. This suite of chemicals facilitates increased heart rate, constricted blood vessels, and bronchial dilatation, which result in an energy dump to muscle groups (McEwen 1998). This generalized stress response, particularly the SAM system, is extremely adaptive for short-term, acute stressors. Increasing heart rate, oxygen intake, and energy conversion provides the means of fight-or-flight in the face of imminent danger. However, anticipation of and exposure to social stressors such as low status and resource inequity, can result in a chronic stress state; this long-term stress response is costly to the body. Allostatic load—the accumulated costs of maintaining allostasis—in conjunction with (and as a result of) the chronic activation of the sympathetic nervous system, results in the wear and tear of bodily systems, diminishes the capacity to adjust to further stressors, and increases susceptibility to disease and system failure (McEwen and Stellar 1993).

Chronic stress which results in the extended activation of the sympathetic nervous system is extremely deleterious to physiology. The stress response, while adaptive in the short term, is best viewed as an accommodation. Accommodations are a subtype of adaptation that favors survival (or adjustment to environmental stressors) in the short term at the expense of long-term fitness (Frisancho 1993). Changes in the cardiovascular system, such as increased heart rate and constriction of blood vessels enable increased oxygen flow and glucose to muscle groups. While advantageous for addressing perceived threats in the short-term, these reactions will eventually

result in continuously elevated blood pressure brought about by atherosclerosis (hardening of the arteries) and hypertrophy of the heart's left ventricle (Folkow 1982). This in turn leads to further hardening of the cardiovascular system, increasing the risk of inflamed blood vessels and the buildup of plaque which causes further hypertension (Wentworth et al. 2003).

While hypertension and atherosclerosis have been extensively studied, chronic stress can lead to many other diseases. Since the parasympathetic nervous system is generally reciprocally cross-regulated with the sympathetic nervous system, the body has difficulty achieving homeostasis during chronic SNS activation. In particular, the stress hormones (epinephrine, norepinephrine, and glucocorticoids) remain at elevated levels and their continued circulation can cause damage to bodily systems which they influence and activate during the stress response. While small amounts of glucocorticoids can increase the communication receptivity between neurons, long term exposure actually desensitizes neurons in the hippocampus, not only halting the communication between neurons, but promoting neural atrophy and stymieing neurogenesis (Magarinos and McEwen 1995; Gould and Gross 2002). Similarly, glucocorticoids and epinephrine actually boost the immune system by culling older lymphocytes and directing others to the surface of the skin thus increasing the immune response time to injury. With extended exposure, however, lymphocyte culling is not always beneficial and can result in an impaired immune system (Besedovsky et al. 1986; McEwen et al. 1997). Chronic stress can also increase the likelihood of diabetes by suppressing the responsiveness of cells to insulin and fat-storage, thereby further exacerbating pancreatic stress and insulin resistance (Robinson and Fuller 1985). Chronic stress can also lead to sexual dysfunction; for example, for men, stress can suppress testosterone levels and erections, especially since the latter requires the activation of the PSNS (Cummings et al. 1983; Saenz de Tejada et al. 1989). For females, glucocorticoids block the

secretion of certain hormones, including estrogen, causing anovulatory amenorrhea (cessation of ovulation) and interrupt uterine wall maturation (McArthur et al. 1980). Chronic stress also stymies the libido in females, which likely results from diminished estrogen and adrenal androgen levels in the bloodstream (Carter 1992a, 1992b).

There are many additional examples of how stress precipitates or exacerbates existing conditions, eventually causing physical distress and illness. Unsurprisingly, many of these stress related conditions additionally serve to create more stress in the lives of afflicted individuals. For many, chronic stress exists in a feedback loop, a state of perpetual homeostatic imbalance, in which the allostatic load of chronic stress turns back onto itself, creating greater allostatic costs and greater distress. This rest of this chapter reviews some studies that shed light on how social pressures give rise to chronic stress. I will additionally consider how the chronic stress feedback loop may be broken and how people can buffer the impact of psychosocial stress. The following chapter will address one proposed buffer—religious faith—in more detail.

Stress and the Social Environment

As discussed above, the autonomic nervous system is the first stage of the stress response. The stress response is an accommodation to environmental and social stressors, causing allostatic changes designed to avoid or confront perceived threats. The question then arises, what is threatening? For the average mammal, acute stressors are particularly easy to identify—they consist of temporary and immediate dangers, such as a predator or an acute injury. For humans and other social primates, however, acute stressors primarily derive from social experiences, such as inter-individual conflicts and resource acquisition. In such circumstances, the stress-response can serve as an exaptation by utilizing a response that evolved to avoid threats and survival to facilitate temporary increases in physical ability and cognitive

recall within current sociocultural settings. Importantly, however, stress for an extended duration can increase allostatic load, taxing numerous physiological systems, elevating the risk for a variety of diseases. The prevalence of chronic stress among humans and other primates suggests that there may be specific types of social pressures and configurations to which humans are innately sensitive (Sapolsky 2004). Indeed, in a variety of stress studies among both human and nonhuman primates, chronic stress seems to arise from perceived social inequality and a lack of coping mechanisms through social networks.

Animal and Primate Stress Research

Among social primates, social stratification is a leading cause of chronic stress. Robert Sapolsky's (1990; 1993; Sapolsky and Spencer 1997) extensive work among baboon troops has shown that lower ranking males exhibit increased glucocorticoid levels, increased insulin resistance, and lower immunological responses. Lower ranking male baboons are often the subject of violent interactions with more dominant males, and have less access to food resources and mates than their dominant peers. The constant threat of harassment, the displaced aggression of higher ranking baboons on subordinates, and limited access to resources creates an environment in which chronic stress flourishes. Importantly, dominant members of the hierarchy are not stress-free either. If the social hierarchy is unstable, that is, if there is jockeying within the hierarchy, dominant individuals also experience increased chronic stress. The pressures of maintaining a high position or attempts to advance up the hierarchy can create more stress, observed through the rise of glucocorticoids, among dominant rather than subordinate males (Alberts et al. 1992). During such tumultuous periods, dominant male macaques show increased risk of developing coronary artery atherosclerosis (Manuck et al. 1995) while chimpanzees have exhibited immunosuppression (Masataka et al. 1990). In the absence of hierarchal uncertainties,

social subordinates among a range of primate species have been associated with increased resting blood pressure (Cherkovich and Tatoyan 1973; Kaplan and Manuck 1989; Sapolsky and Share 1994), higher levels of cholesterol (Kaplan et al. 1995; Sapolsky and Mott 1987;), and impaired immune systems (Cohen et al. 1997; Gust et al. 1993).

Cross-species investigations show that individual coping abilities and appraisal of stressors greatly impacts allostatic load. Research suggests that these differences may be in part explained by the influence of appraisals and coping strategies in the face of stressors. Jay Weiss's (1972) studies on rats demonstrated that the ability to control and anticipate stressors, as well as the ability to displace anxiety, results in fewer physiological symptoms of chronic stress. In a series of experiments, rats who could press a level to halt electrical shocks; could predict the onset and cessation of shocks through tonal cues; or had a means of releasing psychological frustration of chronic stress (such as chewing on a piece of wood), had fewer signs of gastric ulceration than control groups that received equal (and in some cases fewer) electrical shocks. Individual dispositions may also influence the impact of chronic stressors. Among primates, studies on baboons and macaques suggest that dominant, aggressive personalities tend to over-appraise the threat of stressors, and have higher physiological stress profiles, regardless of actual rank (Ray and Sapolsky 1992; Suomi 1987). Aggressive predispositions may also influence coping strategies and their effectiveness. In a series of non-primate, mammalian studies, animals that exhibited proactive (aggressive fight-or-flight) responses to a stressor had higher physiological responses than those who were more reactive (passive avoidance, conservation-withdrawal) (Koolhaas et al. 1999). For example, M.J. Hessing et al. (1995) found that aggressive coping type pigs had increased immunosuppression following exposure to a stressor, while A. Kavelaars et al. (1999) found that proactive coping rats were at increased risk of

developing autoimmune diseases as a result of allostatic stress load. Such an aggressive, proactive coping style has also been linked with an increase in cardiovascular diseases in rats (Sgoifo et al. 1997), pigs (Hessing et al. 1994), and monkeys (Manuck et al. 1983). Finally, in order to understand why subordinate individuals between and within primate groups experience stress differently, Abbott et al. (2003) performed a meta-analysis of a dozen species x gender cases that included information on both rank and glucocorticoid levels. After coding for 17 gender and species characteristics, multivariate analysis showed that elevated basal glucocorticoid levels were correlated with high dominant harassment and low opportunities for coping, particularly social support strategies.

In sum, there is a robust body of literature showing that the chronic activation of the stress response results in physiological distress, which can manifest as a number of immunological, cardiovascular, and gastrological diseases. Among social species, rank appears to be a constant source of chronic psychosocial stress, especially in contexts of status insecurity and inequality without available coping mechanisms. The appraisal of stressors and coping mechanisms influences how stressors are perceived and subsequently dealt with. Aggressive style coping strategies, which may be adaptive for acute stressors, tend to be a more deleterious strategy for chronic stress. The ability to control, predict, and deflect stress, in addition to external resources such as social support, mitigates the impact of stress on an individual's allostatic load. These appraising and coping strategies are fundamental within human's experience of stress.

Human Stress Studies

There is an equally large body of research showing the physiological consequences of prolonged exposure to chronic psychosocial stress among human populations. These studies

largely rely upon non-experimental research designs, taking advantage of naturally occurring circumstances to compare the allostatic loads of one group in relation to others. As with the animal studies discussed above, human groups that are characterized by high levels of inequality and low coping resources are disproportionately exposed to chronic stressors that result in chronic sympathetic nervous system activation and physiological changes.

Archaeologists and paleoanthropologists argue that modern humans have only lived in sedentary communities recently, for the past 10,000 years. Mobile hunter-gatherer groups are considered the *de facto* mode of socioeconomic organization for 95 percent of modern human history. Hunter-gather lifestyle is characterized by high levels of egalitarianism and close kinship ties to other members of the community. Following the adoption of agriculture, societies become more stratified, characterized by hierarchal divisions of labor, high levels of resource inequality, and decreased emphasis on kinship and social relations. The change of subsistence patterns and the associated change in social, political, and economic structures are attributed to the first and subsequent epidemiological transitions. As such, the relatively novel conditions of sedentism and ensuing processes of industrialization, modernization, and globalization may create social stressors that *Homo sapiens'* stress response did not evolve to address (Sapolsky 2004).

Ingrid Waldron (1982) and her research team performed an analysis of over 80 studies that focused on blood pressure measurements among various communities around the world. In conjunction with descriptive data from the Human Relations Area Files, Waldron et al. coded each study population for various descriptive characteristics, including levels of social stratification and complexity. The research demonstrated that blood pressure was highly correlated with the dominant mode of production and level of social stratification. Societies that engaged primarily in agricultural production showed a sharp increase in blood pressure when

compared to hunter gathers and horticulturalists. Further, high blood pressure continues to elevate in communities that are dominated by industrial production. These economic changes are associated with increased social stratification, differences in wealth and resources distribution, changes in sedentary behaviors and patterns (such as urbanism), and modifications to social networks, kinship ties, and other cultural values and institutions.

Differences in socio-economic status, or social inequality, are viewed as driving factors of increasing chronic psychosocial stress within industrialized populations. The Whitehall study (Marmot et al. 1978) on British Civil Servants is widely considered the preeminent analysis that demonstrates how socioeconomic status influences levels of mortality and morbidity. For each upward movement of Civil Service pay grade, health outcomes of employees improved. This SES/health gradient is among the most pervasive and well replicated in social health and epidemiological research. In a review of these SES/health studies, Adler and Ostrove (1999) found that lower SES correlated with higher morbidity and mortality of all diseases, with the exceptions of melanoma and breast cancer which increase with social status. Health related behaviors, such as delayed motherhood, and outdoor leisure activities are identified as likely culprits for the increased morbidity among social elites of these two diseases.

However, health-related behaviors cannot fully explain the relation of lower SES and increased morbidity. Known influences on health and well-being, including age, sex, body composition, health related behaviors, and medical access, only explain one third of the SES/health gradient, leaving much of the correlation unexplained (Pincus and Callahan 1995; Wilkinson 2000). Like our primate kin, the influence of social hierarchies on health may be less about absolute status and abundance of material resources than it is about the experiences (or meanings) ascribed to status and the availability of support.

In a related study, Norman Scotch (1963) addressed the connection of socio-economic conditions and stress-related diseases by focusing on hypertension among rural and urban Zulu Africans. For a number of decades, there was a misconception of the role of genetics in the incidence of hypertension, especially concerning race. Genetic-heredity theories, such as the predisposition of African-Americans towards hypertension as an evolutionary result of the slave-trade, still comprise many popular and professional opinions (Gravlee et al. 2005; see Diamond 1991). Scotch, however, found that the social environment, rather than genetics, was able to better predict hypertension. His study measured blood pressure among rural and urban Zulus in South Africa and compared them to published blood pressure data among whites and African Americans living in Georgia. He found that rural Zulus, regardless of age, have lower systolic and diastolic blood pressures than any other group in the study, including white Georgians. Urban Zulus and African Americans had the highest blood pressures of the study. Only the variables of age, sex, and marital status were significantly correlated with elevated blood pressure among both urban and rural Zulus. For urban Zulus, the additional variables of large families, extended kinship ties, and low income were all associated with higher blood pressure. The same was not true for Zulus living in rural areas. These results, Scotch argued, suggest that the traditional cultural values and constructs, adaptive and integrated in rural settings, become incongruent within modern, urban settings. For instance, large numbers of offspring and extended kinship ties may be functional in rural settings, allowing for greater sharing of labor demands and wealth. In contrast, these large families can become a liability and drain on resources, particularly in an urban setting where people are divorced from the means of production and forced to sell themselves as wage labor. Scotch (1963:1212) concludes:

> whether or not a variable was observed to be stressful was dependent upon the social context in which it arose…in the urban community, the variables related to

> hypertension showed a definite pattern indicating that the individuals most likely to be hypertensive were those who maintained traditional cultural practices and who were thus unable to adapt successfully to the demands of urban living.

For the participants in Scotch's study, the rural lifestyle and its associated social values and constructs allowed for arguably lower chronic stress environments. The movement into urban, modern environments (seen in both the American and urban Zulu participants) was marked by higher hypertension, a likely result of increased chronic stress. The findings on urban Zulus showed how psychosocial stress arises from a failure to meet the new demands placed upon individuals by the modern social environment. Importantly, social networks, which are seen in a variety of primate and human studies as a key coping mechanism, actually became a source of chronic stress, rather than a means of relieving it. Scotch's study is not unique: a variety of other studies (e.g., Albala and Vio 1995; Mbanya et al. 1998) have found that among contemporary populations, physiological indicators of chronic stress increase in urban locations. Additionally, these social environments tend to be marked by lower levels of social support—particularly in contexts that have higher levels of resource inequality. It is not unreasonable to suppose that the degradation of social capital is both a result of economic conditions that force the movement of people in search of occupations as well as increasing the economic liability of involvement in these kinship networks (see Lewis 1963).

At around the same time as Scotch, John Cassel (1976) and his colleagues (Cassel et al.1960) utilized a rural-urban migration study within Appalachia to assess higher observed incidences of cardiovascular disease among migrants. In short, an urban Appalachian business (factory) was recruiting from neighboring rural towns to fulfill its labor demands. The economic spread of the urban area was somewhat uniform, with the factory as the primary employer; pay was standardized by the amount of time spent with the company. Cassel, however, found both

psychological and physiological health differences between migrant employees, and second generation employees. Controlling for SES and assuming a relatively uniform genetic background (all employees were recruited from the same general areas) and dietary habits, Cassel found that differential knowledge of urban life and factory work made new migrant employees disproportionately susceptible to higher rates of stress and illness. Cassel et al. (1960) concluded that stress in these employees resulted from cultural incongruence. That is, recent migrants held cultural knowledge (i.e., schemas, models) that was inapplicable in their new urban-labor environment. A migrant's inability to function, interpret, predict, and control his or her new social-cultural environments led to high/chronic stress and thus higher risk of disease. The experience of social incongruence and even social incompetence can trigger the sympathetic nervous system, resulting in increased allostatic load, which in turn contributes to increased blood pressure, hardening and thickening of arterial walls, plaque buildup, and cardiovascular disease.

Until now, the discussion of the psychosocial causes of stress has relied on rural-urban migration studies that have shown that a lack of enculturation facilitates higher levels of psychosocial stress due to incongruent models. These studies assume that one's migrant status is associated (as it often is) with lower socioeconomic status. Yet, these studies do not fully address the psychosocial component of the SES/health gradient among longtime denizens. To address this, we turn towards social studies of status incongruence—"a circumstance in which an individual occupies inconsistent positions on two dimensions that define social prestige" (Dressler 1993:337). The health gradient of socio-economic status is recast to signify social status, where wealth (and capital according to Bourdieu) situates the individual within the social hierarchy, complete with all of the appropriate psychosocial benefits and stressors. As will be

shown, chronic psychosocial stress can result from the failure to live up to, and in some cases, live down to, individual and social aspirations and expectations.

Many of these studies of social status incongruence are based in Samoa. Samoa is a fecund area for the study of psychosocial stress in response to modernization and changing cultural measure of status because of the varied economic development across the Samoan islands. Western Samoa retains traditional villages while American-Samoa experiences substantial development and modernization, and Samoan immigrants to Hawaii are fully immersed in a developed socio-economic environment. As such, these three distinct populations of Samoans serve as dose responses of modernization.

Inspired by Henry and Cassel's (1969) and Cassel's (1975) research on physiological and socio-cultural stress, the Samoan Studies Project was devised to perform a series of research projects examining measures of modernization (e.g., education, occupation, SES, social status incongruity) with biological outcomes (e.g., blood pressure, blood lipids, immune response). For example, Bindon (1997), Janes (1990), and McDade (2002) observed that status incongruence influences Samoan physiology, independent of SES or BMI. In particular, Bindon found that young Samoan men (under 55 years) experienced significantly higher systolic and diastolic blood pressure if they lacked the material comforts of modernity. Similarly, Samoan men whose wives were in the work force (an untraditional practice) had higher blood pressure than their spouses or than men whose spouses were not employed. Janes' (1990) study of Samoan immigrants to the United States found that physical symptoms of stress result from the monetization of lifestyle ideals that leave many Samoans unable to fulfill their role obligations. Interestingly, however, Janes showed that domain incongruence differentially influenced men and women. Specifically, men experienced higher blood pressure as a result of social

incongruence whereas women had a physiological response as a result of familial incongruence. McDade (2002) expanded on the notion of social incongruence-chronic stress relationship by extending the analysis to the household level. In particular, McDade examined the influence of an adult male household member's status and how this status physiologically impacted an adolescent family member. In McDade's research, status was measured in both traditional Samoan terms (*matai* status) and in Western/modern experiences. Physiologically, McDade utilized Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) antibody levels as an indicator of stress immunosuppression. Individuals with greater status incongruence (high Western status, no *matai*/traditional status; or *matai* status, low Western status), regardless of type, had significantly greater EBV loads than those who were congruent (low statuses in both or high statuses in both). Interestingly, this pattern was strongest in villages that have greater experiences of modernization and development. That is, villages with a greater integration of modernization have incorporated both traditional and Western models of status.

This pattern of status incongruence is found outside of Samoa, most notably among Dressler's (1982, 1993, 1996) and Dressler et al.'s (e.g., 1987, 2000, 2012) studies of status incongruence among St. Lucians, Southern African-Americans, and Brazilians. These studies were inspired in part by Weber's (1946) "style of life" and Bourdieu's (1984) theory of capital, particularly how behavioral and material capital is a symbolic indicator of one's position within a stratified society. In his St. Lucia study, Dressler found a setting where aspirations of a middle-class lifestyle that were driven by conspicuous consumption were becoming the defining factor of social status. This enculturation of Western ideals of status was not however accompanied by a proportional increase in incomes to achieve such aspirations. Individuals would, on occasion, attempt to pass themselves off as obtaining a measure of material success (and thereby social

status) that their monetary wealth did not support. Such status incongruence resulted in higher resting blood pressure in these individuals.

In 1986, Dressler et al. (1987) extended their study of lifestyle incongruence to Brazil. In the late 1980s, Brazil was reeling from an economic debt crisis that was rapidly devaluing the currency following over a decade of rapid economic growth and modernization. As such, modern middle-class lifestyles were valued, but they were difficult for many Brazilians to attain and maintain. To measure lifestyle stress, or incongruence, a measure of socio-economic status was subtracted from an index of style of life (which included cosmopolitan items such as owning a color television, washing machine, and a house, and behaviors including reading newspapers and watching movies). The study found that Brazilians who were living beyond their means were at risk of significantly higher levels of diastolic blood pressure. What was most interesting is that individuals with high lifestyle stress were more likely to describe themselves as relatively less deprived. This suggests that while appraisals of stress are an important coping mechanism, some aspects of social stress, particularly as it concerns status, remain stressful even as they are reified according to culturally ascribed meanings.

Dressler's (1993) study on status incongruence among African-Americans showed how the power of social interactions reaffirms social status. In this project, Dressler refined his research by examining how incongruence can arise from social interactions where meanings of a middle-class material lifestyle and race are at odds. This study was inspired by Everett C. Hughes' (1944) articulation of non-vertical dimensions of socioeconomic status. In this work, Hughes gives the example of an African-American physician whose occupation symbolizes esteem and power while his race is devalued a result of institutionalized racism. Hughes showed how the black physician occupied an incongruent status within society. Hughes' description is

particularly important for illustrating that occupation and race are signifiers for signified status. Dressler's study utilized a simple 23 item scale of middle-class consumer ownership and a three-tier ranking of phenotypic skin color (light, medium, and dark) in order to argue that darker skin color leads to devalued signified social status. Results showed that the phenotypically darkest African-Americans who had high levels of middle-class lifestyle (most socially incongruent) had significantly higher systolic and diastolic blood pressures than lighter skinned/lower lifestyle or those of commensurate skin color/lifestyle measures. In light of these data, Dressler (1993:338, 341) explained:

> A black person who is maintaining a higher status lifestyle and who has darker skin meets with more frequent frustrating social interactions, interactions in which he or she is not treated in a manner commensurate with the level of social status claimed. These repeated, frustrating social interactions can lead to repeated autonomic arousal and sustained blood-pressure elevation…. (This study demonstrates) that differences within the black community in blood pressure can be accounted for in part by the discrepancy between skin color and consumer lifestyles.

Research on the psychosocial stress of status incongruence has been replicated in a variety of settings. In each case, researchers attempt to use a culturally appropriate measure of social status through which an individual and his/her health status may be compared. Social status, however, is a complex cultural construct, existing along multiple dimensions that are not always linear. Cognitive anthropologists have begun to address this complexity by reexamining how social status is conceived and measured.

Cognitive Anthropology, Cultural Consensus, and Consonance

In their Brazilian research, Dressler et al. (2000) questioned the application of foreign measures of "status" in a highly economically stratified and developing nation. Are the items and behaviors that are indicative of middle-class lifestyle in the United States similarly held by another population? Are they equally salient across social-economic spectrums? To address this

issue, Dressler et al. (2000) found guidance within cognitive anthropology, specifically in the theory and method of cultural consensus developed by Romney et al. (1986).

In order to continue this discussion, it is necessary to step back and briefly discuss aspects of cognitive anthropological theory that are fundamental to some of the more recent and exciting findings in the relationship between culture and health. Following Holland and Quinn (1987), D'Andrade (1995), and Shore (1996), culture is conceived of as systems of knowledge necessary to function within a social setting. Cultural models are structural frameworks of specific cultural domains, containing associated behaviors, associations, and meanings. For instance, there are specific models of traditional gender roles—shared understandings of particular identities and behaviors. Neither monolithic agreement nor knowledge consensus is necessary for these models to exert a force as cultural *habitus* (Strauss and Quinn 1994). As such, while cultural models provide the knowledge to interpret, predict, and function in a social setting, they are often enculturated early and are not held in conscious awareness. Because these units of culture—cultural knowledge—are constantly reified through our actions, behaviors, and thoughts, culture often takes on the appearance of a superorganic whole, particularly when the "recurrent behavioral patterns…exert effects because they establish parameters that cannot be ignored profitably, to which one must respond" (Handwerker 2002). Our minds turn cultural models into externally distinct phenomena, a superorganic, based on the shared knowledge and patterned behaviors of individual minds.

Cultural models are only one type of cultural knowledge that may assume a number of configurations. Cognitive anthropology categorizes the mental modules of knowledge into prototypes, schemas, and models. These cognitive constructs interact to form arrangements of knowledge that allow for the interpretation of the natural and social world (Shore 1996).

Unfortunately, there is a conflation and inversion of terms within cognitive anthropology, resulting in confusing jargon on the use and relationship of these terms. This research utilizes a definition of terms as outlined by Norbert Ross (2004). A prototype refers to a generalized form, a set of characteristics which imperfectly categorize a wide range of realities. Rather than cognitively storing massive taxonomic lists of essential differences, prototypes allow people to have "generic versions of experience that remain in memory" (Strauss and Quinn 1994:285). The accumulation of the average experienced characteristics of a domain, through both personal experience and shared discourse, creates a standard mental representation which allows maximum information to be stored with minimal cognitive effort. For example, images and descriptions of what generally constitute a mountain—a rocky, conical geographic landform of extreme height—serves as a base comparison to identify (or exclude) encountered phenomena, such as distinguishing between the Great Plains and the Rocky Mountains.

Schemas can be conceived as the skeletal structure of cognition, providing a framework for networking related prototypes, models, and associated schematic structures. As Bloch (1994:277) describes, "these 'scripts' and 'schemata' are, in effect, chunked networks of loose procedures and understanding which enable us to deal with standard and recurring situations…that are clearly culturally created." Similar to an algebraic formula in which the variables are interchangeable for a given context, schemas provide the means of dealing with complex situations with ease. Ross (2004) provides the schematic example of the restaurant script in which he maps out ordering, eating, paying, and tipping practices. These are in turn filled in with further models and prototypes (i.e., filling in the equation with variables), depending on particular realities, such as fast-food or fine-dining, eating alone or with others, etc.

Models are more abstract and complex than simple schemas. They are generally composed of multiple schemas and other models, arranged taxonomically both horizontally and vertically. All models, therefore, are schemas (though not all schemas are models). Since they are so complex, models generally do not occur within working memory, something upon which informants must consciously reflect. Indeed, it is not at all uncommon for an informant to exclaim, "I've never really thought about it before, what things are necessary for the complete Pentecostal life is important… it's something that is a motivation for many people, but I've never really thought about it piece by piece before." Cultural models are not consciously held, but they often manifest as *habitus*, or recurrent behavioral patterns that are reified as an external force (Bourdieu 1977; Handwerker 2002). Models constitute two distinct dimensions: learned cultural models are for all members of a society; personal models operate as a function of individual biography (Dressler 2005). Personal idiosyncratic models are the product of a unique biographical history while cultural models are shared among a population or community, propagated and reproduced through patterned behaviors, discourse, and public symbols. That is, cultural models are learned through social interaction and comprise tacit and explicit knowledge.

Several characteristics are important for understanding the nature and functions of cultural knowledge/models. First, no two individuals hold identical models for a given domain. The distribution of cultural knowledge is heterogeneously distributed and when combined with unique life histories, it becomes "physically impossible for any two people to hold identical cultural configurations" (Handwerker 2002:109). Importantly, sharing is incomplete so that no single person cognitively possesses the entire model, though some individuals may have more knowledge of a domain than others. For instance, one would expect Pentecostal pastors and elders to be "cultural experts" on what constitutes a full Pentecostal life, rather than a neophyte

who has only begun to attend church. Second, cultural models are subject to change because individual cognition is not static. Similar to the distribution of genetic material within a population, interactions with others can lead to new configurations of models. Emigration and immigration can cause the loss or addition of knowledge, and innovations can serve as mutations in a similar way that social memes spread rapidly through a community. For example, glossolalia, a manifestation of the Holy Spirit displayed by many Pentecostals, has been incorporated within Catholic rituals due to the exposure of Catholics to Pentecostal beliefs, and the movement of Pentecostals to Catholic ranks. Third, cultural models do not exist apart or necessarily in harmony with other held cultural models. Individuals participate in multiple cultures and numerous subcultures, each containing their own orthodox and heterodox models that the individual must call upon and negotiate in different circumstances. The movement from one set of cultural models to others requires negotiation or cognitive dissonance to reconcile behaviors consonant with one set of models but dissonant with another (see Festinger 1957).

Cultural Consonance in Brazil

To elicit an emic understanding of social status, Dressler et al. (1996) asked members of four differently economically stratified Brazilian communities what consumer items and behaviors were indicative of a successful lifestyle. After performing some statistical analyses on the results (fully discussed in Chapter 7), they verified that overall there was shared knowledge around a dominant cultural model that was informing individuals' opinions and behaviors. They found that regardless of economic status, the ideal Brazilian lifestyle is framed as a modest but comfortable life shaped by basic consumer items such as a television, sofa, kitchen table, refrigerator, etc., rather than conspicuous consumption (Dressler and Santos 2000). Individuals were then asked how well their own lives approximated those characteristics the community

identified as necessary for achieving this ideal lifestyle – a measure of cultural congruity that the researchers defined as "cultural consonance" (Dressler and Santos 2000; Dressler and Bindon 2000; Dressler et al. 1996, 1997, 1998). When measures of cultural consonance of the middle-class lifestyle were combined with psychological and physiological measures, the research team saw that higher levels of cultural consonance were correlated with increased psychological and physiological well-being. To put it another way, they found that failure to meet the standard characteristics indicative of a middle-class lifestyle resulted in greater levels of psychosocial stress and blood pressure (Dressler et al. 1996).

Utilizing the same combination of cultural consensus and cultural consonance, Dressler and his research team have replicated similar blood pressure responses to consonance among a wide range of Brazilian cultural models. Drawing from the same economically diverse communities as the early study, Dressler et al. (2007) analyzed cultural consonance across the domains of lifestyle, social supports, family life, cultural cynicism, and food. As in the previous studies, consensus for these various cultural models was found across SES-ranked neighborhoods. Regardless of economic status, consonance in one domain is correlated with congruence in other cultural domains. (Cultural cynicism, as a critique of Brazilian national character, is negatively correlated with the other cultural domains.) This correlation between models, according to Dressler et al. (2007:213), is a "tendency toward consistency in beliefs and behaviors across cultural domains." Consonance in the model, however, was not equally distributed across neighborhoods. Predictably, higher status neighborhoods possessed more of the material items that were important in "lifestyle success." Social support consonance likewise increased across SES, thought not drastically. Interestingly, cultural consonance in family life is nearly identical across the Brazilian social hierarchy (Dressler et al. 2005). Just as in the previous

studies, consonance across cultural domains (with the exception of cultural cynicism) while controlling for age, sex, and SES results in reduced psychological distress and greater well-being. In contrast, consonance in cultural cynicism—as a model critiquing the economic nepotism and subterfuge of Brazilian identity (i.e., *mozambismo*, or a critical national identity)—is associated with greater psychological distress. To this point, cultural models were generally positive indicators of life status and positively associated with wellbeing. Cultural cynicism uniquely demonstrates how both cultural incongruence and consonance in negative models can lead to psychological and physiological distress.

Finally, a recent study by Dressler et al. (2012) warrants specific attention given its direct relevance to this dissertation. During a study that sought to replicate previously identified cultural models and their effect on well-being, they find that generalized cultural consonance is not uniformly associated with psychological health. The subsample of Pentecostals exhibits a lower correlation of generalized cultural consonance and psychological well-being than do Catholics, Spiritists, and atheists/agnostics. While Dressler et al. did not find conclusive evidence of a moderating or buffering effect, they did find a significant effect of religious affiliation influencing psychological distress—and that this effect was driven by the lower psychological distress of Pentecostal members. This is particularly interesting, given their lower overall socioeconomic status and lower levels of generalized cultural consonance. That is, while theoretically they should be a high risk group for psychological distress, they had significantly lower levels of stress and depression than other groups in the sample.

In sum, Dressler et al.'s Brazilian research demonstrates that even after controlling for known correlates of blood pressure, including diet, body composition, gender, and socio-economic status, the better one approximates the cultural models of his/her society, the greater

his/her mental and physical health. Individuals who maintain high levels of cultural consonance across multiple domains live more meaningful and stable lives, as outlined by their cultural peers. Low consonance individuals whose lives do not meet shared cultural standards, are constantly reminded of their marginal and subordinate status within society (Dressler and Dos Santos 2000). The recent "anomaly" of Pentecostals exhibiting better mental health than expected for their level of SES and cultural consonance is explicitly evaluated in this study by focusing on how Pentecostal-specific models may shape patterns of health singly and in conjunction with more widely distributed secular models.

Extending Cultural Consonance

Sapolsky (2004:408) has critiqued human studies of social status, claiming that with the exception of socioeconomic status, "humans belong to multiple hierarchies and tend to value most the one in which they rank highest…(and as such) there are many reasons to question the relevance of such studies to understanding human health." He further argues that an individual may occupy a lower status within one cultural sphere (e.g., low material lifestyle) and a high position within a subcultural community (e.g., head pastor of a church), which effectively offsets psychosocial stress due to selective appraisal. Sapolsky argues that the near endless cultural and subcultural hierarchies that an individual may occupy make it impossible to determine the influence of any one social status on well-being. Importantly, however, this argument ignores how culture can act as *habitus*. That is, despite an individual's differential appraisal of various hierarchies, culturally dissonance or cultural incongruence will manifest as a social stressor when acting within social situations. The research discussed above repeatedly shows this is the case—competence in a cultural model is not a necessary condition for consonance to effect health. As such, status incongruence is a reliable indicator of stress.

This study and others seek to further understand how multiple alternative hierarchies intersect in influencing well-being. Research is currently examining the negotiations between "real world" and "virtual" success, and their combined influence on well-being. In Snodgrass et al.'s (2011; 2012) study of a massive multiplayer online game called World of Warcraft, the influence of two standards of success, one situated in the "real world" and the other as a measure of status within "the virtual world," were compared via their relation to stress, depression, and behaviors indicative of problematic game-play (i.e., internet addiction). Research show that indicators of virtual success are a simulacra of real world success; they share many of the same general attributes, such as the accumulation of social networks and "material" wealth, though the virtual cultural model is focused on achieving these indicators within the online game. Moreover, higher levels of status on either (or both scales) may be associated with lower levels of stress and depression. Low levels of secular status combined with high levels of online success were predictive of problematic gameplay (i.e., internet addiction). These internet gamers use the virtual world success to compensate for real world dissonance. The study suggests that such a strategy offsets some of the negative psychological effects expected from low cultural consonance with dominant models, but at a cost of increased reliance and appraisal of limitedly distributed virtual models.

This study's research on the cultural models of the *vida completa* among Brazilian Pentecostals further extends cultural consonance method and theory. Dressler et al.'s (2012) recent analysis of cultural consonance across multiple domains suggest the existence of a specific, limitedly-distributed set of cultural models that exist alongside dominant "Brazilian" models. Specifically, Brazilian *evangélicos*, despite having the lowest measure of cumulative consonance across religions, experience lower levels of psychological distress than expected, and

show less of a correlation between cultural consonance and distress (Dressler and Balieiro 2009). While these findings were not statistically significant, they do suggest that Brazilian Pentecostals moderate the effects of cultural incongruence. The Pentecostal faith is largely sectarian. Acolytes view worldly ambitions, values, and measures of prestige as antithetical to God's will and divine salvation. As such, they largely eschew public service and prestige for Pentecostal-communal involvement and service (see Chapters 3 and 9 for discussion of the variations between Pentecostal denominations). It is therefore not unreasonable for Pentecostals to have their own (sub)cultural models that frame and organize their thoughts and behaviors. These *evangélico*-specific models are not diametrically opposed nor are they replacements for widely shared cultural models. Rather, these models exist side-by-side, at times overlapping, at other moments in contradiction, but always exerting pressure for consonance on the part of individuals.

Sapolsky (2004) is correct when he states that human society is characterized by multiple competing hierarchies. Through choice, enculturation, or acculturation, we all occupy multiple cultural spheres, embody multiple cultural models, and enact multiple scripts. However, none of these majority cultural or subcultural frames which we occupy completely erase the force that others exert as *habitus*. Rather than being a "black box" of infinite socio-cultural configurations, social hierarchies—understood as consonance with culturally meaningful standards and expectations—can be elicited from respondents. Indeed, cultural consonance may offer a means by which the interactions and configurations of multiple social hierarchies can be explicitly studied and empirically understood.

Chapter Summary

The role of stress in shaping health is still being understood. Chronic diseases, some of which are caused or exacerbated by the psychosocial stresses of modern society, are rising at an

alarming rate, requiring increased attention from scientists. Primate studies on stress suggest that one's position in social hierarchy can dramatically shape physiology. Individual characteristics, such as appraisals, coping strategies, and coping resources can help offset or alleviate the chronic stress of low status or status insecurity.

For years, it has been understood that SES is highly correlated with well-being. Nonetheless, even when factoring for known mechanisms shaping the correlation, such as diet, medical access, and other lifestyle measures, the SES gradient remains. For some time, it has been assumed that stress, somehow, is largely responsible for the association—but the exact means by which stress results from SES remain elusive. In part, this confusion arises because the SES gradient is most prominent in developed societies and disappears when considering more traditional, non-agricultural populations. Several early researchers articulated the role that cultural incongruence plays in causing stress and disease, most notably Scotch and Cassel, but failed to develop a comprehensive and codified theory for the process. Dressler and his colleagues have suggested that cultural incongruence to widely held and difficult to achieve dominant expectations can cause psychosocial distress. Failure to meet the demands shared and enforced by society results in self-shame and community sanctioning. That is, culture holds the rules by which one rises or falls within the primate-human social hierarchy. Research utilizing this method succeeds in significantly reducing the unexplained gradient of SES and well-being.

Some researchers have cautioned about the use of social hierarchies in explaining health gradients for the simple fact that individuals belong to numerous cultural and sub-cultural groups. However, recent developments in cognitive anthropological theory and methods has provided a means for controlling and comparing the influence of multiple supporting and competing socio-cultural hierarchies. My own research with Snodgrass et al. on virtual

communities has shown that for some domains, individuals must negotiate competing demands. Success in World of Warcraft (WoW) does not necessarily demand failure in real world expectations. As virtual success is increasingly valued, however, it becomes more difficult to remain consonant with more dominant societal models. For some individuals, this causes them to view the sub-cultural virtual models as a supplement to, or even replacement for, real world success. Along these same lines, Dressler and his colleagues find evidence that Brazilian Pentecostals have lower psychological distress for their level of cultural dissonance. It is hypothesized that, like WoW players, some *evangélicos* may use their faith to offset psychosocial stress of low consonance with widely-shared dominant models. Put differently, high consonance in limitedly-distributed religious models may lead Pentecostals, who are otherwise marginalized in Brazilian society, to increased status within the religious communal hierarchy. As such, consonance in their faith is more highly appraised, possibly providing a coping strategy against the insults of low SES and low secular consonance. In upcoming chapters, this research will seek to explicitly and empirically understand how consonance in multiple cultural domains is associated with patterns of well-being. Utilizing "cultural consonance," this study will investigate if success within a limitedly-distributed Pentecostal model can shape the incidence of psychological health.

CHAPTER 5: The Epidemiology of Religion

The shaman is thought to be the world's first profession (McClenon 1997). Generally, shamans, sorcerers, and witches incorporate dissociative states and sympathetic magic in an attempt to control supernatural agents for individual and communal objectives such as healing. Thus, religious and medical systems have been united for much of human existence; however, the influences of biomedicine, rationalism, and scientific empiricism have decoupled the study of health and healing from supernatural beliefs (Koenig 2002). Only recently in the last few decades have scholars renewed their interest in the role of religion in shaping the well-being of individuals and communities. The epidemiology of religion is experiencing a renaissance of sorts, and researchers from a variety of disciplines seek to better understand the origins of religious practices and relationships between supernatural belief and health.

This chapter reviews recent studies that have sought to identify and understand the relationship between religion and well-being. First, I discuss commonly incorporated theories concerning the evolution and adaptive potential of religion. These hypotheses argue that religion is an amalgam of cognitive processes that yielded a survival advantage for early humans. Next, this chapter reviews recent epidemiology of religion research. This literature survey, largely from psychological and sociological studies, highlights current trends and conclusions within the field. Following this, I consider some of the ways that healers work among contemporary religious groups. Through more ethnographic accounts of the religion-healing connection, the "transmission of knowledge," an "alternation of identity," and a "belief of efficacy" emerge as key mechanisms for healing among divergent religious medical systems. Finally, I consider some

of the theoretical and methodological contributions that a cognitive anthropological approach can provide to the study of religion and health. As my research demonstrates, by viewing religion as a cultural system, cultural consonance provides both the theory and the mechanism for understanding and testing how religion shapes health and healing.

Early Theories on the Origins of Religions

The universal phenomenon of supernatural beliefs has long interested social and natural scientists, though few aspects of the human condition are as emotionally charged and ideologically conflicted with scientific endeavors. In general, there are two approaches for explaining the emergence of religion: religion as an exaptation or a byproduct of other evolved traits; and religion as a secondary adaptation which developed from an amalgamation of cognitive traits. Here I consider these different perspectives and review the possible selective advantage that religion (as constituent parts or a whole) may have provided early humans.

For over a century, scholars have considered the relationship between religion and health by examining the origins of human belief in the supernatural. In 1871, the publication of two seminal texts, Charles Darwin's *Decent of Man* and Edward Burnett Tylor's *Primitive Culture*, provided the foundation for scientific speculation on the evolution and function of religion. Darwin, best known for his theory of evolution and natural selection, scientifically deconstructed the human animal and provided a means to explain our species' biological and psychological characteristics. While Darwin only discussed religion briefly, he suggested some patterns that have recently been re-appreciated by evolutionary psychologists. Darwin argued that religion holds a functional role, that is, religion provides a way of explaining and making meaningful the natural phenomena (e.g., birth, death, disaster, existence) that surround us. Our imagination, Darwin speculated, gives agency to these forces which explain their existence and garner their

control. While Darwin did not identify a specific selective advantage per se, he did suggest that animals may have a primitive form of "religion." For example, a dog who barks at a bag floating in the wind believes that it "indicated the presence of some strange living agent, and that no stranger had a right to be on his territory" (Darwin 2004:118). While Darwin's contribution to the evolution of religion is not much more than a footnote, later I discuss how his mention of the subject in *Descent of Man* resembles hyperagency detection device, a dominant theory within cognitive religious studies today.

Like Darwin, E.B. Tylor (1958 [1871]) derived a functional understanding of the universality and purpose of religion. Natural phenomena, particularly birth, life, death, and dreams, require an explanation that links consciousness (or soul) and the corporeal body. Institutionalized religions are the codification of these most basic attempts for understanding the world. Tylor argued that religion in modern society represents a "survival" from an earlier state of relative ignorance. Similarly, James Frazer, who was greatly influenced by Tylor, viewed supernatural belief as a means to predict, explain, and control reality. In *The Golden Bough*, Frazer (1994 [1890]) argued that magic and religion are "not unlike that which is postulated by modern science…to explain how things can physically affect each other through…space" (Frazer 1994:27). Frazer situated religious belief along a continuum, though rational scientific thought remained at the apex of human explanatory mechanisms.

To this point, the dominant theories of religious origins focused on how religion functions at the level of the individual psyche; religion was viewed as a naïve means of interpreting, predicting, and controlling the natural and social environments. At the turn of the nineteenth century, Emile Durkheim began to consider both the individual and the social environment in religious studies. For Durkheim (1951 [1897], 1915 [1912]), religion served as a

type of social glue, a "unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden-beliefs and practices which unite into a single moral community...all those who adhere to them" (Durkheim 1915 [1912]:62). Without a social institution to provide pro-social, inclusive, and psychologically salutogenic forces, individuals are prone to despair and even suicide. Determining whether religion is deleterious or salubrious depends on how well the values of the religion meet the needs of the individual vis-à-vis their position in wider society. More specifically, Durkheim found that in 19th century Europe, Protestants committed suicide more than Catholics. Proposing the term *egoistic suicide*, Durkheim argued that Protestant culture, which at the time was characterized by high individuality and high work/status expectations, caused a high degree of alienation and low integration with others and society as a whole (Durkheim 1951; see also Weber 2002). Unfortunately, contemporary religious epidemiology has largely ignored the elegant ways in which Durkheim examined various theological beliefs (i.e., cultural models) and the configurations of the individual and society to determine differential suicide rates (see chapter 4).

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a plethora of social scientists offered interpretations of the origins and functions of religion. Few social scientists, however, have had more of an enduring impact on the field of religion-health research than has Sigmund Freud. Freud (1953) viewed religion as a neurosis—both as a response and contributor to the social sanctioning of the egos' desires. Contrary to Darwin, Tylor, and Frazer, who viewed religion as a conscious though misguided attempt to understand reality, Freud viewed religion as the expression of suppressed, subconscious desires (Pals 1996). In *The Future of an Illusion* (1953 [1927]), Freud speculated that religion is a projection of our anxiety over the lack of control and

predictability of reality. As such, believers regress to a child-like state, and project their desires for an omnipotent father-figure in the form of God. In other words:

> Religion would thus be the universal obsessional neurosis of humanity; like the obsessional neuroses of children, it arose out of the Oedipus Complex, out of the relation to the father…[it is best] to view religious teachings…as neurotic relics, and we may now argue that the time has probably come, as it does in an analytic treatment, for replacing the effects of repression by the results of the rational operation of intellect (Freud 1953:143-144).

This God-illusion mitigates anxieties and provides a rationale for subverting ego-centric urges that are forbidden by society. However, belief in the supernatural is tantamount, according to Freud, to ignorance and even psychosis. This opinion of religion became the *de facto* position of many social scientists for much of the twentieth century (Bergin 1983). As a result, much of the early religion-health research involved searching for correlation between faith and psychopathology rather than between faith and well-being.

Contemporary Theories on the Origins of Religion

In the evolutionary sciences, there is debate about whether religion is an exaptation of early developments of cognition or whether religion developed out of a suite of earlier traits which later coalesced into a complex interaction system (Purzycki and Sosis 2010). This latter view of religion is not entirely unlike the cardiovascular system in which the various progenitors of the heart, blood vessels, and hemoglobin developed synergistically. Indeed, researchers such as Sosis (2009) and Whitehouse (2008) view religion as a complex amalgam of cognitive process, concurrently incorporating a range of cognitive modules, and verbal, rhythmic, and dissociative potentials. One such module is the hypothesized hyperactive agency detection device (HADD), which attributes purposeful agency to random and naturally occurring phenomena. HADD is adaptive by making individuals overly suspicious and on-guard for agents (humans or animals) seeking to do harm. For instance, our hominin ancestors likely attributed the

sound of a twig breaking in the dead of night to a potential predator, rather than to the wind. Similarly, Darwin's barking dog was better to treat a windblown bag as a threat rather than as benign. An important consequence of this propensity to see purpose in natural phenomena is that reality is readily reconceived as an anthropomorphized world, filled with supernatural beings (Guthrie 1993).

Another proposed cognitive module for the development of religion refers to the saliency and dispersal of specific types of beliefs and/or cognitive prototypes. Minimally counter-intuitive ideas (MCI) are thought of as highly salient cognitive models because they (slightly) challenge the normative-reality interpretation of the world (Boyer 2001). "A cactus that jumps" or "an omnipotent man" violates basic assumptions of our prototypes and schemas of reality (Purzycki and Sosis 2010). Because MCIs stretch the logic of more reality-based observations and models, they are thought to be more salient and integrated than other models. As such, these cognitive concepts may reinforce and justify other cultural models. More specifically, because MCI are "unfalsifiable postulates… impervious to time and logic," they can perpetuate, justify, and authorize existing social and cultural formations (Sosis and Alcorta 2003:265,268). By doing so, these salient MCI models facilitate group cohesion and functioning, and increase the ability of individuals to predict the thoughts and behaviors of others due to their wide dispersal (Purzycki and Sosis 2010). While still hypothetical, proponents of MCI argue that it would have provided a selective advantage for early hominins. By facilitating the emergence of a shared understanding and flexible cognitions (i.e., holding contradicting thoughts in conscious awareness simultaneously), MCI would have engendered innovation and cultural plasticity (Tomasello 1999).

The concept of religion as counter-intuitive cognition has been independently conceived of within dissociation research. At its most general level, dissociation is a partitioning of priorly integrated modes of consciousness, memory, identity, or perception (Lynn 2005; Seligman and Kirmayer 2008). As such, this portioning of cognitive and sensory functioning has been hypothesized as inherent to the experience of faith and the supernatural, fundamental in all religions, and an ancient trait of human evolution (Dorahy and Lewis 2002; McClenon 1997). That is, dissociation segments cognitive processes, which enables humans to believe MCI and other counter-intuitive or contradictory thoughts. Unlike MCI and HADD, however, the evolutionary significance of dissociation on religion is more robust, in large part because unlike other hypothesized cognitive modules, dissociation is a cognitive state that can be empirically measured and has definable physiological signatures.

Dissociation, in its more "exotic" forms as altered states of consciousness and shamanistic flight, has long been associated with "primitive" religions. It was not until the latter half of the twentieth century that dissociative practices in Western religions received serious scholarly focus (e.g., Bourguignon 1973; Goodman 1971). Dissociation, however, is not a dichotomous state, but a multidimensional process that is constantly taking place (Lynn 2005). In other words, in addition to the more striking and extreme forms of dissociation, such as trance, spirit possession, or shamanistic-flight, dissociation is a part of "normal" cognitive processing, where thoughts and behaviors become increasingly compartmentalized or automated outside of or peripheral to conscious awareness and memory recall (Ludwig 1983). For instance, as I write this sentence, I am unaware of the exact motion of my fingers or the location of the keys necessary for typing. In fact, focusing on these actions—that is, bringing them to conscious awareness—makes typing difficult and interrupts my internal narrative. This example of

“automatization of behaviors,” according to Ludwig (1983), enables the enactment of habitual and learned behaviors with minimal cognitive effort, thus allowing for a complex integration of multiple such behaviors. Other selective benefits of dissociative states include: an increased focus on a single stimuli, “allowing the individual to bring a single-minded dedication to a task… [by compartmentalizing] confounding or superfluous information,” or what athletes often call ‘being in the zone’ (Ludwig 1983:96); and the resolution of cognitive dissonance (see Csikszentmihalyi 1990). The minimization of cognitive dissonance decreases stress and anxiety by facilitating simultaneously antithetical or irreconcilable thoughts (e.g., MCI). Such resolution may have been important for developing religious rituals through the suppression or altered perception of reality. Further, dissociation likely provides increased group cohesion by altering sense of self and by minimizing the prevalence of the ego, thereby promoting a sense of universal or group connectivity (Ludwig 1983).

Given the theoretical adaptive importance of dissociation, it is unsurprising that religions of all types integrate intense forms of dissociation in sacred rituals; prayer, meditation, and trance have been variously described and studied as dissociation (Bourguignon 1973; Lynn 2005; Seligman 2005). Moreover, since dissociative states manifest readily, particular forms such as prayer and meditation have been studied extensively in laboratory settings (Newberg et al. 2001). In general, EEG and MRI imaging suggests that individuals in dissociative states experience parasympathetic dominance of the autonomic nervous system, including low-wave frontal cortex and hippocampal-septal area activity, decreased cortical excitation, and increased hemisphere synchronization (McClenon 1997). Hence, dissociation is a state diametrical to sympathetic arousal that is characterized by the stress response. Although the available literature is limited, there are reasons to believe that continuous activation of the parasympathetic nervous system

results in a resetting of the stress allostasis set-point (Maclean et al. 1997). In other words, continuous dissociation may result in an autonomic nervous system baseline that directs towards subtle but chronic parasympathetic activation. As such, dissociative states may lead to decreased stress-response (sympathetic activation) to external stressors. To illustrate this point, one can take the example of anxiety. Anxiety is attributed to over-activation of the amygdala as a result of a chronic or hyper-reactive stress response. The sensitivity of the amygdala is developmental, as shown in rat studies (Rosen et al. 1996; Vyas et al. 2002). Thus, exposure to high and extended sympathetic activation results in a positive feedback loop through which stress increases the number of receptors for glucocorticoids and reduces the number of receptors for anxiety reducing benzodiazepine. This results in increased anxiety and stress appraisal (LeDoux 1996). Dissociation's effect on the amygdala is unknown, but it is not unreasonable that extensive parasympathetic activation results in reduced amygdala-anxiety activation. Furthermore, dissociative states are thought to alter the hypothalamic-pituitary-adrenal (HPA) axis, resulting in, among other things, an associated increased endogenous opioids, decreased pain perception, increased thermoregulation, and heightened immuno-competency (Horwatt 1988; Sosis and Alcorta 2003). As such, ritualized religious dissociation may have a wide range of salutogenic effects.[4]

In general, these views on the origins of religion, including both early scholars and more recent evolutionary elucidations frame religion as an early by-product of consciousness. These phenomena, while probably advantageous in early hominin history, is explicitly or implicitly

[4] Dissociation, however, is not a dichotomous state, but a multidimensional process that is constantly taking place (Lynn 2005). As Lynn (2005) argues, whether a dissociative state is adaptive or maladaptive is determined by the intersection of intensity, duration, and culturally ascribed meaning. Shamanistic flight may be therapeutic for both individuals and communities in the correct setting, whereas equally intense and frequent post-traumatic stress flashbacks can result in deleterious effects on both the individual and associated kin and kith.

framed as an atavism, an evolutionary and cultural throwback to an earlier state. This subjective positioning on the genesis and trajectory of religious belief continues to have influence on the study of religion and health.

The Epidemiology of Religion: A Review

Religion-health research between 1950 and 1979 largely operated from the perspectives of Freud, Ellis, and Festinger (Bergin 1983). That is, religiosity was assumed to be associated with or caused by mental illness. As discussed above, Freud (1953) specifically saw religion as arrested development that manifests first as infantile projection and then results in psychopathology. Similarly, Festinger (1957) viewed religion as a dissonant, illogical construct that created a reality in which acolytes constantly needed justification and negotiation. Such a reality left acolytes psychologically on the defensive and in a constant state of anxiety. From a clinical perspective, Ellis (1980:637) provides an apt quote summarizing this negative view of religion:

> Religiosity is in many respects equivalent to irrational thinking and emotional disturbance… The elegant therapeutic solution to emotional problems is to be quite unreligious… the less religious they are, the more emotionally healthy they will be.

Accordingly, studies prior to the 1980s were largely methodologically and theoretically focused to be sensitive to an association with pathology and instability. By and large however, the majority of studies during this period, as reviewed by Bergin (1983), found that religion was either correlated with increased well-being in participants (47%) or that there was no relationship whatsoever (30%). Only 23 percent of the studies between the years of 1950-1979 showed a inverse correlation between religiosity and well-being. This trend of positive correlation between religion and health continued into the 1980s and 1990s, amid a rapidly expanding field of research.

Religion-health research has experienced renewed vitality in the past few decades, including an exponential increase of related studies, journals, and religiosity measures (Ellison and Levin 1998; Miller and Thoresen 2003). This research, however, is not free from controversy and methodological shortcomings. Despite critiques, it is noteworthy that regardless of the population, faith, health-outcome, or operationalized definition of religiosity, there is

> …consistent, evidence that, on average, high levels of religious involvement are moderately associated with better health status….[I]t appears that religion, in a broad sense, represents a protective factor that offers a small but significant primary-preventative effect against morbidity in populations. (Ellison and Levin 1998:701)

This general trend is slowly solidifying into recognizable patterns within the literature. In particular, religion has consistently been inversely associated with cardiovascular disease risk, positively associated with immune function, and negatively associated with psychological distress (Levin 1994). Furthermore, the association appears to be greater among marginalized and disenfranchised (i.e., minority, women, elderly, infirm) populations.

For instance, King et al. (2002) show that religion is associated with increased immune functioning among diabetes suffers, supporting the notion that the religious-health relationship is greater among SES and health marginalized peoples. Specifically, the researchers found that while controlling for known confounders of C-reactive protein (or CRP, an acute inflammatory marker that is also associated with a risk of cardiovascular disease) such as age, BMI, health-behaviors, gender, ethnicity, and self-reported mobility, diabetic individuals who attended religious services were nearly two times less likely to have elevated CRP levels than those with no religious activity. There was no correlation of CRP levels and religious attendance among non-diabetic individuals.

Similarly, in a sample of 1,718 elderly participants, Koenig et al. (1997) found religious attendance inversely associated with IL-6 levels. IL-6 is an inflammatory cytokine thought to be responsible for the induction of the acute inflammatory response and B-lymphocyte proliferation. This is similar in many respects to both CRP and Epstein-Barr virus (EBV) antibodies, insofar as higher levels of this cytokine are associated with a taxed immune system. Controlling for age, sex, ethnicity, education, chronic illness, and physical mobility, religious service attendees were 42 percent less likely than non-attendees to have elevated IL-6 levels.

Concerning cardiovascular health, Hixson et al. (1998) investigated the association between religion and blood pressure among 112 Judeo-Christian women. Controlling for age, BMI, and health behaviors, the authors found that the main effects of high intrinsic religiosity and religious coping were modestly associated with reduced diastolic blood pressure. This effect, interestingly, was greater for elderly women, once again giving credence to the hypothesis that religion is more protective among marginalized individuals (Hixson et al. 1998).

In an important study, Steffen et al. (2001) examined whether religious coping is associated with blood pressure. While the authors were not the first to find a correlation between religion and blood pressure (see for example Scotch and Geiger 1963; Hixson et al. 1998), they uniquely measured blood pressure outside of the clinical setting using an ambulatory blood pressure monitoring device. Controlling for age, BMI, sex, and SES, this study found no general relationship between religious coping and blood pressure. However, the authors did find an interaction effect with ethnicity. Specifically, African Americans with high levels of religious coping had significantly lower blood pressure—of all types –than African Americans with low measures of religious coping. There was no association among white participants. This study is one of several that suggests that marginalized populations—those who are at the periphery of

mainstream society and who lack the same status, consonance, resources, and support mechanisms—receive greater health benefits from religious participation.

The association between religion and psychological wellbeing is less clear, but supports an overall salutogenic effect. In a review of 724 quantitative studies performed prior to 2000, Koenig (2009) found that 66 percent reported a significant positive correlation between religion and mental health. A minority of studies showed no association, and a few found evidence of a negative relationship between faith and psychological well-being. Numerous confounders obscure relationships, and individuals who experience psychological distress tend to rely on religion for coping resources. Nevertheless, there is a clear trend that religion provides coping resources (e.g., social support, internal locus of control, hope, optimism) which buffer the impact of stressful life events (Moreira-Almedida et al. 2006). For example, in a representative sample of 1,139 Detroit residents, Ellison et al. (2001) found that church attendance was associated with decreased psychological distress. Frequency of prayer, however, was only modestly associated with increased physiological and psychological distress. Pargament et al. (1998) examined how different types of religious coping were associated with psychological states. Utilizing a multidimensional scale of religious coping that included both positive coping (e.g., God will give us strength, he has a plan) and negative coping (e.g., this is a punishment from God) items, the authors investigated the degree to which different religious coping strategies buffered against the psychological distress of acute stressors (e.g., death of a loved one, terminal illness, terrorist attack). Generally, individuals who utilized positive coping had better mental health, decreased psychological distress, and increased feelings of community cooperativeness. Increased negative religious coping strategies were associated with increased psychological distress, depression, and feelings of anomie. Both positive and negative religious coping was correlated with increased

physical illness and distress, suggesting an alternative causal direction. That is, those who are sick and ill tend to utilize religious coping more often than well-off individuals.

In a meta-analysis of over 147 studies, Smith et al. (2003) found that religiosity (as it was variously defined) was modestly but significantly associated with lower depressive symptoms (-0.096). Interestingly, this effect was greater for those undergoing stressful life events (-0.152) than those who were not (-0.071)—further supporting the idea that religion is most beneficial to those already marginalized in some fashion. The greater impact of religion in decreasing depression among stressed populations has been supported by other studies. Koenig (2007) in a study of 1428 patients with congestive heart failure or chronic pulmonary disease found that clinical depression (measured through the Structured Clinical Interview for Depression) was significantly more common for those who indicated no religious affiliation, and among those who scored low on intrinsic religiosity. And among psychiatric patients, positive religious coping was seen to significantly predict a remission of depressive symptoms among a sample of 104 elderly psychiatric inpatients (Bosworth et al. 2003).

Longitudinal studies on the psychological effects of religion are rare. But several convincingly show the impact of religion on health over time. In a 6 year follow-up study in the Netherlands, frequent church attendance was associated with fewer depressive symptoms as compared to their initial psychological measurement (Braam et al. 2004). In a more complicated result, Wink and Scott (2005) found that after 30 years, respondents who had either high or low religiosity (measured by researcher ranking through semi-structured interviews) experienced less anxiety. This curvilinear relationship, the authors contend was due to inchoate religious beliefs producing anxiety, particularly later in life. Finally, Koenig et al. (1999) examined the influence of religion among elderly Christian adults in the U.S. over six years. Researchers found

significant evidence that even while controlling for confounders such as age, sex, BMI, depression, mobility, social support and stress, religious attendance predicted increased survival across the population, and even more so for women. Specifically, controlling for demographic and health variables, women who attended religious service once or more per week had a 35 percent reduced risk of mortality over six years, compared to 17 percent for men. The authors hypothesize that several mechanisms may be interacting to confer this survival advantage, such as increased social monitoring of individual health, increased cohesion, and shared communal goals and motivations (i.e., decreased anomie). The authors argue that the effect is amplified for women because they generally have less access to secular resources, coping, and support. That is, religion is able to compensate for women's high levels of social dissonance and anomie (Koenig et al. 1999).

Methodological and Theoretical Trends and Problems in Religion-Health Research

Despite the emergence of important trends in the epidemiology of religion, the development of this area of inquiry is stymied by several methodological and theoretical shortcomings. One of the primary deficits in this research field is the lack of consensus on operational definitions of religiosity and spirituality (e.g., Ellison and Levin 1998; Fabricatore et al. 2004; Sloan and Bagiella 2002; Thoresen 1999). Religiosity is generally defined as an extrinsic, doctrine-driven, institutional practice of faith, while spirituality is the intrinsic, subjective, emotional experience of faith (Hill and Pargament 2003). These definitions, however, remain amorphous, and the depth and breadth of these concepts do not readily translate to measurable variables (Miller and Thoresen 2003). This has not, however, prevented the creation of over 200 spirituality measures and over 100 religiosity measures spanning 17 different "dimensions" (Emmons and Paloutzian 2003; George et al. 2000). A number of these measures

are single item questions. For example, some studies that claim to show a correlation between well-being and religiosity simply measure religiosity by a single measure—frequency of church attendance (Ellision and Levin 1998; Miller and Thoresen 2003). When examining correlations of religiosity and health, the frequency of church attendance measure introduces the confounder of mobility (i.e., being healthy enough to attend), which is rarely accounted for in studies. Furthermore, religiosity scales, which include self-reported church-attendance, seldom consider faith-specific views and practices. For instance, "once a week" worship attendance may be ideal for Catholics, but may be considered under-attendance for Pentecostals. Though they are well intentioned, efforts to create efficient, universal measures of religiosity often reify an imaginary concept of ideal religiousness, while creating additional confusion amid a plethora of available measures (Aldridge 1993; Exline 2002).

Another problematic area in religious-health research centers on how religion and health are connected. By and large, research tends to focus on *if* religion and health are correlated and overlooks *how* they are correlated. Religion is thus interchangeably conceived of as an independent variable, a moderator, and a mediator for well-being through post hoc explanations. While over 400 studies report a significant positive relationship between religion and well-being, only a handful have considered the mediators of the association (George et al. 2002). Health behaviors, in the form of dietary restrictions and taboos, provide the clearest mediator between religion and well-being. Many studies show that active religious participation lowers the rate of drug and alcohol use (Burkett 1993; Perkins 1987), domestic violence (Gallagher 1987), tobacco use, and risky sexual behaviors (Elifson et al. 2003). Well-known for their strict doctrinal taboos concerning drinking, smoking, and sexual activity, Seventh-Day Adventists and Mormons are often the focus of religious behavioral research. These studies suggest that "Mormons and

Seventh-Day Adventists have cancer rates about one-half to two-thirds those of persons of the general population" (Koenig et al. 2001:317), and greater life expectancies (4-7 years) than comparison groups (Enstrom 1998; Simmerman 1993). There is, however, debate concerning whether health-behaviors can be a valid mechanism for religion-health interaction. While some scholars such as Sloan et al. (1999) argue that health-behaviors are confounders, Levin (1994) reminds us that specific theological and cultural beliefs can lead to specific health-behaviors. In other words, "the conceptual compartmentalization of certain behaviors as 'religious' or 'health-related' may be artificial" (Levin 1994:1478). As will be discussed below and in Chapter 7, cultural consensus theory and methods can help to link religious beliefs with individual behaviors.

Communal and social support have also been identified as a probable mediator between religion and health. Religious-social communities provide social solidarity and integration, and a decreased sense of anomie between individuals and larger society (Durkheim 1951). Studies examining this mechanism, however, have produced mixed results. The idea behind a solidarity model supposes that increased ties to the religious community provide greater social integration, social capital, and coping-support. Indeed, studies clearly show that social networks exert "powerful and protective effects on health" (e.g., George et al. 2002:194; House et al. 1988). Some of these even suggest that religious social support exerts a greater salutogenic effect than secular support (Koenig 2002). Unfortunately, the studies as a whole do not provide clear consensus that social support serves as a mediator between faith and health. In a review of religious social networks and mortality, George et al. (2002:194) found:

> In six studies, social interaction had no mediating effects, although it was an independent predictor of mortality (Bryant and Rakowski 1992; Goldman et al. 1995; House et al. 1982; Hummer et al. 1999; Koenig et al. 1999; Oman and Reed 1998). In contrast, two studies report that levels of social interaction with network

> members partially mediate the relationship between attending religious service and mortality (Rogers 1996; Strawbridge et al. 1997).

Evidence for a mediating effect with non-fatal health outcomes is even less well documented. Importantly, however, these studies do not argue that social networks are unimportant to health; in fact, many of them view social integration as having a direct influence on health outcomes. Rather, what is at issue is whether social support acts as a direct mediator between religion and health.

An alternative model of the health-religion relationship is to consider that religion moderates the influence of stressors on well-being. That is, the interactive effect of religion buffers the appraisal or impact of stress. Several studies found that religious involvement diminishes the effects of stress on depression (Maton 1989; Williams et al. 1991), while Brown et al. (1992) "found that higher levels of religious involvement…exacerbated the effects of chronic economic strain on depression" (in George et al. 2002:197). Similarly, some studies argue that dissonance with religious norms can result in psychological distress, such as guilt and anxiety (e.g., Strawbridge et al. 1997). However, these studies lack a coherent method and theory to directly test this hypothesis. That is, while this approach to a health-religion interaction appears to be a promising avenue of inquiry, it lacks a coherent body of theory to connect individual ideals to group norms, and individual behaviors to physical and psychological health. As I demonstrate in Chapter 6, my dissertation research shows that a cognitive anthropological approach can help to address some of the problems plaguing current religion-health research.

How Healers Heal

Anthropologists have known for some time that indigenous healers, often under the auspices of religious authority, do heal. Despite differing opinions for the origins of religion, most scholars agree that healing is central to all religious traditions. To understand how religious

healers heal, it is important to clarify healing in terms of illness and disease. That is, disease and illness refer to two different experiences. As Arthur Kleinman (1980:72) asserts, the two terms represent a "key axiom" in medical anthropology. Disease is the biological deviation from optimal bodily function while illness refers to "the culturally defined feeling and perceptions of physical and mental ailments" (Pelto and Pelto 1996:302). As such, curing refers to the removal of disease, whereas healing attends to the individual experience of illness. Healing, like illness, is culturally defined and thus takes on numerous incarnations and manifestations. However, there are common ways in which healers heal the *psycho-physical* trauma. Healers attend to the experience of disease and have real effects on bodily processes (Moerman 1979). This discussion focuses on spiritualists in Mexico and Brazil, along with Afro-Brazilian Candomblé mediums, to highlight how religion serves as a medical system in a wide variety of contexts. Common among these diverse religious systems are the roles of knowledge transmission (e.g., enculturation of cultural models), identity formation, and beliefs (e.g., expectation response) throughout the healing process.

Knowledge Transmission

The sharing of knowledge is a necessary component of any healing process. The patient must convey experiences of distress, while the healer must explain the cause and means for curing the illness. The degree to which this transmission of knowledge takes place varies for different medical systems. Arthur Kleinman (1980; et al. 1978), for instance, has argued that the client/patient and the practitioner/ healer/physician must share common explanatory models for the cause, progress, and subsequent treatment strategies of an illness in order for healing to occur. Writing in a biomedical publication, Kleinman et al. (1978) acknowledged that the patient may hold conceptions alternative, or even contrary, to those of the physician. Such contrasting

views may prevent the removal of illness by not attending to the ultimate causes or by limiting the efficacy of the treatment (e.g., not following treatment regimen, disbelieving efficacy of healer's advice). For optimal healing, a dialogical process between the physician, the individual, and the patient's family (even the community) needs to occur. This is first because illness is a social phenomenon which affects identities, family economies, and kin networks. Rapport must also be established between the patient and the client, including shared etiology models and treatment options. As Obeyesekere (1977:178) writes, "the sharing of a common belief system facilitates communication and rapport between patient and physician, which in turn enhances the patient's confidence in his doctor." Communication within this model facilitates the elicitation of symptoms for the practitioner and increases treatment compliance for the patient.

More often, explanatory model sharing is not complete for healing to occur. Nor is a close healer-patient relationship necessary for the healing process. In many medical systems, healing is dependent upon an unequal relationship between parties, with the healer having specialized, esoteric knowledge that differs, sometimes drastically, from the patient's own explanatory models. In Greenfield's (2008) study of Brazilian Spiritualists and in Finkler's (1984, 1994) study of Mexican Spiritualists, they find that patronage of a religious medical system is often the result of failed encounters with more traditional (e.g., *curandero*, appeals to patron saints) or modern (i.e., biomedicine) medical systems (see Young and Garro 1981). It is thus not unusual for first time clients to have little prior knowledge of Spiritualist healing systems. Before meeting with a Spiritualist healer under possession (often by the spirit of a famous physician), the novice patient is first attended to by assistants who educate him/her on Spiritualist explanatory models of illness. This information is sometimes relayed through discourse or through the observation of other ongoing healing processes. Education is thus

necessary for the healing process to occur and is built into the healing ritual: the patient must be convinced to adopt the healer's understanding of illness and health (see Oths 1992). Contrary to what Kleinman and Obeyesekre argue for biomedicine, explanatory models are not shared through a dialogical but rather through a more unidirectional process. When the healer discusses the patient's explanatory model, s/he often does so in generalities, pointing out the patient's erroneous and inaccurate presumptions while affirming the certainty of the healer (see Chapter 3). That is, the healer-patient rapport is not based on mutual understanding but rather on the unquestioned authority of the healer that comes from specialized, esoteric knowledge.

Religious Identity Change

The demands of these various religious medical systems can precipitate larger societal role and identity changes. This avenue of religious curing is particularly powerful if the illness is an idiom of distress connected to larger social stresses (Nichter 1981). In her study of Candomblé mediums in northeastern Brazil, Seligman (2005) found that illness is sometimes attributed to the repression of innate healing abilities, thus requiring the patient to become a healer or medium. Often attractive to oppressed populations, mediumship and spiritualism do more than constitute a tactic of resistance, or a rational economic choice. Rather, becoming a healer is "the process of redefining oneself at every level, by reinterpreting one's past experiences [and illnesses] in terms of the culturally defined characteristics of the role…It is in this transformation that…the therapeutic possibilities of mediumship exist" (Seligman 2005). In other words, becoming a healer allows for the creation of a new identity and a world view that reinterprets past, present, and future psycho-physical maladies in terms that are understood and salubriously embodied (Finkler 1994; Seligman 2005).

Christianity also invokes an identity change as part of the healing process. Within Pentecostalism, healing often occurs concurrently with conversion to Pentecostal Christianity. While the specific process differs between congregations and individuals, it typically involves a person such as a mother who is seeking the curative powers of Jesus (manifested through the Holy Spirit) for herself or a family member. In return, the individual publically accepts Christ into his/her heart, and begins a conversion process which involves education in the tenets and beliefs of the church. This is followed by a physical baptism in water and a spiritual baptism in the Holy Spirit, often manifesting as glossolalia.[5] Importantly, among the newly transmitted religious beliefs, the convert receives a new model of gender roles. In the patriarchal and machista Latin American societies, Pentecostalism reframes the genders more equally; while women may not be greatly empowered, men do become more domesticated. As explained in Chapter 2, male roles are brought in from the *ruas* and into the *casas*, thereby rejecting dominant social norms that encourage destructive behaviors such as excessive alcohol consumption, fighting, and womanizing. Redirected into the houses, these counter-cultural male roles raise the prestige of the domestic, and by extension, women (Brusco 1995; Chesnut 1997). Further, while the faith often espouses female submissiveness to male authority, it does not distinguish gender in spiritual and moral authority. When confronted with an unbelieving or abusive husband, Pentecostal women often utilize their knowledge of the Bible or their newfound confidence as a *crente* to berate or scold their partner's poor behaviors (see Brusco 1995). Similarly, because many Pentecostal churches utilize a lay-clergy, female members will often take on authoritative

[5] Tanya Luhrmann (2012) argues that the ability to personally experience the divine, such as glossolalia or hearing the Holy Spirit, requires education, training, and skill. More specifically, members are indoctrinated on the culturally appropriate manifestation of such experiences, encouraged to practice (and pretend) encountering the divine, and develop the skill to easily call upon the phenomenon. Not unlike other tasks, some individuals are innately more inclined to excel at a particular undertaking (e.g., athletics). Increased ability for dissociation and absorption may be critical to experiences of such types of spirituality.

roles as missionaries, teachers, or even preachers. While restricted to religious work, for many Brazilian women this represents the first time that they can hold a public role or presence outside of a remedial work capacity. Religiously instigated identity change can provide a new cognitive framework to reinterpret past trauma, and coping strategies to confront future stressors.

Meaning Response of Religion

Finally, healing can occur simply because one believes in its curative powers. Similar to studies in stress research, appraisal carries significant weight towards shaping the impact of a stressor. The reverse is also true. Positive expectations can begin the release of endorphins and other neurotransmitters associated with mood, analgesia, and other salutogenic physiological changes (e.g., stimulating white blood cell production; decreasing the sympathetic nervous system) (Sapolsky 2004). Irving Kirsch (1997:69), a leading researcher on placebos, defines response expectancy as "the anticipation of nonvolitional, subjective, and behavioral responses to particular situational cues." The anticipatory response to (seemingly inert) stimuli is the underlying theoretical mechanism for a variety of phenomena, including "the placebo effect," self-affirmation and actualization, and hypnosis, as well as being a foundational part of medicine, psychotherapy, athletic training, and self-help books, to name a few. Participation in a healing ritual that includes healing models and the use of symbols associated with healing (e.g., biomedical symbols of the white coat, pills; traditional symbols that draw upon sympathetic or contagious magic) reinforce the authority of the healer and create the expectation of physiological change. This alteration of experience and appraisal, due to an *a priori* expectation of "inert" stimuli, has been clearly documented in a number of studies, including physiological changes after drinking caffeinated or alcoholic beverages (Kirsch and Weixel1988; Rather and Goldman 1994); changes in pain perception (Montgomery and Kirsch 1996); efficacy of

psychotherapy treatments (Southworth and Kirsch 1988; Valentiner et al 1993); improved health when practitioners believe someone else is praying them (Matthew et al. 2001); and the elicitation of specific emotional appraisals of stimuli when exposed to similar testimonials (Wilson et al. 1989). Kirsch (1997) argues that a combination of classical conditioning and the cultural construction of experience create the expectancy response. In his words, "experience is constructive. Perception is influenced not only by what actually happens, but also by expectations concerning what should occur" (Kirsch 1997:75). Medical anthropologists D.E. Moerman and W.B. Jonas (2002) prefer the term "meaning response," where the culturally prescribed symbolic meanings of so-called placebos shape the experiences and expectations of stimuli. These symbols of efficacy exist in all medical systems, from biomedicine to religious healing and shamanism, and they facilitate changes in physiology, independent of any biomedically active ingredient. As Moerman (1979) has suggested, more than 60 percent of treatment efficacy is due to meaning response rather than the drug or procedure itself.

Healers combine symbols of authority and efficacy along with cultural models as part of their healing rituals. For example, Kardecian and Mexican Spiritualists often wear white lab coats during healing rituals, invoking biomedical symbols as they conjure up the spirits of deceased physicians to address the ailments of clients. Similarly, *obreiros* of the IURD regularly don white lab coats and stethoscopes during *cultos do saude* (healing worship)—invoking the authority associated with the biomedical system, even as they heal by laying on of hands. And perhaps most powerful of all are the testimonies of true-believers who are proof of the power of faith healing. The personal accounts of others provide the foundations of the mean response of religious healing. As an autobiographical narrative, they outline the transition from sick role to the healthy role, and provide the necessary knowledge for achieving such a transformation.

Accordingly, such personal accounts comprise a key aspect of many ritual healings (Greenfield 2008). Finally, positive self-affirmation is a key part of many religious discourses, and is especially prevalent within Brazilian Pentecostal sermons (Oro 2004). More detailed aspects of these rituals are discussed in the following ethnographic chapter; in short, these religions provide more than hope. They expect members to not only ask, but to visualize the reception of life changing blessings; at times the churches require parishioners to verbalize or write in detail the future lives they envision for themselves.

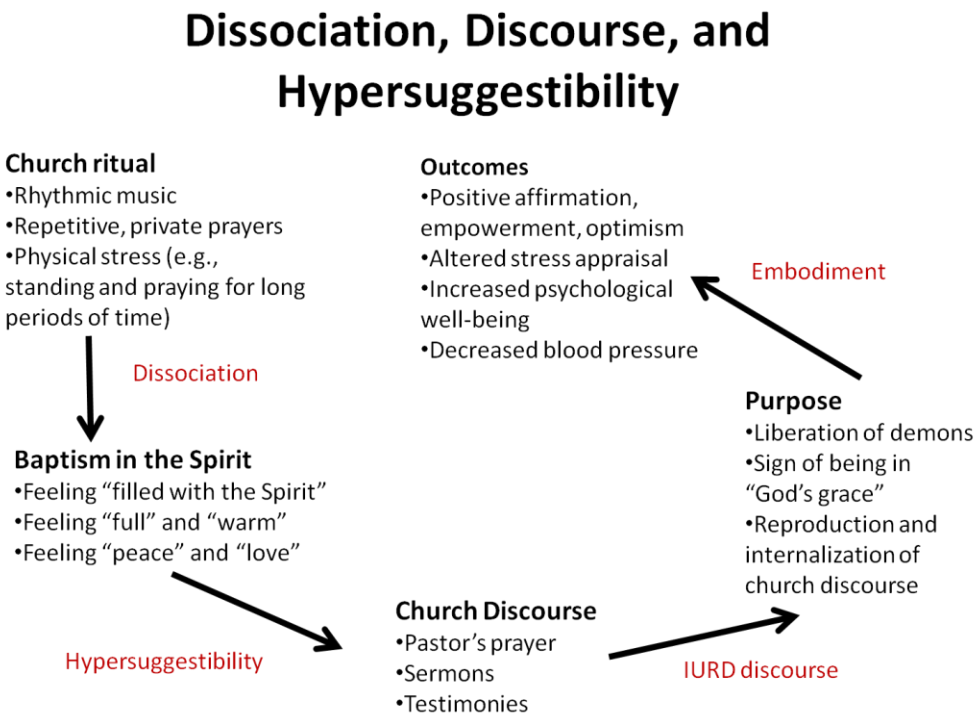

Figure 5.1: Pathway of cultural-biological transduction for Pentecostals

Religious Cultural-Biological Transduction

For some time, these various mechanisms of the religion-health interaction remained disparate. In 2008, Greenfield's (2008) suggested a model of cultural-biological transduction, which posits the movement of information from one bodily system to another—effectively

combining the cognitive effects of religious dissociation with the health potentials of identity change and meaning response (i.e., discourse). Cultural-biological transduction is the integration of culturally meaningful discourse (through language, rituals, or symbols) into cognition, which then induces a somatized response that effectively alters physiology (see Figure 1). Fundamentally, this model relies on studies of hypnosis, a type of dissociative state which integrates discourse (e.g., suggestions of the hypnotist) with an altered state of consciousness to evoke behavioral and physiological changes. There is a long scientific history of hypnosis as efficacious for altering behaviors, treating physical illnesses such as warts (Surman et al. 1973), increasing the immune system response (Gruzelier 2002), buffering experiences of physical pain (Hawkins 2001), and altering blood flow (Clawson and Swade 1975).

In a study of Brazilian Kardecian Spiritualist surgeries, Greenfield (2008) found that the hyper-suggestibility of hypnotic-like trance allowed new patients to undergo invasive surgeries with no anesthesia. Under dissociative states, neophytes could quickly embody dominant messages and narratives of the faith. Since religious dissociation is often accompanied by extreme emotional states (e.g., the feelings of overwhelming love, sorrow, submissiveness, communal solidarity), the cultural values learned (or suggested) during this period possess increased cognitive permanence which can contribute to the perception of newly implicit knowledge and memories (Greenfield 2005). Greenfield convincingly shows that this hyper-embodiment of discourse leads to transduction or the information flow between bodily systems. External stimuli such as cultural symbols and discourses are mapped onto physical processes. During transduction, external cues subconsciously trigger physiological changes through gene expression and neurotransmitter and hormone levels. In Brazil, Kardecian Spiritualist surgeries

occur so that a neophyte can embody cultural values that are necessary for the literal experience of miraculous healings and life changes. Citing Rossi (2002:200), Greenfield (2008:190) notes:

> (This) model of culturalbiology...hypothesizes that healing and other benefits to a suffering individual occur when information at the cultural level…is transduced via the psyche of a participant in a religious ritual…When, in controlled situations, members of these religious or traditional groups enter into what Goodman (1988) calls religious ASC and continue uninterrupted for at least one 90 to 120 minute cycle of activity and rest, they may be undergoing the same process of psychosocial genomics as hypnotized patients. In terms of Rossi's model, they may transduce sufficient information into their bodily systems to (1) turn on immediate-early genes that, …"(2) may lead to the expression of specific target genes, which (3) code for new protein synthesis that is the molecular basis of (4) state-dependent memory, learning, behavior…that is replayed on conscious and unconscious levels."

The transduction and literal embodiment of cultural information is evident through the numerous studies on the clinical efficacy of hypnosis (Holroyd 1992), and in the popularity of religions that utilize such dissociative rituals in their worship. For example the IURD *cultos* almost always entail mass religious dissociation; messages conveyed at church meetings are met by a hyper-suggestive audience. Even a neophyte who may not have full knowledge of church doctrine can receive therapeutic outcomes through the information available in sermons and testimonies combined with an altered state of consciousness (Greenfield 2008).

Similarly, Oths (1999) in her study of the illness *debilidad*, reminds us that *habitus* can result in the embodiment of cultural knowledge that shapes understandings of the body and the manifestation and experience of psychological and physiological states. More specifically, episodes of healing or illness can be understood as a perpetual cybernetic feedback system of biology, psychology, and sociality. Modeling mind-body-culture interaction this way denies Cartesian dualism and the boundaries between individual psychology and cultural knowledge (Foss and Rothenberg 1987). For example, *debilidad* is a cultural-bound syndrome in Andean Peru that manifests as embodied exhaustion (e.g., headaches, body aches, sleep disorders,

dizziness) resulting from specific productive (e.g., labor shortages, property loss) and reproductive (e.g., blood loss, household sex-ratio imbalance) stressors. Within this peasant community, household production and reproduction are central cultural activities whose impact cannot be over appreciated. Experiences within the cultural space of the household are interpreted through shared cultural knowledge, which gives meanings to these events, and is embodied in the bodies and psyches of these individuals, itself which constitutes another life-experience that is ascribed cultural meanings. Oths (1999) described *debilidad* and other examples of culture-biology interaction as cultural "programming," where organizations of cultural knowledge and logic directs certain experiences or configurations of experiences to specifically culturally prescribed outcomes. When culture is directed towards psychological and/or biological outcomes, it constitutes cultural-biological transduction, where cultural literally manifests on and within the body. Cultural knowledge, whether of recent acquisition as demonstrated by Greenfield or as established *habitus* ala Oths, can have dramatic, drastic, and determinate effects on both the mind and body. The role of cultural-biological transduction for Pentecostal religious healing is further explored in the following ethnographic chapter.

What Can Cognitive Anthropology Offer the Study of Religion and Health?

This chapter argues that the study of the association between religion and health can benefit from cognitive anthropological theory and methods. In particular, cultural consonance—the theory that dissonance with shared cultural norms results in stress and impacts health—can provide a way to extend the religion-health field in important ways.

This study operationalizes religion as a series of cultural models and by doing so, puts the epidemiological triad of host-agent-environment back into the epidemiology of religion. Religion-health studies have focused on the host and the health outcomes with little to no

consideration of the environment or how the host-agent-environment triad mutually impacts one another. Levin (1996) contends that viewing religion as a psychosocial environment enables an important conception of religion-health associations. Namely, religion, as a socio-cultural environment, prevents or promotes morbidity; it does not *cause* either healing or disease. Rather, the interaction of the host with the environment—cultural consonance or dissonance—causes salutogenic or deleterious stress, which causes health or disease. This is important because numerous religion-health articles (e.g., Sloan et al. 1999) question the association of religion and health, suggesting instead that the association results from other factors, such as social support, health-behaviors, and coping strategies. By considering religion as the environment, these so-called confounders can be considered as mechanisms and pathways by which religion is related to the individual, and the individual to health. In other words, "other factors such as social support do not 'explain away' the health effects of religious involvement, but rather elucidate the pathways and mechanisms by which being religious and practicing religion seem to benefit health" (Levin 1996:857). Thusly, adapting cultural consonance to the study of religion and health will help us to better understand the mechanism (or mechanisms) by which religion influences health. That is, stress resulting from incongruence with religious communal norms activates a psychological and physiological response.

Conceptualizing the religion-health interaction within the stress-paradigm not only explains the wide range of health outcomes that have been associated with religiosity, but allows for the evaluation of religion in increasingly complex ways—such as the possible moderation of acute stressors or mediation of health-behaviors. Furthermore, this approach associates religion with both salutogenic and deleterious health outcomes (see Ellison et al. 2001). Consonance with religious norms may aid in decreasing stress levels, and provide a buffer against stressors.

Dissonance, meanwhile, may result in guilt and anxiety—which further taxes allostatic states. In contrast to extant religion-stress research which relies on self-appraisal exposure to past acute stressors (e.g., death of loved one, terrorist attack) to determine the buffering power of religion, cultural consonance allows for a contemporaneous and continuous evaluation of chronic stress as a result of psychosocial pressures.

Cultural consensus can also transform the way religion is operationalized and measured. By conceiving of religion as a cultural structure that is composed of systems of knowledge, we can conceive of emically validated notions of religiosity or spirituality. Furthermore, the various domains of religiosity can be compared across denominations—allowing for an empirically driven method of comparing valued religiosity models, and their relative impacts on psychological and physiological health. Besides offering a better measure of religiosity, such an approach may also provide the methodological means of testing why religiosity has a greater association with well-being among marginalized and disenfranchised populations. That is, consonance with religion-centric models may compensate for dissonance in wider secular models. For some, religious domains may be valued above or alternative to others, allowing individuals on the periphery of secular society alternate means of communal integration and resource acquisition (see Powell et al. 2003).

Finally, a cognitive approach will facilitate the infusion of a much needed ethnographic perspective within the epidemiology of religion. Nearly every major study of the religion-health association fails to place in cultural context the people they are researching. That is, investigation into the link between religion and physiological and psychological health has long been under the purview of the more "scientific" of the social sciences, such as sociology, psychology, and epidemiology (Ellison and Levin 1998). As such, the entire discipline of epidemiology, it has

been noted, has long been decoupled from the socio-cultural environment of its subjects (Trostle and Sommerfeld 1996; True 1996). Anthropology brings a suite of structured and unstructured, quantitative and qualitative methods that will not only provide a triangulation of data, enriching meaning, validity, and reliability, but perhaps a paradigm shift that will erase the arbitrarily, ingrained disciplinary divides to quantitative research on the one hand, and qualitative research on the other. Anthropology can provide a more holistic view of how religion is an integrated part of people's lives. Further, the experiences, life histories, and conversion stories of informants can shed important insight on how acolytes view the transformative and "healing" effects of religion. For those more quantitatively inclined, methods such as free listing, pile sorting, and model building (along with consensus) can provide a reified and testable measure of traditionally qualitative data. It is about time that epidemiology of religion is removed from the sterilize gaze of the empiricist.

Chapter Summary

Despite over a century of interest regarding the connection between religion and health, the epidemiology of religion is only beginning to develop as a field onto itself, slowly emerging from the peripheral shadows of psychology, cognitive sciences, sociology, and anthropology. The inter-disciplinary interest in this field has simultaneously benefited from cross-theory fertilization and been stymied by a lack of cohesion and comparable methodology. This chapter has reviewed some of the important trends, theories, and deficits within study of the epidemiology of religion. Anthropological approaches, under-represented within religion-health research, may contribute a much needed perspective to the field. In particular, cognitive anthropological methods, such as cultural consonance, offer a new way of conceptualizing the

religion-health interaction, and just possibly, a means for unifying the divergent approaches currently used.

Durkheim saw religion as a social fact, capable of integrating or alienating an individual from society. Cassel and Levin viewed culture and religion as environments, alternatively buffering or exacerbating stressors of individuals. Cultural consonance, however, views individuals as inhabiting various stages of consonance or dissonance with the norms and values of a society. The degree to which an individual is congruent with their socio-cultural environment impacts their stress and health. As such, the proposed direction for the epidemiology of religion is not a novel concept—but the natural outcome of over a hundred years of observation and research. Importantly, this perspective is not the fruit of any single discipline, but an amalgam of sociological, epidemiological, and anthropological thought.

The study of religion and health is important to not only understand one of the most unique and defining features of the human animal, but to realize the complex ways in which culture impacts and shapes bodies. Culture is the primary adaptation of humans—facilitating an unprecedented level of behavioral innovation and plasticity. It is very likely that proto-religious belief was one of the first complex cultural developments of our *Homo* ancestors—providing the cognitive mechanisms, group cohesion, and societal controls that allowed our ancestors to not only survive, but flourish. Research hypothesizes that religion may still provide an adaptive benefit by decreasing anomie, buffering stress, and providing a sense of collectiveness that is often absent in modern, industrialized settings.

Ethnographic studies have shown that healing goes beyond addressing physiological stressors caused by pathogens or injury. Healers of various medical systems view the individual as society writ large. Illness, healing, and health are influenced and shaped by networks, cultural

symbols, and the social spaces that patients occupy in relation to larger socio-cultural structures/institutions. For healing to occur, individuals must minimally share the healer's etiological model. Education is therefore essential to the healing process so that the patient develops trust in the healer's authority and abilities, and ultimately believes in salubrious outcomes. Culturally specific and other idiosyncratic symbols contribute to the authority of the healing practice by reifying the process in material forms. Altered states of consciousness, including dissociation and hypnosis, often accompany religious medical systems as a type of embodied evidence of the presence and power of supernatural forces. Such states of consciousness may actually aid in the healing process, not only by blunting the sympathetic nervous system, but by making the individual more susceptible to suggestion, altering emotions and cognitions, and resulting in salubrious and analgesic physiological changes.

Central to my research is the etiological system of disease and illness associated with religious, especially Christian-based, healing systems. Illness and healing are framed around notions of pollution/sin and purity/righteousness. The good Pentecostal can expect to be under divine grace, and can *expect* continued health and security. A sinful Pentecostal, on the other hand, *fears* that illness or injury will result as a punishment/result for falling away from divine protection. In other words, the position that an individual holds in relation to the expectations of their religious community may alter his/her health and healing expectations. Working as a meaning response, an individual's consonance with religious norms may shape his/her psychological and physiological health.

Cognitive anthropology may provide the means of this proposition using more valid and reliable methods. First, through cultural consensus and cultural consonance, a cognitive approach can provide a better measure of religiosity. Cultural consonance, especially when

combined with other anthropological methods, can increase the meaning, validity, and reliability of these measures. Second, cultural consonance explicitly links individuals with their faiths, and provides a mechanism (i.e., the stress response) for explaining the wide range of observed health outcomes. Along these same lines, cultural consonance therefore accounts for both positive and negative health outcomes due to variations of religiosity or religious consonance. Finally, religiosity conceived as religious-domain consonance will allow for more complex modeling of the religion-health association by being readily integrated with other domain measures of consonance or comparable across faiths along similar domains.

CHAPTER 6: An Ethnographic Perspective on Ribeirão Preto's Pentecostals

This research draws from a transdisciplinary perspective to understand the interaction of culture and health. Cognitive anthropology, epidemiology, and stress research all provide valuable insights towards comprehending this important relationship. It is necessary, however, to situate these ideas within the lived ethnographic contexts of my study's participants. The ways by which Brazilians view, practice, and use their faith are structured by the larger and often subtle cultural milieu of which they are part. This chapter provides the briefest of glimpses of how Brazilian Pentecostalism is situated in the day-to-day life of the citizens of Ribeirão Preto. In order to do so, I provide the following ethnographic account of my field-work, the city which it takes place, and the people whose lives I intersected.

Overview of Ribeirão Preto

Figure 6.1: Location of Ribeirão Preto within Brazil. Adapted from: Wikipedia 2012

Some basic statistics provide a foundation for my ethnographic accounts. Ribeirão Preto is located in the northeast part of the state of São Paulo, approximately 318km from the state capital (Figure 6.1 and Figure 6.2). The smooth rolling hills, fertile red soil, and a warm Aw climate (Köppen climate classification) have made Ribeirão Preto an ideal place for agriculture

Figure 6.2: City of Ribeirão Preto. Source: Google Maps 2013

since its founding in the mid-19th century. As a result, much of the original forest has been cleared for sugarcane production—leaving less than three percent of the native forest intact (Carneseca et al. 2012). The result of the blowing of winds and the cleared fields can be seen in the light blanket of red soil that covers exposed surfaces in the city. The heart of Ribeirão Preto is bounded by three highways forming a triangle: on the east by the Anhanguera Highway; on the south by the Highway Mayer Antonio Duarte Nogueira; and on the northwest by the Highway

Alexandre Balbo. The city is divided up into a number of neighborhoods, each with its own layout and socioeconomic status (see Figure 6.3).

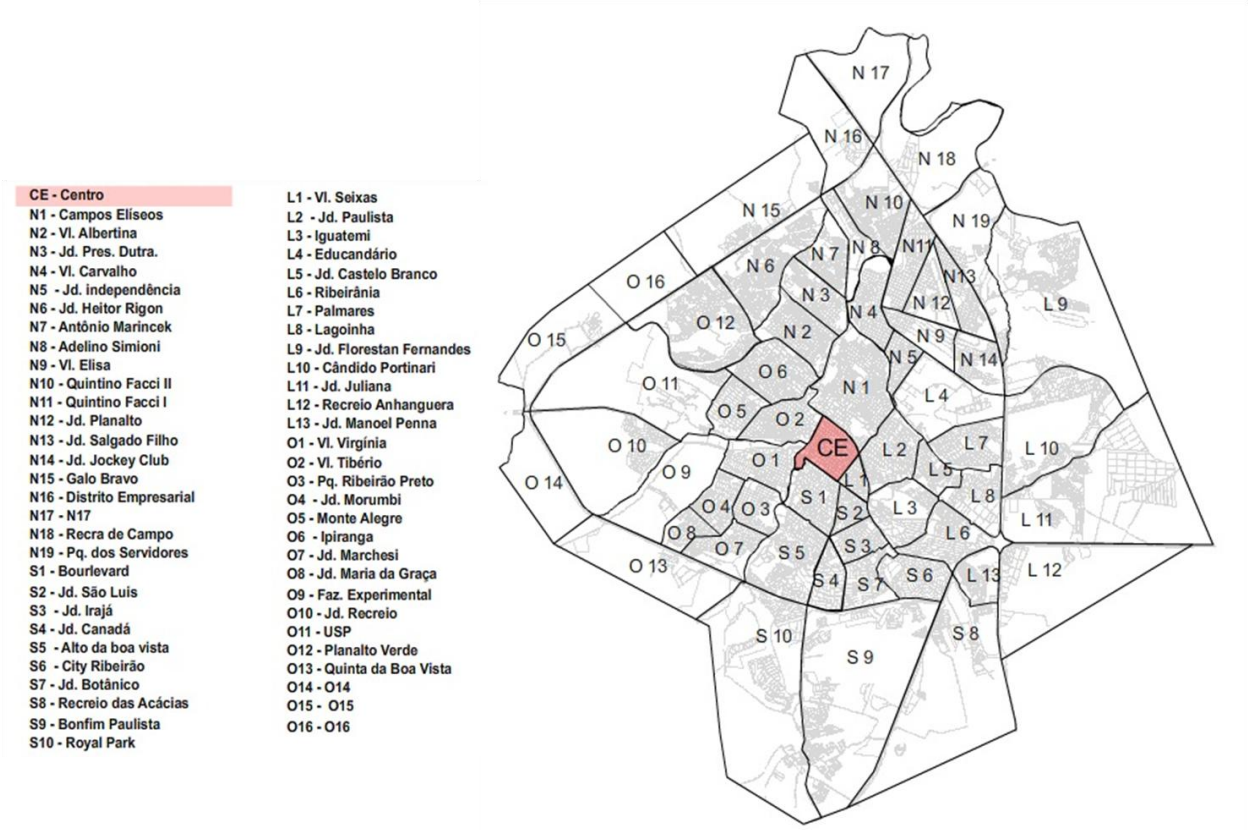

Figure 6.3: Neighborhood map of Ribeirão Preto. Research communities of IURD and AD are located at CE and O2, respectively. Source: Lastoria, A. C. 2008

According to the most recent national survey, Ribeirão Preto has a population of 604,682 (IBGE 2010). The entire municipality occupies a total area of 650. 955 km^2, resulting in a population density of approximately 928 inhabitants for every square kilometer. There is a fairly equal gender distribution, with a male to female sex ratio of 0.92. The population is young, with 63 percent of the population under the age of 40 (see Figure 6.3). The relative youth of the population is bolstered by the city's many universities, such as the *Universidade do São Paulo* (USP), *Universidade de Ribeirão Preto* (UNAERP), *Universidade Paulista* (UNIP), *Fundação*

Armando Alvares Penteado (FAAP), and *Fundação Fritz Muller* (FFM). In fact, over 26,070 residents

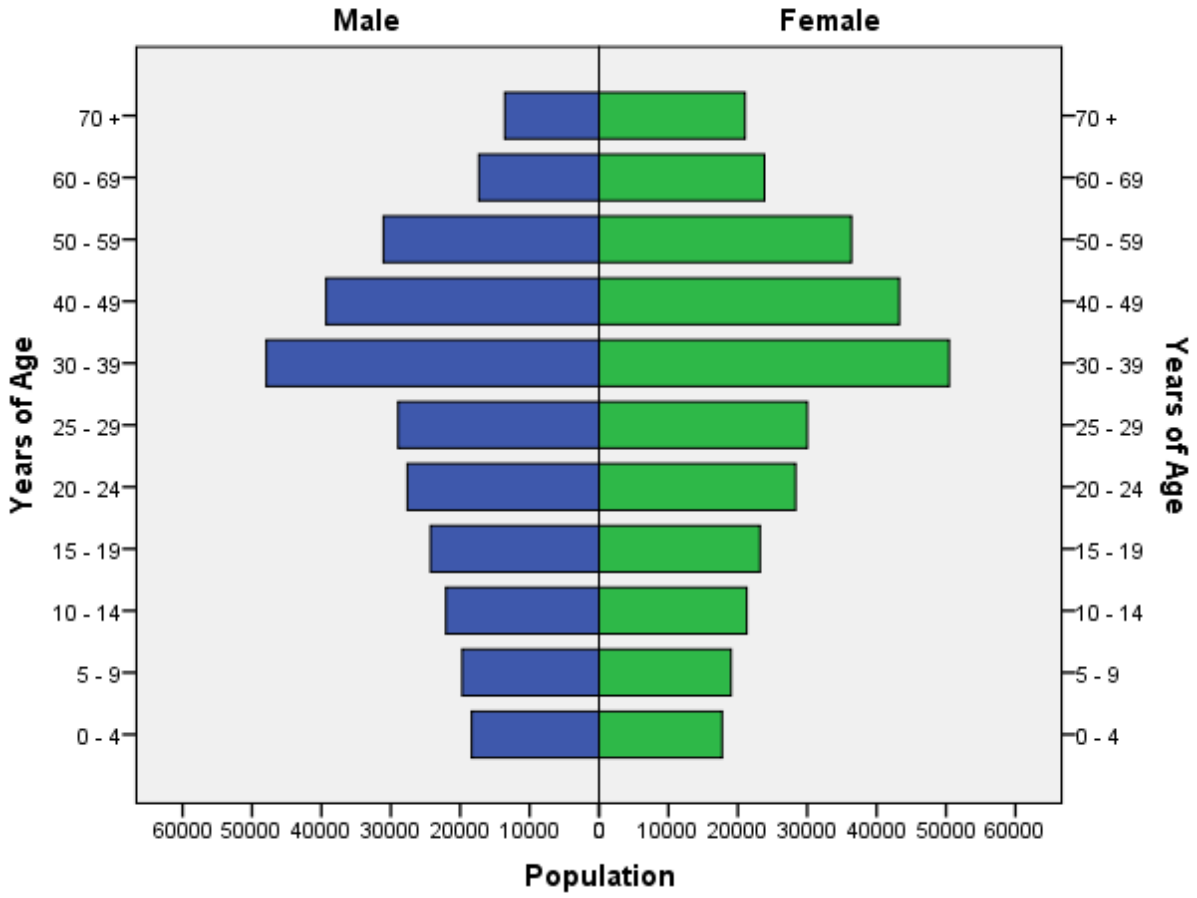

Figure 6.4: Population pyramid of Ribeirão Preto. Data Source: IBGE 2010

were currently attending higher education classes when the census was conducted in 2010. The population is also overwhelmingly *branco* (white) (76.9%). *Negros* (black) (5.6%), *pardos* (brown/mixed) (15.7), Asians (0.8%), and *indios* (indigenous Brazilian) (0.1%) make up the minority of the population (IBGE 2010). With regards to relationship status, there is a substantial single population exemplifying its youthful composition: 205,126 people are married, 39,765 are separated or divorced, 28,568 are widowed, and over 200,000 people over the age of 15 are single. Ribeirão Preto is nominally very religious, as is the majority of Brazil. The majority, 61

percent identify as Catholic; 20 percent practice an *evangélica* religion. At smaller concentrations, 7 percent identify as *espírita* and 8 percent do not identify with any religion. Of the *religiões evangélicas*, 14 percent are from traditional Protestant faiths such as Lutherans, Methodists, and Baptists. Fifty-four percent (11% of the total population) belong to Pentecostal churches. The *Assembléia* has the largest presence, with 3 percent of the city (nearly 17,000) identifying as a member of the church. The IURD, while smaller, still has over 1 percent (7,301) of people publically declaring to census officials their membership in the church.

This city is one of the most developed in Brazil: it has the 30th largest economy among Brazilian cities; 99 percent of all residents having running water and a connection to the city's sewer system; and over 97 percent of residents over the age of 15 are literate (Filho et al. 2007; IBGE 2010). Despite this, there are substantial wealth inequalities in Ribeirão Preto. The average monthly income of a household is R$1,551.20 per capita, or about R$4,051.04 (7.4 minimum salaries at the 2010 rate of R$545/month) for the typical household. However, the median per capita monthly salary is R$833.33 or approximately R$2,167 for the household (about 3.9 minimum salaries). The difference between these two figures indicates that income in Ribeirão Preto is skewed to the right; a few individuals make much more money than the majority of residents. Some of this wealth disparity is seen along racial lines. Whites make almost $R1000 more monthly than all other racial/color classifications, with the exception of Asians. Men on average make 1.5 times that of women. Overall, 11.75 percent of the population lives in poverty, and 8.77 percent live in abject poverty. Many of these poor Brazilians are among the 128,879 people ten years of age or older who are neither enrolled in school or nor employed. Disproportionately more women (88,738) than men (40,141) are unemployed, making them a vulnerable population reliant on others for resources. This socio-economic gender gap is

important considering that 16 percent of households in Ribeirão Preto, or about 28,500 families, are headed by a single mother.

As a result of socio-economic inequalities, the GINI index for the city is 0.45—the same as the megacity of São Paulo. However, the GINI coefficient of the city is lower than that of the nation: 0.45 compared to 0.54. And this stands in contrast to the much higher indicators of social inequality both the city (0.77) and the nation (0.61) had over ten years ago at the turn of the 21st century (Bazon 2008). That is, despite continuing inequality, the city over the last several years has greatly improved the economic profile of its population.

There are several examples of the relatively improved economic profile of the population. Two measures are the size of the household and the number of residents per bedroom. The 2010 national survey identified 178,016 families residing in private housing units. Thirty-four percent of households are comprised of only two people; 31 percent have three family members; 23 percent have four family members; 8 percent have five family members; and 3 percent have more than five family members living under the same roof. These houses are also less crowded than in past decades: 42 percent of houses have on average of one resident per bedroom; 46 percent have approximately two residents per room; 9 percent have up to three; and 3 percent, almost 6,000 households, have four or more people per bedroom. Similarly, households in Ribeirão Preto are reporting a fairly high degree of consumption of consumer goods. Eighty-seven percent of households have a radio; 99 percent have a television set; 77 percent have a washing machine; 99 percent have a refrigerator; 88 percent cell phone; 71 percent landline telephone; 60 percent personal computer; 51 percent have internet access; and 67 percent have cars.

As a result of this greater distribution of income as well as government programs, over one third of the citizens are covered by private health insurance plans, and the rest, approximately 62 percent are covered by the national health care system (Carneseca et al. 2012). Indeed, Ribeirão Preto, with its many clinics and university teaching hospitals boasts one of the country's best systems of medical centers (Bigal et al. 2000). Across the city there are 319 health clinics and hospitals, 95 of them are public institutions available to all citizens. As a result, the infant mortality rate is low compared to other areas of Brazil (20.5), at 10.47 deaths per thousand live births (de Oliveira et al. 2010; CIA 2012). And overall life expectancy is over 74 years (IBGE 2010). Despite this however, alcohol abuse is rampant. A recent study surveyed over two thousand citizens in Ribeirão Preto, and found 43.47 percent of the men and 10.18 percent of the women were symptomatic of alcohol dependency (de Freitas and de Moraes 2011). This has resulted in high mortality—in 2000 it was estimated that alcohol contributed to 3.5 percent of deaths among women and 14.2 percent of deaths among men; the years of life lost due to disability (Disability Adjusted Life Years) stands at 4.1 percent for women and 17.3 percent for men (de Freitas and de Moraes 2011).

Saturday, September 3, 2011

The sound of roaring motorcycles jolts me from my slumber. It is barely seven on a Saturday morning, but the streets outside my small apartment building are already bustling. Women with burlap bags and small metal carts are on their way to the street-market for fresh fruits and vegetables on sale from the countryside. As they walk, the women stop at the various closed clothing, shoe, and lingerie stores to window-shop. Men on motorbikes and in cars speed past, barely missing some of the pedestrians. Despite the early hour, the sun is already promising to make this another hot, sweltering day in Ribeirão Preto.

Ribeirão Preto has been called the California of Brazil for its economy based on both agricultural products (primarily sugarcane) and biotechnology, its associated wealth, and a warm and sunny climate. The city was originally founded in 1856 by former miners who were searching for a place to raise cattle and to grow coffee beans. Accordingly, the city elite were composed of wealthy land owners and coffee barons, making Ribeirão Preto one of the richest cities in Brazil at the turn of the 20th century. The city also boasts a number of high cultural institutions, such as several nationally ranked universities, an opera house (Pedro II Theatre), mansions, and the European-style architecture of its oldest buildings. Arguably, the 600,000 citizens are most proud of the city's beer culture. In 1911, Antarctica Brewery Company opened a factory in Ribeirão Preto, soon followed by their *Pinguim* (penguin) beer houses. These draft houses are elegantly decorated with antiques of Brazilian farming and mining life placed tastefully on the walls, while the waiters wear finally tailored uniforms more commonly seen in a 5-star restaurant, and the home-brewed draft beer is exclusively served in fluted glasses.

Beer was not on the menu for me this morning. The local Pinguim draft house, nestled on the ground floor of the *Santa Ursula* shopping center, does not open until 11am. From the window of my apartment, I could still see the patio chairs of Pinguim neatly stacked and a worker with a hose washing down the patio and surrounding sidewalk. This did not concern me since I was scheduled to have breakfast with my friend at a local hotel that he and his family owns and operates.

My apartment is located within the *bairro* (neighborhood), *Centro,* located in the city's center and the oldest section in town. This part of Ribeirão Preto is arranged along a grid pattern, with residential houses and businesses often occupying the same street. Interspersed throughout the *Centro* are *praças* (small plazas and parks) with meandering sidewalks, white gazebos, and

gardens. These places attract a wide range of the city's inhabitants: elderly friends can be seen on park benches discussing the plot twists from last evening's *telenovela* (soap opera); the youth often congregate around the gazebo to smoke cigarettes with friends after school.

As I navigate my way through one of the *praças* and onto the street, I nearly trip over and into a *buraco* (hole) that could easily conceal a medium sized dog. The *paralelepipedos* (paving bricks) that line the grid of streets have long since been covered over with asphalt, but the occasional rain storm combined with poor workmanship has left craters in the street where the original reddish brown bricks can still be seen. Indeed, poor public works infrastructure is a common complaint from many city dwellers. Many public works are viewed to be of substandard quality and with questionable duration. "Brazilians don't like to work" was a common point of critical self-reflection, or, "They will put off until tomorrow what can easily be done today." Some of my more educated informants cite former French president Charles de Gaulle to illustrate Brazil's misplaced priority. De Gaulle's quote "Le Brésil n'est pas un pays sérieux" (Brazil is not a serious country) is proof for some that the rest of the world views Brazil as more concerned with revelry than with work.

In many ways, enjoying life holds much more cultural salience for this South American county than other nations. Brazilians of all backgrounds value moments of *lazer* (leisure), often around pools during *churascos* (barbeques) held at an owned or rented *chácara* (cottage) located outside of the city limits. Life literally stops when the national *futebol* (soccer) team or the beloved Corinthians or Palmarés (two professional soccer clubs) take to the pitch—people leave work, close down shops and gather around the television to root for their team. For an entire week before Lent, the nation dances in the streets for Carnaval. Importantly, however, this perceived gaiety is tempered by *saudade*, the unlikely combination of *allegria* (joy) and *tristeza*

(sadness) that leads to a deceptively open hospitality that is underlined with a current of mistrust. Writing on the culture of his people, Fernando de Azevedo (1995:4, 7) remarks: "Great though their hospitality may be, Brazilians…do not open up easily or totally…Even when Brazilians opened the gates of their houses, they would close those of their intimacy and of their heart… (Rather) of all the social institutions, the family shows the greatest solidarity and cohesion." As a result, the cultural institutions most celebrated by Brazilians—*Carnaval*, *futebol*, and *samba*—are often enjoyed and enacted in the company of strangers and acquaintances on the streets, rather than among close friends and family in the home. Within the dichotomy of the *casa* (house) and the *rua* (street) that anthropologist Roberto DaMatta (1991) has written so extensively about, the family is secure and protected. This dyad is symbolically reinforced by the electric fences and broken glass that line the gates and walls of every Brazilian home, making them into small fortresses. While the security measures functionally serves to keep intruders out, they symbolically keep the family in, inaccessible to all but the most trusted relationships.

Figure 6.5: View of Ribeirão Preto from atop the hotel

I contemplate these aspects of Brazilian society as I enter my friend's hotel. I am immediately greeted by Rodrigo, the bellhop, with a hearty handshake and a slap on the back. He inquires about my research and jokes, "shouldn't you be at church right now?" Behind the reception desk, another employee named Carla smiles and waves. She and I half embrace, each kissing the air by the other's right cheek in Brazilian custom. She inquires about the well-being of my family back in the US, as I ask about her son who is preparing to take the college entrance examination known as the *vestibular*. I feel a tug on my pants and look down to see Neto, the two year old son of my friend. I lift him up and carry him into the hotel dining room, where I encounter my friend Chang and his family, including his wife, his brother, and his brother-in-law, as well as both of their spouses. The eight of us sit down to breakfast, as is our custom every Saturday morning. Despite being my closest group of friends in Brazil, having spent Christmas, Carnaval, and Easter with them, I can count on one hand the number of times I have visited their homes. Chang, an immigrant to Brazil from China, regularly refers to me as his American cousin, and I do not doubt the sincerity of our friendship, nor the extreme amount of hospitality that he has shown me. But our relationship is typical of non-familial Brazilian relationships. Gatherings of friends occur almost exclusively at "third places," such as the soccer field, *barzinhos*, *chácaras*, or in this case, the hotel.

The conversation today centers around politics and the economy—common topics of discussion since Chang, his brother, and brother-in-law all invest in properties and construction projects. Indeed, several of the major construction projects around the city are funded in part by their money. Despite their shared economic investments, my friends differ on the meanings behind their own economic successes. Chang's brother-in-law Lucas has recently spent time attending a university in the United States. His experiences there, particularly what he views as a

“less class obsessed” American society, have shaped his opinions on his country and his city. “Brazil…Ribeirão Preto is falling,” Lucas explains over his breakfast of fruit salad and hard boiled quail eggs. “You see construction everywhere, but who are these new condominiums and high rise apartments for? (The rich.) But who is building these buildings? The city does nothing for them. They live in bunk housing. Meanwhile, the streets all have *buracos* the size of cars after a rain, and all the best grade schools are private.”

“No, no,” responds Chang, “Ribeirão Preto is growing, and will have more opportunities. It’s the center of the region, and people come from all over. I know, people come from other places for concerts and conferences in my *salões* (event center). You don’t see as many poor people as you used to, the *qualidade de vida* (quality of life) is much better now.”

There is little doubt that Brazil and Ribeirão Preto are still riding a wave of economic success and development. Brazil has emerged from the global economic crisis of 2011 relatively unscathed, and is fecund with public and economic development driven by global investments and the upcoming World Cup and Summer Olympic Games. These two international events have put the global spotlight on Brazil more than ever, thus pressuring national and local governments into much needed renovations and infrastructure investments. The benefits of this growth are not equally distributed among the population groups. Ribeirão Preto, as in many places in Brazil, is marked by stark economic discrepancies. Since the “lost decade” of the 1980s economic crash, monetary gains in Brazil and other Latin American nations have been largely allocated to the upper and upper-middle classes (Smilde 2007). As a result, Ribeirão Preto is very much two cities in one. On one hand, there are the billboards and designer boutiques advertizing and selling expensive European fashions, while VIP treatment is available at most businesses, and the parking spots at shopping malls are occupied by German automobiles. My friends sitting around

the breakfast table are fortunate enough to enjoy such a lifestyle. On the other hand, many of the *domésticas* and city laborers live in *favelas* and *conjuntos* while a growing homeless population spends its evenings on old pieces of cardboard within the doorframes of businesses and stores. Somewhere in the middle is a precarious Brazilian population—not living in poverty, but not firmly middle-class either. They are the semi-skilled laborers, such as Carla and Rodrigo who work in the hotel. They work paycheck to paycheck, saving what little they have for basic markers of a middle-class lifestyle: a car, a dinner table, a refrigerator. These latter two populations—those whose lives are marked by insecurities—tend to disproportionately flock to the Pentecostal churches that I study.

One segment of the population—the poor and dark—is disproportionately demonized by the media and the focus of the security paranoia that grips most members of the precarious-middle and upper classes (see Hanchard 1994). The television in the hotel dining room is tuned to a re-airing of *Brasil Urgente* (Urgent Brazil), a "news" show hosted by the rotund and bombastic José Luiz Datena. Today, he is showing uncensored security camera footage of two dark-skinned youths gunning down a motorist at a gas station, stealing her wallet, and absconding together on their motorcycle. The video is looped, the 30 seconds of horror plays over and over again as the visual stimulus seems to drown out the verbal noise of the host's hyperbolic analysis. With my appetite now gone, I push my breakfast plate away from me and comment to my friends about the graphic imagery of Brazilian media. They inform me that while *Brasil Urgente* does stretch the boundaries of good taste, the show is not unique and far from the worst that Brazilian television has to offer. Lucas goes on to tell me that during the 1990s and 2000s, there was a news show, *Canal Livre* (Live Channel), which highlighted urban violence. Host Wallace Souza would race to the sites of murders to air the footage of the grisly scene and

initial police response. The show was wildly popular, including the scandal that befell both the show and its host. It was revealed, my friend tells me with grim amusement, that Souza was arranging some of the murders himself through hitmen and then rushing to the scene for exclusive footage. Chang laughs at the story and remarks, "Só no Brasil (only in Brazil)!" The Brazilian people, Lucas explains, are *apaixonado* (passionate) and *carnais* (carnal), they are obsessed with immediate gratification from both sensual and macabre sources.

While violence throughout the country has receded somewhat in the last several years due in part to the massive police and government presence in poorer neighborhoods for the Olympics and World Cup, violence remains a permanent mark in the public psyche (see Page 1995; Robb 2004). Preoccupation with safety is not unfounded: in 2010, Brazil recorded 21 murders for every 10,000 residents, placing the murder rate not that much lower than the Democratic Republic of the Congo at 21.7 (CIA 2012). Drug gangs in Rio and São Paulo form militias that engage in urban warfare with police and military personal, unsanctioned police hit-squads murder homeless children and drug users, and even politicians hire hitmen to take care of rivals (Hecht 1998; Robb 2004).

The fear of violent crime is seen in the aforementioned fortress walls that surround many houses and housing communities. Nearly every apartment on my block has a 24-hour security guard sitting in a booth behind bullet proof glass, opening the gate only for residents and listed guests. My friends give me dire warnings about avoiding certain streets after dark and to never wear my wristwatch while walking alone. In fact, nearly all of my friends expressed concern when I decided to move into an apartment which is located across from a high-end mall and on a safe street, but that is without a guard and no electric fence to prevent people from scaling the walls. During my time in Brazil, I have been regularly chided for walking past the bus station

every other night on my way to and from the AD church, and for keeping my bedroom window cracked open at night.

In reality, the majority of violence that takes place in Ribeirão Preto and in other places in Brazil is in the form of structural violence that affects the poorer segments of the population. The fear felt by the upper-classes serves to justify lower-class marginalization in the peripheral neighborhoods and favelas, as well as their status within the larger social fabric. Nancy Scheper-Hughes (1992) wrote most forcefully about this in her account of life and death in Bom Jesus, Pernambuco. In a poor, predominantly *negro* town in northeastern Brazil, Scheper-Hughes documented the syndemics of poverty that contributes to domestic violence, food insecurities, disease, and a high mortality rate among infants and newborns. As a result of such common death and misery, residents utilized accommodations to help psychologically survive the daily insults and stressors—one of which manifests as psychological indifference of mothers in response to the death of their children.

Such violence that disproportionately affects the most marginalized Brazilians has forced many of its most vulnerable victims out onto the streets in search of resources and escape. Brazil has a long history of gangs of roaming street children—groups of youth who spend the majority of their time unsupervised on the *ruas*, *praças*, and in other unsupervised, public spaces. These children panhandle and steal to gain money to buy food and drugs such as glue, which they sniff to temporarily blunt the psychological pain of their existence. In a gripping study, Tobias Hecht (1998) describes the lives of these children as enmeshed in a "culture of terror." In Recife, Hecht gives voices and faces to the tens of thousands of structural violence victims who are viewed by the world as refugees of economic inequality, and within Brazil as vermin who threaten the safety and sensibilities of the bourgeois elite. These children, he finds, are almost exclusively

from the most impoverished peoples in Brazil, and that many of them escaped *favela* conditions. Many of the children live in a cycle of violence: they are temporarily homeless and then return home to help with the family income; they return to the streets to escape resource insecurity and the physical and sexual abuse that is ironically more prevalent within the *favelas* than on the streets. For many children, escape to the streets simply involves substituting one system of violence for another. On the streets they are prey to intra-street child violence and to harassment (e.g., beatings, tortures, and murder) from the police.

Janice Perlman (2010) most recently has written about the vast structural constraints that prevent individuals from finding safety and security, and which have led to a culture of poverty as individuals and families seek to cope, compensate, and survive in abject poverty and social stigmatization. Forced relocations, exclusion from education and employment opportunities, and the vacuum of official government presence (e.g., police stations, health clinics) have left many *favela* residents trying to eke out a living in which the syndemic violence of their conditions makes life for many short, sad, and brutal. Interestingly, despite these conditions, Perlman finds that individuals still embody the imagination of better lives provided by the national and global mediascapes (Appadurai 1990). They dream of upward marriage, raising a family, prosperous employment, and conspicuous consumption of material markers of the ideal lifestyle (Hect 1998; Perlman 2010). Such fantasies, which Smilde (2007) calls "imaginative rationalities," provide hope to the hopeless, assuaging the stress of daily life through dreams of a better future. For some, these rationalities may instill a cycle of positive affirmation—something that is seen in many neo-Pentecostal meetings.

I am shaken from my *Brasil Urgente*-induced trance by my friends arguing, seemingly for the thousandth time, over whether the *Palmares* or *Corinthians* soccer teams will win the

upcoming match. *Futebol*, not Catholicism, is the actual national religion of this country. There are disputably more rigid allegiances and blind devotion to *futebol* teams than there are to any specific religion. Coincidently, I am saved by the bell when the alarm on my wristwatch beeps. The alarm signals that the Universal Church meeting is about to start, thus releasing me from another futile *futebol* debate.

As always, Saturday breakfast seems to end far too soon. My friends, as is custom, invite me to spend the rest of the day with them at their *chácara*, a small house located outside the city used primarily for *churrascos*. They go into detail about the delicious *linguiça, vinagrete*, and *cerveja* (so cold that is it nearly frozen) that I will miss while at the Pentecostal service. "Why don't you just tell them that you have to drink today?" jokes Lucas. "Let me talk to the pastor, he will understand." As is my custom in return, I begrudgingly decline their invitation, and leave for the day of weekend worship at first the IURD and then the AD congregations.

The *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus*

From the hotel, the IURD church is a straight shot down *Rua Marechal Deodoro*, a residential cobblestone lined street, until it hits the *Avenida Doutor Francisco Junqueira*, a major thoroughfare that marks the northern boundary of the *Centro* and that runs parallel to the dark waters of the Black Stream from which the city derives its name. The walk takes only 20 minutes at a moderate pace, so as usual, I let my mind wonder, utilizing this time to make connections between the various aspects of Brazilian culture to which I am continuously exposed. My thoughts return to the image of the woman being mugged, the portrayal of Brazil's poor on television, and the invisible violence that plagues the majority of this nation's people day-in and day-out. I try to connect these larger social issues back to my own research on Pentecostalism.

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the Pentecostal faith has grown exponentially within Brazil's current socio-economic context. Researchers have explained the disproportionate rise of Evangelical Christianity among the poor as a response to the low social solidarity provided by the state and by the majority Catholic faith, as a strategic change in identity that facilitates greater resources and security, and due to the spiritual coping resources that Pentecostal faith provides (e.g., personal relationship with divine, baptism in the Spirit, hope of miraculous blessings) (Burdick 1993; Chesnut 1997; Stoll 1990). Conversion to Pentecostalism operates as "cultural agency" that alters members' life conditions and that supports a sense of control over their situations. For example, conversion to the faith is viewed as a way for: men to leave the male prestige complex of machismo (Brusco 1995; Smilde 2007); women to gain autonomy and a degree of authority (Brusco 1995; Burdick 1993); overcoming illness, especially addiction to drugs and alcohol (Chesnut 1997; Mariz 1994; Martin 1990; Stoll 1990); avoiding the cyclical violence that accompanies these gendered behaviors (Annis 1987; Brusco 1995; Stoll 1993); amassing social capital and avenues for job-placement (Chesnut 1997; Mariz 1994); adopting the Protestant/Pentecostal work ethic (Chesnut 1997; Mesquita 2007); and, achieving the promises of miraculous prosperity blessings (Oro 2004). Nonetheless, Pentecostalism is not exclusively a religion for the poor and those who experience what Chesnut (1997) calls "dis-ease." There is a growing middle-class of *crentes*, many of whom are second (or third) generation members of their family within the same evangelical denomination. Their motivations, however, are not so different from their poorer brethren who occupy the same pews. Faith provides them with a means to achieve an imagined ideal lifestyle. The identity, discipline, relationships, and promises of the faith provide the necessary cultural and spiritual capital to imagine and hope for a better life, and in some cases, to achieve it.

I deftly dodge the traffic on the busy *avenida*— stopping at a red light is often little more than a courtesy for most *motoristas*—and I climb the marble steps of the church whose name is emblazed in four foot tall letters in front, "*Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus* (underneath) *Jesus Cristo é o Senhor.*" Church has not quite started and many people are still trickling in to the building. Outside each of the dozen glass doors allowing access to the sanctuary, church volunteers called *obreiros* (men and women all dressed in matching blue and white uniforms with red name tags) are hanging out what appears to be a facsimile of handcuffs constructed of paper (these will then be symbolically broken to represent "liberation" from demons). Running back and forth among the promenade are the church youth—many of whom are wearing recognizable black t-shirts with the words "*Força Jovem*" (Youth Force) printed on the front in large white letters—who are selling pieces of candy or copied music on CDs to the parishioners for a few Real.

A young man wearing the dazzling yellow of a Brazilian national team soccer jersey catches my eye. Samuel walks over and attempts to engage me in a handshake that involves a complicated series of gestures. "Ahh, come on *Americano*," he says disappointingly after I fail the hand maneuver, "you have to be more *topper* (from the English, "top", to be above, i.e., cool) than that." I ask him how he is doing. He responds that he is well, and he proudly shows me his new iPhone (which is actually a poorly made rip-off). Samuel is relatively new to the IURD church in Ribeirão Preto. He is from Catanduva, a town that is a two hour car ride east of the city. Samuel is twenty years old, but has seen more than many do in a lifetime. He is already a father to a six year old girl named Victoria who has lived with her maternal grandparents since the suicide of her mother. Like his own father, Samuel is largely absent from his child's life; the most recent picture he has of her (though one he made sure to put onto his new "iPhone") is

when she was three years old. Samuel's own mother had dealt with depression and alcoholism, leaving him and his brothers to take care of themselves. They often resorted to panhandling so that they could afford the barest of necessities for the household. His time at his home in Catanduva was spread between hitching rides to neighboring towns and cities, and living on the streets. During one stint in the megacity of São Paulo, Samuel, who was addicted to crack at the time, experienced a series of physical and psychological insults that eventually led him to the IURD church.

> I know that Satan is alive in this world, out here, outside the walls of the church…One night, when I was still on the streets, before I came here (to Ribeirão Preto) and was sleeping under a bridge with a group (of other children). Another group (of street children) came by…I don't know what problem they had with him (one of his group), maybe he stole something, maybe he said something, I don't know. But they poured gasoline on him and lit him on fire. I knew that if I stayed on the streets, I would end up dead like him.

Ultimately, what caused him to change his life was news on the suicide of his former lover and mother to his child.

> She would always tell me that I needed to stop using drugs, to stop hanging out with my friends who were bad influences. She started going to the Universal Church, praying for me to stop using drugs, to stop my life of destruction…She would always ask me to come back, to come to church with her…Maybe if I had listened to her things would be different.

By all accounts, Samuel has made a radical transformation. His ears, once gouged with massive earrings, are slowly shrinking back to normal size—an apt metaphor for his transformation that is still taking place, and of a past whose scars will never completely heal. He is currently living with his grandmother in town, and is training to be an *obreiro*. He is very active in the church and can be found either in the worship hall or in the car garage every evening—practicing his faith through prayer or dancing with other *Força Jovem* youth among the automobiles and exhaust fumes.

Figure 6.6: *Força Jovem* youth dancing in the church parking garage

It is unsurprising that Samuel is attracted to the IURD church. For him, it provides a safety and stability that his life has not yet known. Through church sermons, which are very similar to self-help therapy in their rhetoric of positive affirmation and visualization, Samuel is capable of imagining a better life for himself. Through hard work, perseverance, and faith, he believes that God will reward him with prosperity. The past is recast as the result of Satan's demons, which literally possessed him and others to engage in behaviors that are sinful and painful. As such, his faith provides a measure of solace for him. "The church is a hospital. It is where people go to heal. Is it your fault you are sick? No, but it is your fault if you don't find a doctor and follow his rules. Jesus, he is the doctor of all doctors." Finally, after a young adulthood that has seen more misery than triumph, he seems to be at peace with himself and excited about his future. Almost as if reciting from an IURD testimonial script, Samuel puts his new "iPhone" back into his pocket and explains, "Do you know how I was able to afford it? Because it wasn't *barrata* (cheap)? God answered my prayers! I *ganhei* (found, won, received) a new job!"

Liberation and the Health and Wealth Gospel

A bus pulls up to the church, and a mass of people disembark. This is not owned by the city, but is rather a charter bus rented by the church to bring in people from the peripheral neighborhoods—mostly the *favelas* and *conjuntos*—to the large worship meetings. I leave Samuel and join the flock of bodies climbing the dozen or so marble steps into the main IURD worship hall.

Normally, this Saturday worship would focus on developing a relationship with the Spirit which would help practitioners to receive blessings related to matters of the heart: finding love; converting a loved one; or repairing a damaged or abusive relationship. Receiving the Holy Spirit is viewed as sign from God of one's spiritual status—ultimately signaling that the soul is saved and worthy to receive His blessings. The experience of baptism in the Spirit varies from individual to individual and congregation to congregation. For example, the AD largely views glossolalic utterances as the public signaling of spirit baptism. Other congregations condone exaggerated and "uncontrolled" bodily movements, such as jumping and flailing. In a case known as the Toronto Blessing, Charismatic parishioners laughed uncontrollably during a mass baptism in the Spirit (Bowker 1997). Within the IURD church, however, baptism in the Spirit is often a more benign but equally powerful affair. Members usually describe the experience as an "overwhelming feeling of peace and love," or "a heat that is radiating out from the heart all the way down to the toes." Publically, individuals undergoing baptism in the Spirit at the IURD are identified through the tears of joy rolling down their faces during heightened emotional moments of the worship meeting.

This meeting, however, was part of a larger week long program called *Sete Dias De Liberação* (Seven Days Of Liberation), which entails a systematic purification of the soul by

removing demons perceived to be the cause of all of life's misfortunes. Demon removal can save the parishioner and make him/her worthy to receive the Spirit and associated earthly blessings. Like all IURD meetings, the service induces dissociation. I take a seat five rows back, a spot which allows me to easily observe the majority of members while inconspicuously taking notes.

Pastor Carlos takes the stage, immediately breaking into song, "*Vencer, Vencer*" (Conquer, Conquer) while he quickly states each line before it is sung to allow neophytes and others who have not memorized the song a chance to sing along. The upbeat hymnal is soon accompanied by the keyboardist and the combined voices of the congregation. Before the song officially ends, the pastor delves into an opening prayer. Congregants stand and hold their arms and hands out above their head, as is common practice among Evangelical groups to signify adoration and willingness to surrender and be filled by the Holy Spirit. Concurrent with the pastor, the approximately 2,000 acolytes say their own prayers, often repeating simple mantras "Glory to God, fill me with the Spirit, Glory to Jesus, I put myself in Your hands." As usual, the pastor holds the microphone too close and the over-amped speakers start to deliver screeching feedback. I wince in pain, though no one else seems to mind. The other acolytes continue to pray aloud with their arms spread open toward the heavens. The combined noise is cacophonous: the sound of thousands of people simultaneously speaking, in addition to the pastor praying over the loudspeaker, and the continuous musical accompaniment of the keyboard. The speed and volume of this group vocalization ebbs and flows, which ultimately drowns out my own internal monologue.

Figure 6.7: IURD members praying for liberation

The lights in the worship room are turned down, and Pastor Carlos stops the sing-prayer to engage in a short sermon about the omnipresent threat of demons. "If you have ever been to churches that practice *macumba* (black magic), you have practiced devil worship whether you know it or not! If a member of your family has (practiced spiritualist faith), they have brought these demons into your house!" he ominously warns the audience. Since most members of the IURD are converts and since Brazilians are traditionally religious pluralists, it is unlikely that anyone is immune from this perceived threat. The organist begins playing a dark, foreboding piece, and the air conditioner increases, causing a cold breeze to circulate throughout the room. I am not sure which one of these acts caused the goose pimples that were running down my spine.

Pastor Carlos instructs the congregation to place their hands on the crowns of their heads in order to raise the demons out of their bodies. "Manifest!" he screams, "Demons and devils that

cause depression, manifest! Demons responsible for the vices of alcohol, drugs, crack, and prostitution, manifest! Demons that cause cancer and AIDS, MANIFEST!" All around me, people in hushed voices recite their own personal prayers, asking God for deliverance from the various problems—both banal and tragic—that afflicts them. The sound of a thousand people whispering at once adds to the eerie feeling that this "liberation meeting" creates. Somewhere to my left, a woman screams.

The high pitched, blood curdling scream does not shake the prayers of those around her. The only thing that opens one acolyte's eyes is the arm of the screaming women hitting him in the head as her flailing body crumples to the ground amid her banshee-like shrieks. She is soon attended to by *obreiros*, who walk through the audience on-watch to prevent possessed people from hurting themselves or others. She and the four other women who are possessed by manifested demons are brought onto the stage. Through the power of God, the *obreiros* have already "bound" the demons—each woman has her hands behind her back as if constrained by invisible handcuffs. Her fingers are curled like claws, and writhe as if trying to break the constraints. They are made to kneel towards the back of the stage, facing outward to the congregants. Some of the women sway back and forth, while others gnash their teeth, snarl, and spit at the pastor.

The pastor takes one women, orders her to her feet, walks her to the front of the stage, and demands to know the name of the malevolent spirit. The spirit cackles maniacally and gloats "you have no power over me!" To which the pastor then brandishes the bible and declares, "I don't but the Lord Jesus Christ does!" The demon hisses and the woman falls to her knees in front of the pastor. The congregation erupts in applause.

After much posturing back and forth between the demon and the pastor, the demon identifies himself as Satan. The pastor almost jokingly responds, "We have the boss here then, huh?" This is a common self-identification for a manifested demon within an IURD liberation meeting, though they may also take the name of a specific vice (i.e., addiction) or the specific identity of an *orixá* or *exu* (e.g., Afro-Brazilian gods and spirits such as Esu, Ondo, Ekiti). Naming carries with it symbolic power, not unlike in the classic fairy tale story of Rumpelstiltskin; a named demon loses its power and control over an individual, and is then susceptible to exorcism. Before this takes place however, the demon admits to the various insults, trials, and travesties that it has caused to the individual and to those around her. This act serves as an idiom of distress—as a public expression of life afflictions and sometimes the identification of specific tormenting parties.

For the woman currently being possessed, Satan claims that he has caused *milhões* (millions) of hardships in her life, including alcoholism, depression, and inter-personal violence at the hands of her father and her husband. The pastor looks to the congregants, many of whom have left their seats and have gathered around the stage for a closer view. "Is the husband here?" he inquires. A young man, wearing tight jeans and a purple shirt for a Brazilian band sheepishly climbs the stage to the pastor. The pastor inquires about the state of affairs regarding their relationship and domestic strife. "It is difficult," the man whispers into the outstretched microphone. "We fight a lot, she is always unhappy. Sometimes I lose control as well. But that is why we are here." Pastor Carlos tells the man that he wants to speak to both he and his wife privately after the meeting, and then returns his attention to the possessed young woman, who has been obediently silent—a sign of the weakening hold the devil has over the woman's body. The pastor places both his palms onto the woman's head. The *obreiros* on stage do the same to

the other possessed church members. In fact, all of the church-goers perform the same gesture to themselves. The pastor says a liberation prayer, telling the demons to remove themselves from the person's body, never to return, in the name of Jesus Christ. He ends the prayer by saying *Sai*! *Sai! SAI!* (out). Each time he invokes this word, he simultaneously removes his hands from the head in a dramatic fashion, which serves to pull and throw out the demon. Everyone around me is doing the same liberation maneuver to themselves. Afterwards, the pastor briefly interviews the girl, who is now smiling with tears of joy and testifying to the relief she feels after being liberated from demonic entities. This same spectacle is repeated nearly every day at IURD churches throughout Brazil and around the world.

Figure 6.8: A scene from a liberation meeting where members are exorcised

The *Assembléia de Deus*

I leave the IURD congregation and literally run across town to attend the AD meeting that begins only 30 minutes after the IURD meetings normally end. The route to *Templo Sede* takes me past the city's primary bus terminal, a seedier part of town that is home to the majority of the homeless population, prostitutes, drug dealers, and nomadic Brazilians from the Northeast

who travel from city to city, hawking wears, and providing street performances. Based on the advice of AD members, I walk quickly without speaking to anyone who calls out from the shadows of store fronts, and I refrain from showing my wrist watch or cellular telephone. Over 14 months in Ribeirão Preto, I did not encounter situations in which I felt endangered. My informants continued to warn me about the dangers, however, by providing firsthand accounts of the robberies, hold-ups, and street violence they claim as endemic to Brazilian life.

I show up to the AD right before the *culto* (worship meeting) starts. The *Templo Sede* is the largest building in the *Vila Tibério* neighborhood. The giant stucco golden chalice can be seen several blocks away, and the purple flood lights give it a preternatural glow. From the street, I can hear the band tuning inside the church. People are congregated in front of the church, spilling into the street as they talk, laugh, and gossip. The church cantina, located immediately next to the church, is overflowing with the youth who consume Coca-Cola and *salgados* (Brazilian meat and cheese pastries) before worship. I make my way through the crowd into the chapel, saying "*Paz do Senhor, Paz do Senhor*" (Peace of the Lord) to everyone with whom I make eye-contact. I quickly realize that there are many more *crentes* (believers) in attendance than normal for a Saturday evening. I remember that the AD is also holding a special weeklong event, a celebration for the centennial anniversary of the church in Brazil. As a result, the local neighborhood AD members are all gathered within *Sede* to hear the sermons from guest preachers who come from as far as Pernambuco and Rio de Janeiro. Whereas the typical church meeting includes one sermon given by an elder in the church to an audience of 200, this meeting includes two sermons given by guest preachers to a standing room audience that easily numbered over 600. Overflow space is set up in the neighboring cantina, linked in through closed circuit television to accommodate all *crentes* in attendance.

As is my custom, I make my way towards the front of the church to sit with the *surdos* (deaf individuals) and their signers. Early in my research with the AD congregation, I made inroads with some of the adult interpreters who were sympathetic towards my academic interests in their faith and patient with my nascent knowledge of the Portuguese language. In typical Brazilian fashion, I greet each female with a hug and a kiss to the cheek (this is not a custom in the IURD church, which views kissing members of the opposite sex, even on the cheek, as a gateway to more lascivious behaviors which should be avoided in church), and each male with a handshake and a hearty slap to the back. I take a seat in the pews next to them, placing my bible, notebook, and voice recorder on the shelf built into the pew in front of me. The band begins to play a popular hymn, *A União do Crente com o Senhor,* (The Union of the Believer and the Lord) and the congregants sing-along from memory or by following the lyrics projected onto a 6 foot screen in the far corner of the chapel. Afterwards, the children's choir files to the front of the church and sings *Crente Gelatina*, a song title that translates literally as "Jell-O Believer." The lyrics encourage the listener to not have faith like gelatin that wavers when shaken, but to rather develop a firm and explosive faith like a piece of *pipoquinha* (popcorn). The bubbly beat and silly lyrics are infectious and I see many of the adults singing along and mimicking the choreographed hand movements of the children. As is typical of AD *cultos,* the service is a community affair. Characteristic activities such as bible group reading, hymnals sung by specific choirs as well as by the entire congregation, and blessing requests read by the Brothers and Sisters all require the collaborative efforts of the entire congregation.

Figure 6.9: AD children's choir

The first sermon of the evening is given by Pastor Edson, a skinny, balding pastor who also is a physician in Rio de Janeiro. The topic of his sermon is the connection of Biblical faith with scientific fact. “The Bible isn’t incompatible with science,” he preaches as white spittle collects on the sides of his mouth. “Look at health. We know from science that in every bit of food, there are thousands of microbes…did you know this? You can look in a microscope and see this. But you have this perfectly designed immune system to keep you healthy. It shows that God has a hand in these things. But things in the modern world can also make you sick. There is stress and depression for instance. There is stress from sitting in traffic; there is stress from your job. These things can also make you depressed. And science tells us that stress and depression will damage your immune system and make you sick. But these can also be thought of as *doenças* (sicknesses) of the soul. God can heal your soul, and reduce your suffering, and take away depression and stress, restoring your immune systems and heal you…This is one example of how science and the Bible are one and not at odds with one another.”

Such explicit connection of science and religion is rare within AD church sermons, though not unheard of. Indeed, there exists a surprisingly open approach towards education for a religion that has been characterized as one of the most conservative in Brazil and one that preaches Biblical literalness (Chesnut 1997; Stoll 1990). Many of the AD leaders in Ribeirão Preto hold full time jobs outside the church in public health (medicine, psychology) and education (teachers and professors) sectors. Thus, while some of the membership may find the topic "*chato"* (boring), wishing instead to talk about the daily application of specific biblical stories, others—especially the youth—who are attending or hoping to attend a university, find the integration of their faith with collegiate subjects "*muito interessante*" (very interesting).

The rest of the congregation seems to reengage with the visiting pastor as he transitions his sermon into how God can heal earthly illness and misfortunes. Contrary to the IURD church which views travesty as demonically ordained, the AD sees hardships, sicknesses, and challenges to be a part of mortal existence. For the AD, life is a temporary, terrestrial test to see if we turn to God and find comfort in His promise of salvation. This view is reinforced when a pastor remarks,

> Mistakes and hardships, we all experience these. Sometimes they are small, other times they are massive and seemingly insurmountable. But God never puts anything before us that we cannot overcome. He doesn't do things without a reason. And often, the reason is for us to learn and grow from these events, to turn to God, develop a relationship with Him.

Following Pastor Edson, the *carioca* (someone from Rio) Pastor José takes to the podium. He is a heavy set man who sweats profusely. He constantly wipes his brow with a handkerchief enseamed with the crest of the church. His speech is rapid and his billowing voice seems to shake the rafters when he emphasizes words. His style almost mimics that of Southern Baptists preachers—though in *carioca* Portuguese. This man, Pastor José, speaks about the

religious significance of tithe, sacrifice, and giving. "Tithes and offers," he explains, "are only given with joy in one's heart. You should not do it only out of obligation. And, when you give, God returns multiplied…But it's not tied to a specific blessing. It's not like you can give for a specific outcome—If I give this R$10 then I get a car in return. It's a blessing toward all things in your life." While Pastor José is not explicit in his critiques—few AD informants speak negatively about competing faiths—it is clear that the pastor is speaking out against the health and wealth gospel popular in neo-Pentecostal churches such as the IURD. "Similarly," the pastor continues, "a sacrifice is doing the works of God: evangelizing, loving God, and serving in the church…it doesn't have to be money. We have to remember that when we ask "what more?" from God, we really should be asking "what more can I do to serve God?" I hope you remember this and that more people ask this of themselves before asking of God." The pastor ends his sermon with a call for community action, an attitude, or "*filosofia*," he would later tell me, that changes preconceived notions both within and outside the church, of *Assembléia crentes* being passive in local and national politics (Stoll 1990; see Burdick 1993). "The purpose of the church is for the *comunião* (both Holy Communion and community) of the people—for the people to worship as one body and act as one body—a *comunidade* (community). And this is how we worship, how we show our faith, how we do the *obras de Deus* (works of god). It is *fidelidade* to the philosophy that the ministry—us as *crentes*—have a responsibility not only to the church, but to the community, the entire city of Ribeirão Preto and all Brazilians. We need to evangelize to our neighbors and pass out bibles; we need to help the poor and needy and the *desgraçado* (unfortunate). We need to elect politicians who have the same morals and *padrões* (patterns) as we."

It was a powerful sermon and unexpectedly political. Nonetheless, the speech resonated with something an AD respondent complained to me about only a few nights prior. Paulo, the son of one of the senior elders lamented that,

> One of the reasons why the US is so successful is because 90 percent of them are evangelicals. They have better priorities than Brazilians—(Me: I don't understand…), we don't work as hard, and we don't get into politics. Many *evangélicos* avoid politics because they see it as of the world and *sujo* (dirty). And in the mean time, other churches gain power. (Me: Like who?) Well, the Catholics have always had power in Brazil, even if most of them don't ever go to church. But recently it is the *Igreja Universal*. All they care about is money and growing. They don't care about helping people or saving souls. They have that television station, and then they have their own pastors run for office and tell the people to vote for them. It isn't right…

While Paulo is correct that the AD church has only recently begun to contribute to national politics, the church has always had a presence in local and community affairs. *Assembléia* influence ebbed and flowed in relation to larger political structures and varied local demographics, though it is erroneous to say that the AD is apolitical (Burdick 1993). Many members do fear that upstart churches such as the IURD may surpass them in national influence, creating a religious-political environment that will be hostile to the religious pluralism of Brazil (Oro 2003). While this is yet to be seen, Brazilian AD members are rapidly trying to make up for lost time and become a larger presence in the national discourse of their nation (Oro 2003).

The most powerful moment of the night comes at the end, when the Pastor from Pernambuco returns to the podium, and asks those present to publically accept Christ into their heart. Despite the sunset, darkness falling over the church, and despite the humming of the air conditioners, the packed church cannot keep cool amidst all the body heat. The sweltering Brazilian summer heat creeps in, making the church a veritable oven, and yet no one seems eager to leave. The pastor begins by pleading for lost souls to come up to the podium and to accept Christ. The congregation takes to their feet and raises their hands in prayer—urging the Spirit of

the Lord to "touch the hearts" of these *almas perdidas* (lost souls), and to give them the courage to change their lives and to take the first steps towards being saved. The charismatic pastor repeats his plea, this time asking not for *someone*, but for "*você*" (you). By doing so, he seems to speak to people individually. He slowly scans the chapel, appearing to make eye contact with all 600 in attendance. As he does so, he repeatedly asks, "what are <u>you</u> waiting for?" His delivery is so powerful that it is hard—even for me—to not feel he is speaking directly to me.

The pastor's eyes scan the packed chapel, identifying those who (by dress, mannerisms, other signaling) are unlikely to be members. After making eye contact, he asks, "what are you doing here if not looking for answers…not looking to change your life…not looking for salvation? Now is your chance to accept Jesus Christ as your Lord, it may be your last…you never know about what tomorrow will bring." After his first call, several people make their way to the front. Exclamations of "*alleluia!"*(hallelujah) and "*glória a Jesus!"* (Glory to Jesus) fill the air as an older woman and middle age man step in front of the stage. Both are weeping and the man falls to his knees with his arms outstretched to the heavens. Two church members, in a sign of solidarity and acceptance, walk next to the supplicant, place one hand on their backs and the other hand raised and prays along with the neophyte. Glossolalic utterances start to fill the air. Like a contagion rapidly spreading, the *linguagem dos anjos* (language of angels) flows back and forth through the building. The pastor wipes tears from his eyes and asks, "Where is the third person? Where is the third person? I know there is someone else ready to accept Jesus. I know you are here, Jesus knows you are here." Sure enough, a woman in her forties, wearing jeans and a t-shirt walks down the aisle. A female member greets her and together they pray. A renewed chorus of praise and baptism in the Spirit rock the church. The pastor continues this for 30 minutes, calling people up one by one:

> Where is the eighth person? Do you want salvation or damnation? You have to choose, and you have to choose tonight! You don't know what will happen tomorrow. This may be your last chance...Where is the fifteenth person? You have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Don't be a coward. Let Jesus make you brave, and come up here to accept Him.

This continues until twenty people, in front of 600 witnesses, publically accept Christ into their heart. With each person, the fervor in the church increases. At the end, people are speaking in tongues, standing with arms raised and crying, while some are even jumping up and down in the aisles. Pastor Edson, openly weeping and between his own glossolalic utterances exclaims, "Do you believe in miracles? Look at all these people finding Jesus! You are not alone anymore. You are never alone with Jesus in your heart."

Figure 6.7: New AD members publically accepting Christ

Chapter Summary

Brazilians everywhere are a diverse group of people from different walks of life. They are bound by a common national cultural identity that forms an imagined community built from the shared love of family, friends, and *futebol*, but also on national cynicism, fear, and insecurity

about their financial futures and their physical well-being. The religious marketplace of Brazil—from the various Evangelical churches, to Afro-Brazilian and Kardecian Spiritism, and even the Catholic Church in the forms of Liberation Theology and Charismatic Catholicism– serves to assuage the stresses of daily life, provide hope for the future, and create an environment for the building of community.

The two evangelical churches described above, the AD and the IURD, address these very insecurities experienced in the lives of their members. The type of religious goods produced by the church and consumed by the *crentes* reflects the diverse membership of these two churches. The IURD has carved out a specific space within the religious marketplace that focuses on Brazil's poor and forgotten populations. Evangelism takes place largely within the city's *favelas* and *conjuntos*, specifically bringing their message of the health and wealth gospel to those who feel the most resource and health insecurities. Youth activities largely aim to keep members off of the streets and off of drugs, such as the anti-crack campaigns undertaken by the church. Church doctrine explicitly removes guilt of sin from its members, transferring blame to demonic forces that pose and compel us to act in ways that are antithetical to God's plan. Members appreciate the nonjudgmental atmosphere, distinct from the Catholic confessionals which many grew up using. Simultaneously, this discourse also binds believers to the IURD church and the pastoral leadership, as they are the only ones capable of doing battle with Satan and his minions, devils and demons that possess us all at one time or another. The liberation rituals, where these exorcisms take place, are dissociative events. The use of music, lights, sounds, and the simultaneous group behaviors of hundreds of other believers who create an atmosphere that facilitates altered cognitive states. While for most acolytes these are quiescent, therapeutic affairs, others enter into possession trance. These states allow for the reification of church

doctrine for the existence of a spiritual war of good versus evil, and the power and authority of the IURD leadership. For members, these rituals provide solace in knowing that they are not to blame for life's tragedies. Through the power of God and the patron-like relationship they have with pastors, afflictions can be alleviated, cured, and solved.

By contrast, the AD in Ribeirão Preto focuses on the insecurities felt by its members' status within larger society. They are less concerned with changing and addressing the larger inequalities, dangers, and sinful disposition of society than they are with carving out a safe and stable existence. Rather than addressing specific sins, sermons instead focus more on familial stability and harmony and encourage the display and consumption of middle-class Brazilian ideals. Membership in the church often includes the adoption of middle class cultural capital, such as wearing suits and dresses to church, learning to play an instrument or sing in the choir, and receiving or aspiring to receive an education. Similarly, the AD advocates an individualized and educated approach to the faith: religious literacy is informed, not determined, by church leadership. In as much, church doctrine does not absolve personal responsibility for sin or for life events. Life's trials are seen as tests of one's moral strength and faith, and are something to overcome rather than be liberated from. That is not to say that these events are weathered alone. Members read blessings publically so that the entire congregation can come to the aid of a needy church member. Such communal solidarity would be impossible without a functional religious social network. Rather than an imagined community of worshipers who are linked through their common beliefs and life circumstances (such as in the megachurch setting of the IURD), the AD creates and maintains real social ties in an almost familial style. New individuals are identified by *obreiros* and ushers, and publically welcomed by name at the beginning of every meeting. Individuals sitting alone are invited to join groups of friends and family, members who know

each other only through worship services regularly extend their relationships into the outside world, and as shown above, members going through life changes (such as conversion) are never alone and are supported by their new fictive kin group.

In the upcoming chapters, the themes discussed in this chapter will be highlighted in the relationship between religion and psychological well-being for members of the AD and IURD churches in Ribeirão Preto, Brazil. The similarities between the two congregations and their differences manifest in both how they conceive of the ideal Pentecostal lifestyle—*A Vida Completa*—and how consonance with this shared cultural model influences their appraisals of life events and their relative levels of stress and depression.

CHAPTER 7: Research Methods

This research is based on the affirmation that cultural anthropology can be conducted in a manner in which hypotheses and assumptions can be tested and ultimately supported or rejected. In short, I contend that anthropology can be scientific. This does not mean that empiricism is valued over experience, or as Clifford Geertz (1973:5) contends, an "experimental science in search of law" is diametrically opposed to "an interpretive one in search of meaning." Rather, the two can mutually inform one another with a carefully planned research design and executed field methods. Unfortunately the so-called "post-modern crisis" in anthropology continues and methods are often sidelined in favor of interpretative subjectivity. While anthropologists must be aware of their positionality in relation to informants and to how that influences their data, such awareness should not preclude the use of structured methods for gathering and verifying data (Ross 2004). This research contends that objective methods can verify subjective interpretations (D'Andrade 2000). More specifically, this research moves past the well-trodden empiricist-relativist debate by employing a cognitive theory of culture. This theoretical foundation provides a suite of methods that ensures a high degree of data reliability and validity, while it facilitates reflexive interpretation that provides context and meaning to the results.

This chapter outlines the mixed methodological approach of this dissertation. I provide a detailed description of the research setting and discuss why two particular communities were chosen for study, as well as a reflective discussion of my positionality as a researcher within a religious community. This is followed by an outline of the first research phase—which involves the identification and verification of the religious model of a successful Pentecostal—

particularly as it relates to the cultural consensus theory and method developed by Romney, Weller, and Batchelder (1986). The second research phase tests the hypothesis that religious cultural consonance is positively associated with psychological well-being. A questionnaire measures how well Brazilian Pentecostals meet the expectations of their faith (*A Vida Completa*), the expectations of society (family and material life), and how these measures correlate with psychological distress (i.e., stress and depression) (see Appendix C).

Project Overview

This study investigates the interaction of dominant cultural models and limitedly distributed cultural models with psychological measures of stress. As previously discussed, Pentecostals in Brazil, by and large, utilize a sectarian identity that emphasizes a rupture from worldly desires and standards (Burdick 1999; Robbins 2004). This rejection of the secular realm may explain the faith's overwhelming appeal to the underclass and disenfranchised populations. The goal of this project is to examine the influence of culture and faith on Pentecostal bodies. Cultural incongruence, measured through cultural consonance, is shown to be correlated with various biological and psychological stress measures (Dressler 1991, 1995; McDade 2001). As such, this research examines how Pentecostal acolytes interact with alternative cultural models of secular and religious lifestyle and the effects of this on their well-being.

This research hypothesizes that: (1) Regardless of denomination, Brazilian Pentecostals share a model of an ideal religious lifestyle; (2) Consonance with Pentecostal cultural models correlate with increased well-being; (3) Religious models will exert a greater effect on well-being than secular cultural models; (4) Limitedly distributed religious cultural models will interact with dominant cultural models in shaping patterns of psychological health.

To test these arguments, this research is separated into two phases. The first phase establishes the existence of a limitedly distributed model of an ideal Pentecostal lifestyle, or *A Vida Completa.* The secondary goal of the cultural domain analysis stage is to understand variation of this model: both how the model differs conceptually among Pentecostals and how it is differentially distributed. To accomplish this, a mixture of qualitative methods (e.g., schema analysis of conversion testimonies, free listing) and quantitative (e.g., CCT, PROFIT) was performed. The second phase of this research examines the relationship between secular and religious consonance and measures of psychological distress. This stage represents the final hypothesis testing and is conducted through structured interviews and psychometric scales. Analysis of these questionnaires were performed in SPSS and evaluated in conjunction with ethnographic insights from interviews and participant-observations.

Review of Research Setting

Ribeirão Preto, São Paulo serves as this study's research setting over a period of 14 months from 2011-2012. The city is home to approximately 600,000 people. Originally founded in the late 19th century, Ribeirão Preto has developed from an agricultural market center to one of the most affluent cities in Brazil, known for its financial and health care industries. The city has an incredible range of socioeconomic variation which is apparent in the dramatic wealth discrepancies within and between the various *bairros* (neighborhoods). For example, while the city-center's skyline is dominated by expensive condos and apartments of the city-elite, the streets are occupied by the lower-middle class. A few kilometers away, on the periphery of the city, numerous *favelas* occupy open spaces with makeshift homes of cast-off wood and corrugated tin.

Southern Brazil has large concentrations of Pentecostal acolytes (Freston 1995). Two well established Pentecostal denominations, AD and IURD, chosen for their theological differences, were studied in Ribeirão Preto. As previously discussed, AD is theologically more sectarian than the IURD, advocating a greater separation between their faith and the secular world. The AD also places greater emphasis on the signaling behavior of glossolalia for proof of "baptism in the Spirit." The IURD is the more antagonistic of the two, actively incorporating the exorcism of Umbanda and Candomblé spirits, and sermons that are critical of Catholicism. These theological differences are valuable for examining the differential interaction of cultural models in the appraisal and embodiment of stress. Congregations chosen for this study include *Templo Sede* for the AD and *Templo Cenáculo* for the IURD. Both are located within or very near the city center (*Centro*), and are the main meeting places within the city for their respective denominations. That is, while smaller satellite AD and IURD buildings are located within nearly every neighborhood, *Templo Sede* and *Templo Cenáculo* attract acolytes from around the city, and are often the primary meeting places for important events and holidays.

Gaining Access and Building Rapport

Several ethnographic methods were employed in this mixed methods research. While in the field, I encountered a few issues using these methods that warrant mention and discussion. Participant-observation occurred at both AD and IURD congregations, including worship meetings and communal activities. Engaging in-depth ethnographic research within two communities simultaneously presented enormous logistical issues. Fundamentally, it was difficult to find the time to conduct thorough ethnographic research in two different communities. Further, religious populations are notoriously difficult for negotiating "membership" status, rapport, and trust. Religious communities typically possess particular,

exclusionary loyalties. Similar to Emma Cohen (2007:7), I feared "that it would be impossible to win the trust and respect, as well as to achieve some level of membership, of more than one community." Unlike her research on Afro-Brazilian spiritualists, whose meetings largely overlapped with one another, the high frequency of Pentecostal meetings and their flexibility allowed me to be present in the two communities. The IURD, for example, holds meetings every day of the week, up to five times a day. On the other hand, the AD only holds three essential evening meetings every week, with a smattering of "classes" at other times. As such, I was granted the flexibility to conduct extensive ethnographic studies on two communities, assuming that I was *willing* to attend church every day. On average, I attended church meetings 5-6 days a week, split equally between the two congregations, and at times I participated in two or three church activities a day.

Divided loyalties were also a potential issue in my fieldwork. Achieving a level of rapport and trust that provides an insider's view is hampered (or out-right occluded) by participation in two exclusionary clubs. This is not new in ethnographic fieldwork and has been written about extensively (e.g., Bell and Nutt 2002; Coleman and von Hellerman 2011; Hannerz 2003). For my work, however, I was reminded of H. Russell Bernard's (2006) view on fieldwork:

> Face it: "Gaining rapport" is a euphemism for impression management, one of the "darker arts" of field work, in Harry Wolcott's apt phrase (2005:chap. 6). E. E. Evans-Pritchard, the great British anthropologist, made clear in 1937 how manipulative the craft of ethnography really is. He was doing field work with the Azande of Sudan and wanted to study their rich tradition of witchcraft, so he decided to "win the good will of one or two practitioners and to persuade them to divulge their secrets in strict confidence (1958 [1937]:151)." Strict confidence? He was planning on writing a book about all of this.

Indeed, to get the necessary information for his book, Evans-Pritchard *created* a hostile, jealous struggle between two practitioners who were each trying to prove to Evans-Pritchard that he

knew more about witchcraft than the other. In his own words, the famous anthropologist gloats, "[the two witchcraft practitioners] vied with each other to gain ascendancy among the local practitioners…and I reaped a full harvest from this quarrel" (Evans-Pritchard 1958 [1937]:153).

While I did not create a hostile environment to obtain information, I did selectively present myself in order to gain access, build rapport, and conduct research. For example, each community knew that I was visiting other Pentecostal churches in the area to get a wider appreciation for the religious marketplace of Brazil. I did not, however, explain the depths to which my research would take me. Like Evans-Pritchard, however, I would come back to each church with things I learned from the other in order to better understand how the cultural landscapes and similarities and differences within the plethora of cultural models influence church doctrine and acolyte behaviors.

The final issue presented in this style of anthropological investigation is the identity of the anthropologist as an outsider who is trying to gain acceptance into a foreign culture. Much has been written about the intersection of the ethnologist identity with that of their informants. Abu-Lughod (1991) writes of being a halfie-anthropologist, someone who holds identities that provide both insider and outsider status, while Blanes (2006) discusses his experience as an atheist anthropologist who works in a religious community setting. Identity is a particular issue within the anthropology of religion, as many anthropologists hold private views or come from backgrounds (such as my own atheist views and Mormon upbringing) that would make participation and even friendship with informants very difficult. As one *crente* informed me over freshly squeezed orange juice, "The only people in this world who I don't like, who I can't be friends with, are atheists. They deny the existence, the possibility of God." Though I was stunned by this, I did come to understood that such an opinion was expected based on his personal,

cultural, and religious framework. His opinion is among the majority for many Pentecostals around the world and was even a central focus of the session, *"Experimental Religion": A New Paradigm for the Ethnography of Religion*, at the 2011 annual AAA meeting in New Orleans. Leading anthropologists of religion such as Joel Robbins and Henri Gooren discussed the difficulties of being anthropologists who study conservative religious communities. Anthropologists, it was acknowledged, often feel compelled to hide aspects of their identity to gain rapport and to agree (or give the appearance of agreement) with views that they may personally find questionable, if not detestable, in order to maintain relations. This is further compounded by the ethnographic "participant-observation" method which can require participation in religious rituals while still maintaining ethical integrity.

The AAA session provided no answers. Yet, it did discuss the possibilities available to ethnographers who study Evangelicals: All anthropologists selectively present themselves to be able to move within and between groups, to be an outsider with an insider's perspective. Ruy Llera Blanes (2006) provides an interesting reflexive account of how to negotiate ethnographer identity with access to an exclusive religious community. Working with Spanish and Portuguese evangelicals, Blanes was apprehensive but determined to present himself as what he was, an atheist. After experiencing some negative reactions from gate-keepers, Blanes decided to selectively present himself in order to gain access and build rapport: he presented himself as ascribing to an "unfinished agnosticism," one that caused him to (truthfully) leave the Catholic Church in which he was raised. This identity facilitated access into the community and provided him access to knowledge—as a potential convert and believer—that would not have been available to a suspicious nonbeliever. For many anthropologists, "defining different parameters in terms of proximity and distance," is essential to not only allow potential informants the ability

to relate to the ethnographer (and provide access), but also for the anthropologist to relate to the community (Blanes 2006:229). Within the discussion held at the AAA, a key concept that evolved was anthropology as "play." That is, the practice of ethnography requires that the investigator leave the trappings of their own cultural and personal models behind in order to understand a foreign group on their own terms. An anthropologist who holds alternative religious or atheist notions will not understand the true joy Pentecostals receive from singing hymns, the elation felt while speaking in tongues, or the comfort given by witnessing the exorcism of a demon out of a young girl. As Henri Gooren suggested, why not try to experience what your informants are experiencing? This includes praying, speaking in tongues, and "even being baptized." Such participation does not necessitate "going native," but it does require the anthropologist to meet their informants on their own terms.

Indeed, Tanya Luhrmann (2012) in her book, *When God Talks Back*, describes this very approach to fieldwork within a religious community. Luhrmann conducted four years of participant-observation with members of a conservative Evangelical denomination in Chicago and California. Despite not being an evangelical herself, and not being raised within a particular religious household, Luhrmann immersed herself within both the public and private worship settings. She attended worship sessions and weekly prayer groups, attended retreats and conferences, and befriended the informants of her research. She approached her study not with an eye for atomizing belief into sterile scientific units of analysis, nor to debunk the supernatural experiences claimed by respondents. Rather, she sought to understand the charismatic experiences of evangelical Christians through their own eyes; Luhrmann even engaged in visually-guided prayer session so powerful that she was reduced to tears. The reality of God's existence is not taken up by the research; instead Luhrmann considers how cognitive,

psychological, and social structures shapes experiences that are interpreted as divinely ordained phenomena.

Within my own research, I presented myself as an agnostic who was raised within an Evangelical faith. I was upfront with my presence in Brazil for the purpose of studying Pentecostal culture and well-being. While I was met with skepticism by both congregations, over the course of my 14 month-long research project, I achieved a level of rapport that I felt was equal to that of any regular member. Absences from any congregation were noted and often was the focus of discussion upon my return ("I was afraid that you found another church to attend!" or "I was worried that you went back to the United States!"). While in attendance, I observed and participated behaviors and public symbols of their shared and salient cultural models. For instance, signaling behaviors are especially important in these Pentecostal churches as sign of membership and status. I took notice of arm raising, shaking, glossolalia, and other behaviors associated with baptism in the Spirit, and I occasionally attempted to mimic them as well. The ethnographic data collection process, as both observer and participant, is used synergistically with more structured methods in the identification of common themes to be used in the creation of the "ideal Pentecostal lifestyle" model, as well as their *meaning* (see Holland and Quinn 1987). Without allowing myself the latitude to participate in the various religious rituals, I would be relegated to observer and perpetual outsider status. By temporarily setting aside my personal and cultural models, I was able to gain a greater understanding and appreciation of Brazilian Pentecostal culture, which allowed me to make connections and to foster relationships which may not have been otherwise available.

Phase I: Cultural Domain Analysis

The first phase of this study focuses on the analysis of the cultural domain of the ideal Pentecostal lifestyle, or *A Vida Completa*. To do so, this stage relies on cultural consensus theory (CCT) for the elicitation and measurement of a shared, salient model of Pentecostal identity. Cultural consensus provides an approach that helps analyze the distribution of cultural knowledge among a group of respondents. As a "set of learned and shared beliefs and behaviors," culture is imperfectly distributed knowledge, a complex configuration of the shared intersections of cognitions, emotions, beliefs, and behaviors of a community of individuals (Weller 2007:339). Any cultural domain is thus a multidimensional concept which can be explored by a suite of models. Similar to a stress scale that approximates a complex psychological state through a series of statements, a multidimensional cultural domain can be approximated through a series of cultural models (Handwerker 2002). Cultural consensus theory, developed by Romney, Weller, and Batchelder (1986), is a methodological and statistical approach that elicits and analyzes the distribution of shared knowledge around a cultural domain.

Fundamentally, CCT looks for patterns of agreement between respondents using a style of factor analysis to provide an accurate estimation of how cultural models are distributed among a population. According to Romney et al. (1986), the purpose of such an exercise is to provide a valid and reliable check of how a cultural domain is described and to whom it applies. As the authors explain,

> The assumption in fieldwork has been that the investigator is a valid and reliable instrument and the informant provides valid and reliable information. We suggest that informants' statements should be treated as problematic in character… evaluation and analysis of such data, including theory construction and testing, constitute a vital part of the research activity of the profession. Frequent disagreement among informants confronts the investigator with two major problems: first, how can the 'cultural knowledge' of different informants be

> estimated, and, second, how can the 'correct; answers to specific questions be inferred and with what degree of confidence?"

The first step of the CCT methodology requires eliciting a cultural model around a central domain. Approaches may involve participant observation, unstructured and semi-structured interviews, and more structural methods such as free-listing. Sampling during this phase need not be random. The purpose of this exercise is to elicit widely shared cultural models, so the individual should be chosen for his/her cultural expertise (Handwerker 2001).

Elicitation of *A Vida Completa* relied on a combination of qualitative methods. Observations, open-ended interviews, testimonials, and free-listing were used to elicit common schemas and prototypes related to the domains of the ideal Pentecostal. Sampling followed Handwerker's (2001:19) advice that for cultural model construction: a "random selection of informants constitutes a superfluous and wasteful activity… (Rather) select informants for their cultural expertise." Accordingly, my key informants represented highly immersed and integrated community individuals who provided the "core" perspective of the cultural domain. Thirty-two individuals between the ages of 18 and 82 years from the two congregations (17 from the AD, 15 from the IURD) were chosen, including 18 men and 14 women. A similar sampling methodology was used satisfactorily in previous research (Dressler 2000; Garro 1986; Medin at al. 2006).

Most of Phase I occurred during a critical rapport building period that coincided with the development of and my increasing confidence in my Portuguese language abilities. As such, I relied primarily on free-lists in an effort to avoid confusion and misinterpretation, and on semi-structured interviews that relied on simple questions that were audio recorded for future playback and verification. One key question was asked during both the free-list and interview processes: what are the things that one needs for a fulfilled Pentecostal life? When I explained my research project to an IURD pastor, he immediately corrected my phrasing of the question by saying,

"what you really want to know is what is a *vida completa*?" Adding, "This is good, because this is what we give people here, a complete life through the power of God." Conversion narratives and testimonials were often a part of interviews, as many informants wished to provide concrete examples of the blessings associated with the *vida completa* and to provide a contrast to what their life constituted before conversion. Recorded interviews were then coded in ATLAS.ti for common themes and models (see Holland and Quinn 1987), which were then analyzed jointly with the free-list data within ANTHROPAC for the consolidation of common themes as well as frequency.

Thirty-nine items listed most frequently by informants (within both religious communities and as an aggregate) were selected as potential salient items to develop the *vida completa* Pentecostal model. These words or short phrases were written down on index cards for use in unconstrained and ranking pile sort exercises. Unconstrained pilesorts, also known as free pile sorts, allow the informant to order cards based on similarity into as many or few groups as they wish. This task was thus performed prior to the later rating task in an effort to record the initial native cognitive mapping of informants. The only constraint of this method is that a respondent cannot create a single all-encompassing group, and that he/she cannot give each item its own group. All other configurations are however possible within this style of pile sorting.

The goal of this method was the construction of a shared mental map for the cultural domain—that is, an estimation of how informants cognitively order the items of the *vida completa* model. Multidimensional scaling (MDS) allows for the graphing of a similarity matrix along two dimensions, literally creating a map of similarities and differences. Items grouped in common are represented spatially close to one another, whereas differences are represented by increased distance. An aggregate proximity matrix of the groupings across individuals provides a

cultural mental map of the domain for the group, an estimation of how the cultural domain is generally cognitively arranged (Bernard 2006). The spatial orientation of domain items is subject to distortion—as a result of the artificial two dimensional axes of the mapping, and variation of the aggregate matrix. A measure of stress, from 0-1, measures the amount of distortion of the MDS map, where 0 signifies no distortion. Social science statistical packages, such as ANTHROPAC and UCINET, can easily perform MDS analysis from compiled pile sort data.

Finally, Property Fitting Analysis (PROFIT) provides a test of the hypothesized structure of the MDS graph. Specifically, PROFIT allows for the testing of hypothesized dimensions of the MDS map along which the items are spatially organized. Statistical analysis in UCINET regresses a set of attributes onto object locations on the MDS map. In short, PROFIT analysis is a multiple regression of object attributes and their coordinates. As a rule of thumb, an R-squared of 0.8 suggests the existence of a hypothesized dimension (Borgatti 1997). The criterion tested here is that informants organize *a vida completa* by "importance" (i.e., the cultural consensus model). As a result, this analysis is only performed after the elicitation and verification of a shared cultural model, which is described below.

The ranking task of the 39 domain items was used to test for cultural consensus. Thirty-eight additional informants (19 from each community; 18-66 years of age) were asked to create three groups of thirteen items of increasing importance. That is, one group comprised of items deemed "essential" to achieve a *vida completa*, another held items deemed "important but not necessary," and the final group was composed of items identified as "less important." Informants were then asked to rank-order, from 1-13, each item within each group. The result was a rank ordering of importance for all 39 items. On occasion, informants refused to differentiate the rank order or two or more items. In such cases, the average rank of the items was used in the later

consensus analysis. For example, if "baptism in the Holy Spirit," and "being active in the church community" were unranked within the #5 and #6 ranks, each received a ranking of 5.5.

The use of ranking to measure cultural consensus was undertaken due to the nature of the domain. What constitutes *a vida completa* is highly codified within the religious community, as among other things, achieving a complete life is a purpose of religious affiliation. It was thought that using Likert-response items would result in all items being rated "highly." Ranking, therefore, forced individuals to order items in degrees of relational importance. Such a technique actually adheres to the "informal cultural consensus model." "Informal" denotes the few assumptions made about the data, such as not controlling for guessing, and not interpreting an individuals' competence by the proportion of "correct" answers (Weller 2007). Rather, this style of cultural consensus is a factor analysis of individuals, where competence is measured by how representative the individual's rankings match those of every other informant. As outlined above, the ranks of each individual were imputed into UCINET, which performs the analysis. Model consensus was measured by its ability to meet a 3:1 eigenvalue ratio.

Terms and concepts are analyzed by frequency and rank, and developed into a series of phrases or questions to be evaluated by informants. This construction phase is "the art" of the CCT approach, when researchers may include tacit knowledge that they observed. Importantly, all chosen terms, phrases, and concepts around a cultural domain are subsequently evaluated independently by respondents. They are asked a series of questions around a domain which focus on how specific terms or concepts are applicable, valued, needed, or necessary to the cultural group. Questions are purposefully directed outward to the community in order to elicit specifically which concepts that members perceive as shared group knowledge. Consensus analysis can then be performed with an informant response matrix. Through a form of factor

analysis using a social scientific statistical package such as ANTHROPAC or UCINET, researchers can measure the amount of agreement between individuals based on their responses.

Cultural consensus analysis utilizes an informant by informant matrix of response correlations. In other words, the responses of each individual are correlated with the responses of every other individual (Weller 2007). The resulting patterns of agreement can be expressed as principal components—eigenvectors that explain the underlying variability of the informant-informant matrix. The first factor extracted from cultural consensus explains the majority of the variation and serves as a measure of "informant competency." Utilizing this first factor, an "answer key" can be developed of the most culturally correct answers of a domain. These culturally correct answers are "estimated by weighting the responses of each person by their competency and aggregating responses across people" (Weller 2007:340). As such, a first factor "answer sheet," in which informant ratings of *a vida completa* are weighted by their cultural competence, serves as the most culturally agreed upon model for the tested domain. In general, evidence for cultural consensus occurs if the first factor sufficiently explains more variation than the second factor. Typically, the minimum threshold is that the eigenvalue ratio of the first factor to the second is greater than 3:1, or that the first factor explains 3 times the variability of the second factor (Romney et al. 1986).

Residual Agreement

This research follows Dressler's (2012) approach to cultural consensus by advocating that the residual data must be understood for complete analysis. As a form of principal component analysis, the first factor explains only part of the underlying variation of the respondent correlation matrix. Patterns of residual agreement—or subcultural sharing—may lie beyond the overall cultural consensus explained by a single factor. There are two primary ways

for determining the existence of alternative models or subcultures. The first was introduced by Hubert and Golledge (1981) and involves recreating the inter-informant agreement matrix from each individual's first factor cultural competency scores. Theoretically, if the first factor explains all of the variation between informants, the original and recreated matrices should be identical. Patterned deviation between the matrices suggests the existence of shared departure from the consensus model. Subtracting standardized forms of each matrix from each other creates a third, residual matrix. With the quadratic assignment procedure (QAP) in ANTHROPAC, tests of correlation significance can be performed between the original and residual matrices. Significant correlations suggest that the residual matrix has an organized structure that indicates cultural sharing beyond the original first factor (Dressler et al. 2012).

The second means of identifying patterns of agreement beyond the first factor is much simpler, as it only takes into account the additional variation explained by the second factor. However, if a significant amount of residual consensus lies beyond the first factor, then this subpattern of agreement should be evident within the second factor. Introduced by Boster and Johnson (1989), this method involves graphically plotting informant's first and second factor loadings. If there is clustering along the second dimension, the data may indicate shared cultural variation beyond the first factor model. Hypotheses about the nature of this subcultural variation may be assessed through tests of significance on informants' second factor scores.

To this point, however, these methods have only served to identify shared agreement beyond the first factor and they have not done anything to elicit how the residual agreement departs from the overall cultural consensus model. Previous efforts have looked at the differences between the first and second factors one item at a time (Ross and Medin 2005), or they have constructed separate cultural consensus models for each subgroup (Keller and

Lowenstein 2011). Neither approach is ultimately satisfactory: both fail to take into account that a significant portion of the variation is already explained by the first factor. As Dressler et al. explain (2012:4),

> …a portion of the variation in the original answers to questions is due to the existence of an overall cultural consensus. Examining differences in the original answers or re-estimating the cultural answer key for subgroups leaves the part of the answer generated by cultural consensus in the estimate, along with whatever part of the answer is a function of residual agreement. What needs to be done is to estimate the variation in the cultural answer key that goes beyond the cultural consensus.

To explain the organization of the residual agreement, while considering the overall shared consensus, Dressler et al. (2012) suggest a novel technique for calculating the deviation score of each informant. This method calls for subtracting the item value of the cultural answer key from each respondent's own rating of the same item. A positive value, therefore, indicates that the item was ranked higher by the respondent than by the answer key. Each item's overall deviation can be calculated by averaging the deviation scores for all individuals. This method, in effect, removes the known variation accounted by the first factor, leaving only the residual agreement. Separate item-deviation scores can be calculated for suspected subcultural groups as identified by Hubert and Golledge's (1981) or Boster and Johnson's (1989) previously described methods.

Dressler et al.'s (2012) technique for identifying the structural specificities of residual agreement has been used successfully for describing the temporal differences of Brazilian cultural models of lifestyle, social support, family life, and national identity. However, each of these cultural domains relied upon responses to a 4-point Likert-response scale. The technique supplied in this study applies a subtle alteration to Dressler et al.'s method for analyzing residual agreement that is more appropriate to rank-ordered data and the informal consensus method (see Weller 2007).

Rank order data differs from multiple-choice and Likert-responses because each item's response is made in relation to every other item's response. In the data collected here, respondents ranked 39 characteristics indicative of a Pentecostal *vida completa* in order of importance. Respondents ranked items highly important because they were considered more necessary than the other items presented. Within Dressler et al.'s method, the researchers rely upon the average item-deviation across informants. While this works well with self-contained items, when applied to rank-order data, it has the function of skewing the extremes—items the cultural answer key ranked the very most and very least important. For instance, *being a God-fearing Christian* was ranked as most important in the Pentecostal cultural consensus answer key with an item score of 6.71 (a low score indicates greater importance). Informant deviations from this score are more likely to under-rate the importance of this item. There are only so many places from 1 to 7, and many more between 8 and 39. The same is true for items ranked least important: the average informant deviations from these items tended to regard them as more important because the scale does not permit items to be ranked less important than 39. However, items in the middle of the scale, such as *helping one's family* (17.63), received less skewing since the scale allows informants to over-rank this item just as easily as they can under-rank it. In sum, one individual alone can create the appearance of wide-spread disagreement by ranking a very high or very low item on the opposite divergent extreme. This results in the artificial appearance of high consensus of centrally located items, and high residual disagreement for items located on either extreme.

Solving the problem of residual agreement distortion requires only the calculation of separate first factor cultural consensus coefficients for each subgroup (in this study, the AD and the IURD) in question. These subgroup cultural answer keys are then each subtracted from the

shared cultural answer key resulting in two sets of itemized residual agreement scores—one for each church. In effect, the cultural answer key is the weighted average of informants' responses based on their cultural competence (or agreement with one another). In this form, item differences are less susceptible to the influence of outliers, and can then be used to determine the amount and structure of the residually shared agreement of each subgroup. Plotting each group's residual agreement scores along separate dimensions graphically represents areas of high agreement for the two churches (represented by little to no variation from the shared model) and areas of high residual agreement within the subcultural groupings, but high variation between the groups.

Sampling

This research utilized two sampling designs for Phase I and Phase II. Since this research is concerned with various degrees of religious consonance, length of religious participation was recorded, but it was not used to exclude informants. As such, for all research phases, informants were recruited by their presence and participation in Pentecostal religious activities and worship. The research was conducted under the auspices of local leaders, who helped me to inform the congregations of my research project and to recruit research informants. Phase I respondents were selected using the convenience snowball method. In Phase II quota sampling was employed; respondents were selected to match the age and gender distribution of São Paulo Pentecostals as identified in the 2000 Brazilian national census (IBGE 2000).

Phase II: Social Survey: Cultural Consonance

Contemporary treatment (e.g., Geertz 1973) of culture within social science literature erroneously treats behavior as synonymous with culture. Not all behaviors (even shared group behaviors) should be regarded as culture, as they can arise from idiosyncratic cognitions, or non-

culturally shared inclinations (e.g., instincts) (Ross 2004). Cultural consensus allows the elicitation of cultural knowledge, not just the behaviors associated or as outcomes of such knowledge. This is important since behavior need not extend from knowledge. Structural constraints and individual dispositions may lead one to behaviorally adhere or avoid culturally prescribed mandates. Separating behavior from culture, so that each can be studied independently is enabled by the combination of CCT and its logical extension, cultural consonance. Methodologically, cultural consonance (Dressler and Bindon 2000) analyzes individual behavior as it coincides to shared cultural knowledge. As such, informants' beliefs and actions can be measured in terms of degrees of consonance or dissonance from the accepted cultural norm.

The Phase II portion of cultural consensus research involves interviews which focus on the variation and interaction of cultural consonance of religious and secular models (Dressler et al.'s (2000; 2005; 2007) and associated biological and psychological outcomes. Snowball sampling recruited 62 *Assembléia* and 56 *Universal* members for a total sample of 118 individuals—only 10 individuals overlapped from the previous research phase. These individuals were chosen in order to represent the age and sex distribution of *evangélicos* in São Paulo, Brazil, based on the most recently available census data (IBGE 2000). After finding consensus for a single, shared *vida completa* model, individuals were asked the degree to which their own behaviors approximate important characteristics of the model.

The final religious consonance scale is comprised of items found to be most "necessary" for *A Vida Completa*, as determined by the ranking task and CCT. From the original 39 items tested for domain analysis, 27 items make up the religious consonance scale. Several items are combined given their similar etiology. For example, the prohibitions against smoking, drinking,

drugs, and extra-marital sexual relations are combined within the more culturally meaningful category of "treating the body like God's temple." Likewise, feeling "happiness" and "peace" in one's life was combined into a single category given their experiential similarities. Sixteen of the items measure general dispositions or conditions; survey participants responded along a 4-item Likert-agreement scale. Examples of these items include "I have faith that God will resolve all my problems," and "I have been liberated from all the demons in my life." Possible responses include "complete disagreement", "disagreement", "agreement", and "complete agreement." Five of these items were reversed coded, so that higher disagreement represented higher consonance with *A Vida Completa* (e.g., "Unlike Christ, sometimes I have difficulty loving my fellow man"). Eight items elicited a frequency response—with greater frequency denoting higher consonance. For example, respondents answered on the monthly frequency (never, 2-3/month, 2-3/week, everyday) of certain behaviors such as "reading the bible," "being baptized in the Spirit," and "evangelizing to others." The final three items each employed a unique response scale: the frequency of church attendance (0, 1-2, 3-5, 6 or more), perceived activity within the church community (not active, a little active, active, very active), and the perceived strength of their testimony/faith in God (measured on a scale of 1-10, then scaled to be comparable with other items).

Utilizing items from the shared cultural model, informants rate the extent to which their behaviors are congruent or consonant. There are two ways to calculate consonance scores: weighting the behavioral (consonance) responses by the consensus answer key; and including only those items that are deemed more "important" in the cultural model (Dressler 2005). This research used the latter method. Specifically, informant consonance with the "ideal Pentecostal lifestyle" will be derived from summing informants' ratings of their own congruence to the 25

items deemed most important by the first factor answer key. Two additional items: the conquest/achievement of the material lifestyle; and being content with the simple life were also included, despite their low-aggregate ranking, given their importance in the IURD and the AD, respectively. The diverse aspects of the cultural domain of *A Vida Completa* made it necessary for the use of a large and diverse scale of 27 items that were asked by a variety of means (i.e., agreement-disagreement, frequency recall). The items hold together well as a single scale with an acceptable internal reliability (Cronbach's Alpha of 0.84.)

To measure secular consonance, this research uses models of Brazilian material lifestyle success, and the ideal family. Both of these cultural consonance measures were developed by Dressler and his colleagues among residents of Ribeirão Preto, Brazil. Cultural consonance in material lifestyle is composed of 11 items deemed "very important" for having a good life. Study participants responded by affirming or denying ownership of items (e.g., car, oven, television, sofa, telephone). This scale has been shown to be highly correlated with psychological and physiological stress in a number of studies (e.g., Dressler et al. 1998; Dressler and Bindon 2000). Cultural consonance in family life is composed of 18 items assessed through a 4 point agreement Likert-response scale. This scale has been shown to have acceptable reliability (Cronbach's alpha=.88) in previous studies (Balieiro et al. 2011). The magnitude of the associations of these measures of cultural consonance with outcome variables will be compared to the magnitude of the associations of religious consonance with outcome variables. A single principal component accounts for 65.5 percent of the shared variance and this score is used as the measure of generalized secular consonance.

Measuring Well-being

Two psychological health outcomes served in this study's hypothesis testing as the primary dependent variables. Cohen's Perceived Stress Scale (PSS, Cohen et al. 1983) and the Center for Epidemiologic Studies-Depression scale (CES-D, Radloff 1977). This study uses the 10-item PSS which has been widely used and repeatedly shown to be reliable with Cronbach's alpha coefficients averaging about 0.8 (Cohen et al. 1983; Cohen and Williamson 1988; Cole 1999; Glaser et al. 1999). A Portuguese version of the PSS-10 was tested among 793 Brazilian university professors and found to have good reliability and validity (Cronbach's alpha=0.87, test-restest reliability= 0.86), being inversely correlated with perceived health (Reis et al. 2010). Among a sample in Ribeirão Preto, the PSS was similarly shown to have internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha=0.78) and correlation with depressive symptoms (r=0.6) (Balieiro et al. 2011; Dressler et al. 1998). This study likewise found satisfactory internal reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.78. The CES-D is comprised of 20 items that elicits frequency of depressive symptomatology. This measure is also widely used and has shown repeatedly to have high internal consistently, with Cronbach's alpha averaging 0.85; and high validity, correlating with several psychological disorders (Knight et al. 1997; Radloff 1977; Roberts et al. 1989; Weissman et al. 1977). In Brazil, a Portuguese translation of this scale was shown to have identical Cronbach's alpha among a sample of 523 college students (DaSilveira and Jorge 2002). This study found satisfactory internal reliability for CES-D with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.87. These scales were used because they are among the most widely used psychometric scales in the social sciences. Each scale has been translated into Portuguese and has shown reliability and validity in previous use in Ribeirão Preto, Brazil (Dressler et al 1997; Dressler 2000).

Measuring Covariates

Standard covariates of health and stress were measured, including drug use (including tobacco and alcohol) and social support. Social support was measured by The Single Item Measure of Social Support (SIMSS) (Blake and McKay 1986). This item asks: "How many people do you have near that you can readily count on for real help in times of trouble or difficulty, such as watch over children or pets, give rides to the hospital or store, or help if you are sick?" Possible responses range from low to high assistance based on the perceived size of social support available (e.g., 0, 1, 2-5, 6-9, 10 or more). This measure has been shown to be strongly associated with more encompassing social support measures and is correlated with morbidity (Blake and McKay 1986). Additional covariates of age, sex, and socio-economic status were gathered from informants. Socio-economic status was measured using the principal component of several measures: an occupational ranking developed in Brazil codes the social prestige of a variety of occupations from low prestige (0) to high prestige (6) (derived from Pastore 1982); the number of years of education of the respondent (ranked from 0 - 4, with 0 = no formal schooling, 1 = MOBRAL/literacy training, 2 = elementary/middle school, 3= high school, 4 = (some) college/university); and the monthly income of both the household and household head (measured in monthly minimum salaries, approximately R$623 in 2012). These three variables load a single principal component accounting for 61 percent of the shared variation. This score is used as a measure of socioeconomic status (SES).

A series of statistical data analyses tested my hypotheses: Do Pentecostals appraise their stress experience through religious lifestyle models? Hierarchical multivariate regression analysis in SPSS (v.21) tests how consonance with the Pentecostal model shapes psychological well-being in relation to, and concurrent with secular models. First, standard covariates of stress

and status (e.g., age, sex, BMI) were controlled for in multivariate regressions. Both psychological well-being measures serve as primary outcome variables. Secular models of Brazilian material lifestyle success and family are widely distributed models and are known to be associated with psychological well-being. The health effects of Pentecostal-specific models were tabulated in comparison to other known influencers and predictors of well-being. Models were evaluated for their statistical and theoretical significance.

Chapter Summary

This study demonstrates how anthropological research can be conducted from an empirical foundation without compromising the emic views and multivocality that has made anthropology "the most humanistic of the sciences and the most scientific of the humanities" (Wolf 1964:88). Utilizing a mixed methodological approach, this research approaches religion-health interactions by examining how participation in a subculture can buffer the psycho-social stresses of dominant culture. Drawing from cognitive anthropological theory, religion is conceived as a set of cultural models which complement, overlap, and contradict cultural models advocated by other socio-cultural realms which individuals variously occupy. Consonance in an alternative model (i.e., a model of limited distribution) assuages the deleterious effects of secular model dissonance. To accomplish this, my study utilizes Romney et al.'s (1986) cultural consensus theory and method to first identify and test the saliency and distribution of limitedly-shared religious models. Dressler's (2000, 2005) theory and method of cultural consonance, combined with psychological and physiological well-being measures, link individual knowledge with cultural knowledge—shared ideas, knowledge, and values— and then back again to individual behaviors and health outcomes. A synergistic mix of quantitative and qualitative

methods builds upon and informs the other, enhancing the possibility of developing more reliable and valid assessments and outcomes

CHAPTER 8: Cultural Domain Analysis of *A Vida Completa*

A central aspect of this research is to understand what constitutes a full and ideal life for Brazilian Pentecostals. The existence of such an organizing cultural model was assumed *a priori*, based on the axiom that religions provide a framework of standards, behaviors, and goals which define a good, spiritual, and moral lifestyle. As with any cultural ideal, however, sharing is not homogenous. Individuals may only partially understand the model, or they may hold alternative "heterodox" versions. Utilizing the CCT methods outlined in Chapter 7, this chapter investigates the composition of the *vida completa* model, how it is shared among Pentecostals, and how it is cognitively perceived and organized. This chapter first presents the results of free-listing and interviews which were used to illicit items indicative of *a vida completa*. Next, I discuss the results of the pile sorts, including a ranking task which provides a test of cultural consensus. Residual agreement analysis identifies areas of shared deviation from the group answer key, showing subcultural variance for what constitutes the ideal Pentecostal life. An unconstrained pile sort shows how Pentecostals cognitively organize or arrange the prototypes, sub-schemas, and models that comprise *a vida completa*. Each method is done as an aggregate to elicit the generalized Pentecostal culture as well as by denominations to understand how the AD and IURD subtly conceive of the "complete life" differently.

Free-Lists

Romney (1999) argues that free-listing is as devoid of research bias as any ethnographic method invented. Thirty-two respondents completed free-lists of items they themselves considered necessary for the "full Pentecostal life." When possible, I audio recorded the free-

listing procedure, capturing the thought processes and subsequent discussions. These interviews provide the subjective meanings for the items captured on free-lists. A selective presentation of these interviews follows the description of the free-listing data.

This phase of the study utilized a non-random sample of key informants. Respondents represent individuals who are highly immersed and integrated in the community, and who provide the "core" perspective of the cultural domain. Thirty-two individuals were chosen, including 14 women and 18 mean ranging from 18 to 82 years old (M=33.8; s.d.= 12.8). A similar sampling methodology was used satisfactorily in previous research (Dressler 2000).

AD and IURD respondents free-listed 186 and 184 total terms, respectively. The average free list length for both churches is approximately 12 items (~2.4 s.d.).These words and phrases were analyzed within ANTHROPAC for the consolidation of common themes as well as frequency. For instance, tithes (obligatory 10% donation) and sacrifices (giving money to the church which may or may not include tithe) were combined due to their joint use in discourse and common *raison d'être* as the performance of faith through an investment in the church (i.e., God). Similarly, items denoting pro-social demeanors, such as happiness, humbleness, and friendliness were combined within the category *good personality* and behavioral and dietary taboos of drinking, smoking, drug use, and sexual relationships outside of marriage were combined within the emic category of *treating one's body like a Temple of God.* After consolidation, there was no substantive variation of frequency for commonly listed items between denominations, and no unique items for either group. For instance, *having a good personality, treating one's body like a temple, having a relationship with God,* and *having a loving family* composed the top four free list items for the AD, and was within the top six for the IURD. Twenty-one items comprise 91.6 percent of all responses.

Table 8.1 Free List Data

Pentecostal Free List		
	AD	**IURD**
Informants	17	15
Male	11	7
Female	6	8
Average Age (Range/standard deviation)	35.5 (18-82/18.4)	31.8 (18-76/15.3)
Avg. Response Length (Range)	11 (8-20)	12 (8-22)
Total items listed	186	184
Top 17 Items (Frequency)		
	Good personality (19)	Relationship with God (20)
	Body = God's Temple (19)	Loving family (18)
	Relationship with God (17)	Body = God's Temple (14)
	Loving family (15)	Conquest of "material life"/prosperity (14)
	Baptism in the Spirit (13)	Doing the works of God (13)
	Doing the work of God (13)	Good personality (10)
	Working hard (9)	Living the Word of God (10)
	Loving thy neighbor (9)	To be Saved (9)
	Separation from worldly things (9)	Faith that God solves problems (9)
	Faith that God solves problems (8)	Loving thy neighbor (8)
	Satisfaction with a simple life (8)	Baptism in the Spirit (8)
	To be Saved (6)	Giving tithe and sacrifices (8)
	Faith in Christ (6)	Separation from worldly things (7)
	Studying the Bible (6)	Work hard (5)
	Faithfulness/fidelity (6)	Studying the Bible (5)
	Living the Word of God (5)	Go to church regularly (5)
	Having an education (4)	Friends are members of the church (4)
Total	172/186	167/184

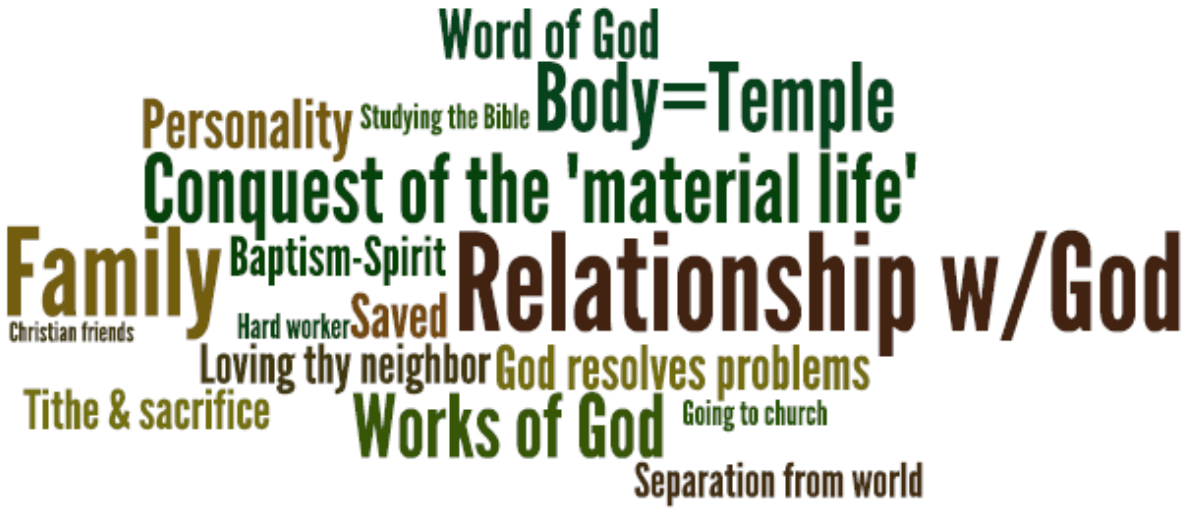

Figure 8.1: IURD word cloud of top free list items

Figure 8.2: AD word cloud of top free list items

Table 8.1 shows both the similarities and differences of the AD and IURD free-lists. These data are reproduced graphically in word clouds (Figures 8.1 and 8.2). Word clouds represent frequency-specific words and phrases, and they allow for quick visualization and interpretation of data. Items appearing larger have higher frequencies than items appearing

smaller; location and color have no special significance. For *a vida completa*, the aggregate of Brazilian Pentecostals share much in common. Thirteen of the most frequently listed 17 items were the same for each congregation (though with varying frequencies). AD members further listed *satisfaction with the simple life, having faith in Christ, fidelity,* and *having an education* with high frequency, whereas IURD respondents more frequently listed *the conquest of the material lifestyle, tithes and sacrifices, going to church regularly, and having friends in the church* as items necessary for *a vida completa*. Importantly, however, no item was unique to either group; rather, the aforementioned terms were listed with lesser frequency.

The word clouds show that despite the substantial overlap of terms, some items are much more salient in one church than the other, even when limiting the graphic to the top 17 items. For the AD, *having a good personality, working hard, baptism in the Spirit, having a loving family,* and *treating one's body like a Temple of God*, are among the more prominent terms. Conversely, for the IURD, the *conquest of the material lifestyle, having a loving family,* and *following the Word of God* are more salient terms from the free-lists of *a vida completa.*

Free-List Interviews

Whenever possible, I had informants expand on the meaning of the free-lists and what it means to achieve *a vida completa* more generally. These provided additional terms for the construction of the cultural model, as well as ethnographic insight into how Brazilian Pentecostals conceive, embody, and enact their religious culture.

Raphael is a 30 year old *obreiro* (worker, volunteer) in the IURD church. He converted three years ago and is very active in the community, though he wishes to be more active. Raphael's job as a motorcycle taxi driver and his evening classes at a technical school for mechanic training do not allow much time for participation in the church more than twice a

week. Yet, his faith is very important to him and he enjoys translating church hymnals into English. For Raphael, *a vida completa* is about being filled with the Holy Spirit.

> *A vida completa* is to be always filled with the Holy Spirit…when I am filled with the Holy Spirit, I radiate peace. I am filled with God and project light. People see this, they react differently to you. For me, they ask, "Why are you so happy? What changed about you, you seem different...better?" To be filled with the Holy Spirit, to be liberated (from demonic influences). It is a process. You have to search for God every day. You have to pay your tithes, give sacrifices, and do the works of God. Only then will you be part of the Nation of God. And you can't just live the word on Sundays. I see many people at church praying, seemingly filled with the Spirit. But I sometimes wonder how many of them smoke, drink, and cheat on their wives outside of church.

For Raphael, baptism in the Spirit is proof of living the Word of God and of achieving *a vida completa.* It is framed largely by the obligations to God (tithes, sacrifices, and works) and the spiritual and emotional benefits of compliance—peace, happiness, and salvation. Raphael is skeptical of some fellow church members who he believes are "Sunday Christians." That is, members who act piously during meetings, but who leave their morality at the pew. These behavioral taboos are more than just guidelines for a healthy spirit, body, mind, and household. Rather, they are (costly) public signaling of true devotion to the Word of God. In Raphael's view, anyone can go through the motions at church—praying and paying tithe. Changing one's daily behavior in both public and importantly in private settings requires true faith.

Marcelo, another *obreiro* in the IURD, takes a similar view as Raphael. He is 40 years old, married and expecting his first child. He has a college education and works in business—an unusual socio-economic position in a church that has a high membership within the *favelas* and *conjuntos* of the city. Marcelo's understanding of *a vida completa* is arranged in a reciprocal relationship with God. In exchange for living the commandments of the Lord, salvation and earthly rewards are gained.

> You can't have *a vida completa* without being saved. If you are outside this church, it is impossible to have *a vida completa*. As a consequence of salvation, you will have peace in your life, you will have joy, you will be free from problems. If you had financial problems, you will be blessed in your financial life. If you had problems in your love life—which was my problem—you will find the love of your life. But you must first have faith, you have to follow the path and word of God. You have to search for God every day and you have to give tithes and sacrifices. First you give to God, after you will have doors opened for you, and you will have blessings.

Marcelo views salvation as both the origin and destination of *a vida completa.* A full Pentecostal life cannot arise without salvation. According to Marcelo, salvation can only be gained at the IURD, which "is the only church to fully realize the works of God." However, the idea of salvation is quickly eclipsed by the promises of blessings. For Marcelo and other IURD members, *a vida completa* is focused on the earthly rewards that can be achieved through having faith; it is a faith practiced through monetary gifts in exchange for blessings.

Guilherme is a pastor in the AD church. He is 40 years old, and lives in a small apartment attached to the back of *Templo Sede* with his wife and two young children. He is very close to the youth of the church. After meetings, Pastor Guilherme can often be found joking, conversing, and counseling the young adults in front of the church. For him *a vida completa* starts with being *fiel* (faithful).

> *Being fiel* is most important (for *a vida completa*). It leads to all other things. With faith (fé) in God, all is possible. And to practice faith, a *crente* needs to help those around him. It is the fruit of the Spirit and the essence of God's word. So I live here (in the church) to devote my life to helping others. The church is open 24 hours, and I am available at any time to someone in need. You also need to love your family, because this is one of the greatest gifts we have on earth. The family is the platform for all other things…school, work, worship, it all begins with the family. Because of this I believe that the family comes first, then the church. Unfortunately, modern life is destroying families. Television, work, life has prevented people from forming strong families. People need to unplug and talk around the dinner table like in years past.

For Pastor Guilherme, *a vida completa* is less about rituals and rewards and more concerned about how one interacts with their fellow man. Indeed, faith for him is not about giving money to the church, but is rather more about imparting service to others. Similarly, he places family in front of the church (though not in front of God), and views the family as the place one first learns about God and morality. The church for him and many other AD members is a communal extension of this basic familial unit.

Finally, Kérima, the 30 year-old daughter of an AD pastor, demonstrates how *crentes* seek to separate themselves from perceived damning aspects of majority Brazilian culture.

> For us *evangélicos*, we get joy from our relationship with God. We don't need material things…we don't need to drink to be happy—we are already happy! We don't need to do a lot of what other Brazilians feel like they need to do to be happy. You may know that it is Carnaval next week. For us *evangélicos*, Carnaval are sad days. It is supposed to be a time right before Easter to reflect on the sacrifice of Jesus, but many Brazilians don't understand the significance of this time of year. Instead they have a *festa* (party) of the flesh, because you know that is what *carne*—Carne-val—means, right? During the *festa* they don't think (of Christ) and do many things—sex, drugs, alcohol.

Kérima views the ideal Pentecostal lifestyle as one of conscious separation from the Brazilian society she views as sinful and immoral. She feels that happiness for the majority of the world is based on material accumulation and temporary pleasures of the flesh. For her and other *crentes*, happiness comes directly from the relationship with God and their experiences with the Spirit. Worldly conventions and customs are often seen at best as "distractions from the Spirit," and at worst as temptations from Satan that will prevent salvation.

Ranking Task Results

The free list of salient terms was expanded to 39 items to take advantage of subtle-variations (e.g., *prosperity* vs. *blessings of prosperity;* the latter requires an appeal to God) and items gleaned from participant-observation (e.g., the importance of *tithe*). These thirty-nine items

were selected as the most relevant to compose the *vida completa* Pentecostal model (Appendix A). These terms were written down on index cards for use in ranking tasks. The ranking of the 39 domain items constitutes the test of cultural consensus. Thirty-eight separate respondents (19 from each community; 18-66 years of age, M=29, s.d.= 12.2) were asked to rank from 1-39 the necessity of requirements for achieving what they consider the complete lifestyle.

Before discussing the findings, further mention of the constraints associated with rating-tasks in cultural consensus analysis is necessary. The domain in question requires that the standard mathematical measures for determining levels of cultural consensus must be considered with nuance. The domain of focus is the set of characteristics necessary for a successful Pentecostal lifestyle. From free-listing, interviews, and participant-observation I compiled a list of 39 behaviors, characteristics, and demeanors deemed essential for the "ideal life." All the items, therefore, were emically important for the Pentecostal communities. In fact, no item was unique to either group and there was substantial overlap of salient terms. As a result, many informants had trouble ranking items that they found to be fundamental imperatives of the Pentecostal lifestyle. As one informant lamented, *"how can you ask me to put these in order? They are all necessary to be with God, none is more important or less essential than the others."* Thus, measures of cultural consensus, like other tests of significance, must be tempered with an understanding of the data, methods, and culture.

Cultural consensus shows that respondents do share a common model of *a vida completa*, supporting my initial hypothesis. The similarities among individuals' rank-order of the 39 items resulted in the first factor explaining 3.81 times more variation than the second factor, with an average competency of 0.49 (and three negative scores) (see Table 8.2). While this is a somewhat low measure of competency, it is not unexpected due to the makeup of the domain

(i.e., all items being deemed "essential") and the heterogeneity of the sample (i.e., comprised of two different Pentecostal denominations).

Table 8.2: Aggregate Cultural Consensus of *A Vida Completa*

	Pentecostals combined
Respondents	38
Male	17
Female	21
Average Age (range, s.d.)	29.0 (18-66, ±12.2)
# of Negative Competency Score(s)	3
Avg. Competency (range, s.d.)	.49 (-.35-.82, ±.29)
Eigenvalue ratio	3.81

In order to test my second hypothesis – the two church communities have significant residual agreement divergent from one another – I first plotted each respondent by their first factor and residual second factor scores (Figure 8.3). The distribution of Pentecostals along the second factor (vertical) axis suggests that there is a clumping of IURD members below the plane of the Y axis and AD members above the plane, though AD respondents are more dispersed. To more formally test the distribution of church members along the second factor, a test of significance was performed. Pearson's Correlation shows that church denomination was highly correlated with the second factor ($r=-0.42$, $p=0.01$, $n=38$), indicating that the residual agreement of *a vida completa* is in fact due to the existence of two subgroups organized by denomination. Other hypothesized characteristics such as age and gender were not correlated with respondent scores on the second factor.

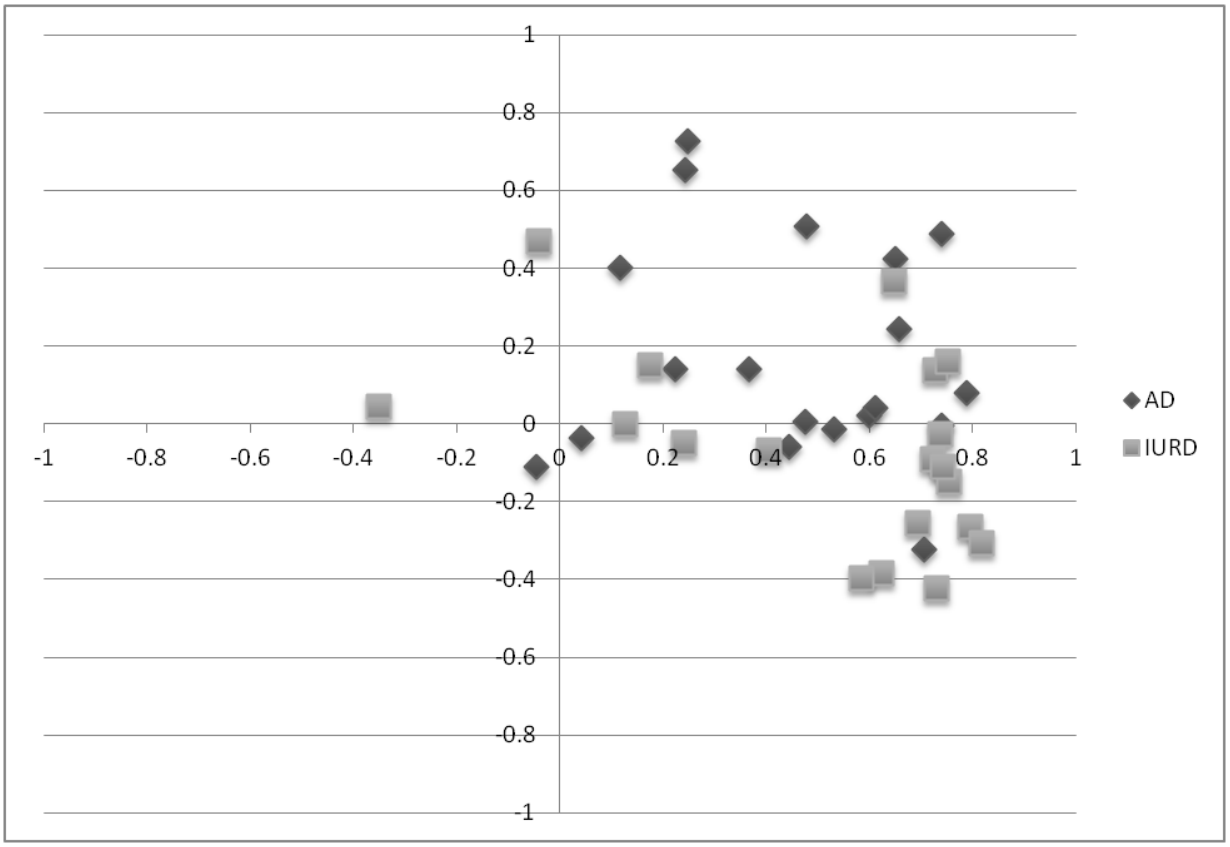

Figure 8.3: Respondent loadings on the 1st and 2nd factors

After determining the existence of residual agreement within the two denominations, the next step was to ascertain the structure of the residual sharing of each community. This requires the formulation of a separate cultural answer key of *A Vida Completa* for each group. Again, a test of residual agreement requires the identification of further cultural sharing that is not accounted for by the first factor of the aggregate Pentecostal sample. The AD's cultural consensus is similar to the overall Pentecostal population, with an eigenvalue ratio of 3.54 and an average competency of 0.48. The IURD show much higher levels of cultural sharing with the first factor answer key explaining nearly 7 times the amount of variation as the second. The average competency for this community was also slightly higher at 0.53 (Table 8.3).

Table 8.3: Cultural Consensus of *A Vida Completa*

	AD	IURD	Pentecostals combined
Respondents	19	19	38
Male	8	9	17
Female	11	10	21
Average Age (range, s.d.)	27.84 (18-66, ±12.1)	30.05 (18-58, ±12.6)	28.95 (18-66, ±12.2)
# of Negative Competency Score(s)	1	2	3
Avg. Competency (range, s.d.)	.48 -.10-.890, ±.25	.53 -.32-.87, ±.34	.49 -.35-.82, ±.29
Eigenvalue ratio	3.54	6.95	3.81

Subtracting the aggregate Pentecostal answer key (the weighted average rankings) from each denomination's answer key provides a measure of residual agreement of each item for each church. These items' deviation scores can then be plotted to show divergence from the overall Pentecostal model between churches. Figure 8.4 shows the residual rankings as deviations from the original *vida completa* model. Items ranked more important by the subgroup received a *lower* rank order score (e.g., 1, 2, 3) and as such hold *negative* residual values. Conversely, items ranked less important were given higher rank scores (e.g., 37, 38, 39) and have residuals with *positive* coordinates. If there was no deviation between the groups' ranking and the overall model, the item would lie at or near the origin (0,0). Thus, items along the X axis decrease in value for the AD with larger positive integers, whereas items least important for the IURD are located higher along the Y axis.

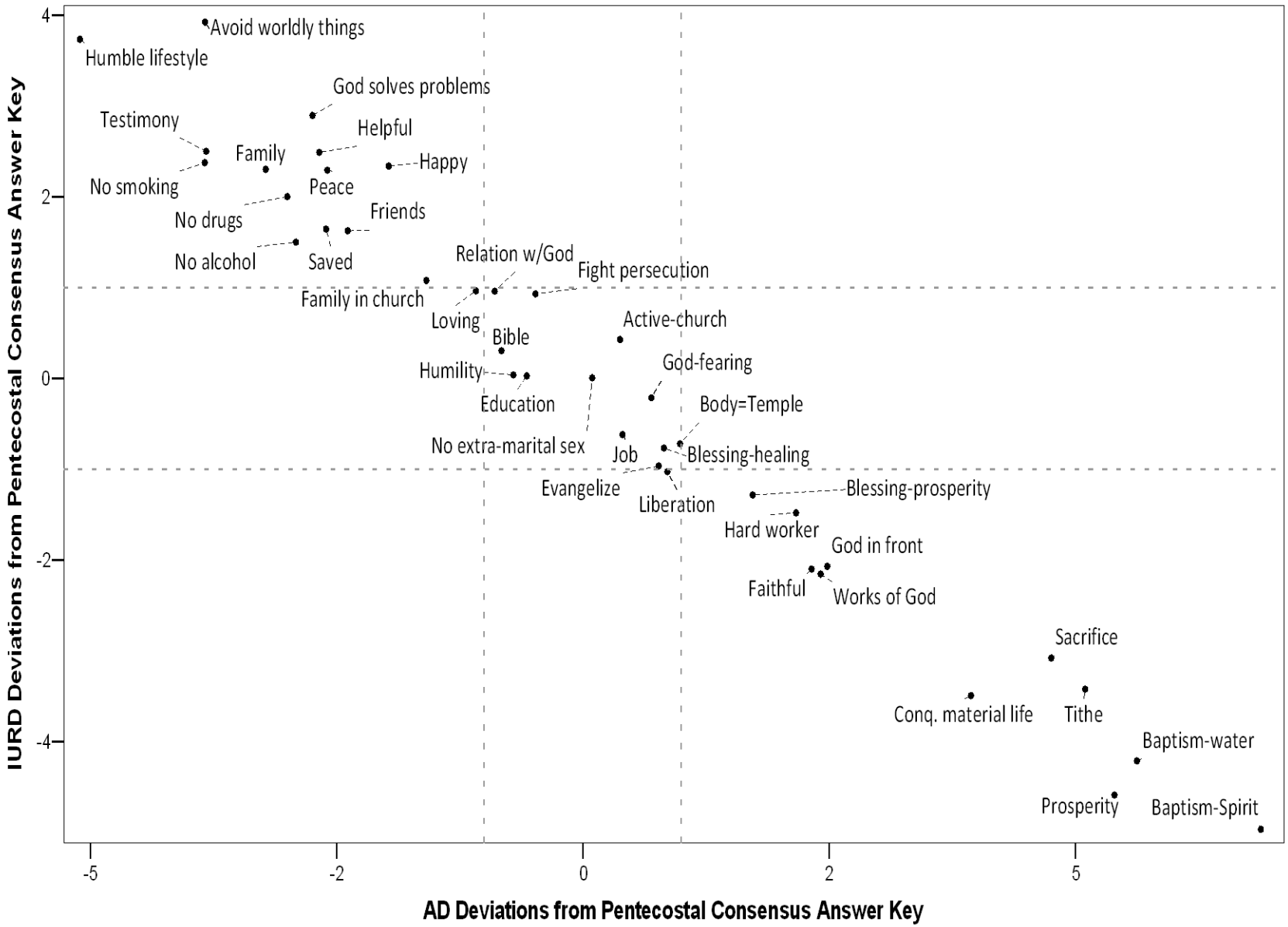

Figure 8.4: Structural representation of residual agreement

As shown in Figure 8.4, there are numerous items for which there is little divergence from the overall shared model. To reiterate, due to the rank-order nature of the data (e.g., low scores equating to higher importance), items positioned positively along an axis are ranked as less important than items with a negative score. That is, as terms move left to right along the x-axis, items decrease in relative importance for AD respondents, whereas items decrease in importance for IURD respondents vertically along the y-axis. The lines on the graph outline those items that deviate by +/- 1 from the aggregate Pentecostal answer key. Items such as having a *good job*, *having humility*, and *having an education* show little deviation. *Having no extra-marital sex* sits at 0,0 thereby showing complete consensus between the churches. They are the items ranked (nearly) equally by both denominations, and thus show little to no unique agreement apart from the aggregate knowledge. However, for some items, respondents of one congregation value them more than the other. Interestingly, the very items that one church values more than the aggregate are the same items the other denomination ranks as less important. As a result, the residual agreement forms a strong linear correlation. Quadrant II (upper left) shows items that are viewed as more important by the AD than the IURD, such as *avoiding worldly things, being content with the simple life,* and *having a strong testimony*. These items are indicative of a general intrinsic religious orientation held by AD respondents. Conversely, items deemed more important by the IURD (Quadrant IV, lower right) are under-valued by the AD, including *conquest of the material life, sacrifices and tithes,* and *baptism in the Holy Spirit*. That is, the items found to be more important for IURD respondents are in line with their emphasis of the Heath and Wealth gospel

To reiterate, the items that the AD ranked more important than the consensus model were the same items that were ranked as less important by the IURD. Similarly, the items ranked as

more important than the shared model by the IURD were relatively devalued by the AD. It should be kept in mind that residual agreement, like CCT, is a somewhat blunt tool for measuring the distribution of cultural knowledge. While CCT and residual agreement aims to understand the distribution and structure of subcultural variation, cognitive anthropological methods have not yet progressed to reliably measure other forms of cognitive patterning—such as context specific heteroglossia, where an individual may culturally code-switch depending on the social setting. However, while the results generated from these approaches are generalizations or "models" of shared cultural knowledge, they supply a means to test the hypothesis of what is often assumed within ethnographic work: that a set of characteristics called culture is meaningfully shared and distributed among members of a group. The data presented above are not inevitable, since variations within subgroup informant competence patterns can alter the consensus rankings, leading to a rank change in one church's answer key but not the other. Similarly, alternative subgroupings that do not have significant subcultural sharing would not result in structured deviation of shared knowledge that is also ethnographically interpretable. Like any methodology, cognitive anthropological approaches must be triangulated with other lines of data.

Unconstrained Pile Sort Data

After verifying the existence of a shared Pentecostal cultural model of *a vida completa*, it is possible to ascertain its cognitive structure. Utilizing multi-dimensional scaling (MDS) it is possible to create a two dimensional cognitive representation or a mental map of how all thirty-nine terms related to *a vida completa* are organized. The previous chapter contains a more in-depth explanation of the logic and method of MDS, but briefly, it is a graphical representation of how often respondents sorted items together into the same pile. Items in close proximity in the

MDS graph were frequently grouped together, whereas items separated by distance were rarely combined. A stress factor produced by the MDS analysis provides a measure of goodness of fit—that is, how well the two dimensional diagram represents the statistical data. A score of 0 indicates a perfect representation of the data. In practice, an MDS graphic rarely absolutely faithfully reproduces the data. Thus, Sturrock and Ross (2000) argue that the benchmark for verifying the existence of an underlying structure to the MDS map depends on both the number of hypothesized dimensions and the number of objects being mapped. For an MDS analysis of 39 items along 2 dimensions, a stress of 0.35 would have a 1 percent chance of occurring randomly. A stress score of an equal or lower value would indicate the map satisfactorily represents the data. Further, hierarchal analysis can identify additional structure in the MDS map by finding groups that are more closely bound in space—and thus more often grouped together during the unconstrained pile sorting task. Discussion with informants can elicit the emic meanings and reasoning of their groups. Finally, PROFIT analysis, also known as Property Fitting Analysis, provides another test of the hypothesized structure of the MDS graph. Whereas hierarchal analysis can help to identify hypothesized groups of objects, PROFIT allows for the testing of hypothesized dimensions—that the locations of items on the map are determined by an underlying attribute. In other words, there is an underlying shared cognitive criterion (or criterions) by which respondents organized their groups of terms related to *a vida completa*. Generally, an R-squared of 0.8 suggests the existence of a hypothesized dimension (Borgatti 1997). The criterion to be tested here is that informants organize *a vida completa* by "importance" (i.e., the cultural consensus model). Each PROFIT analysis is done with the group specific cultural consensus answer key.

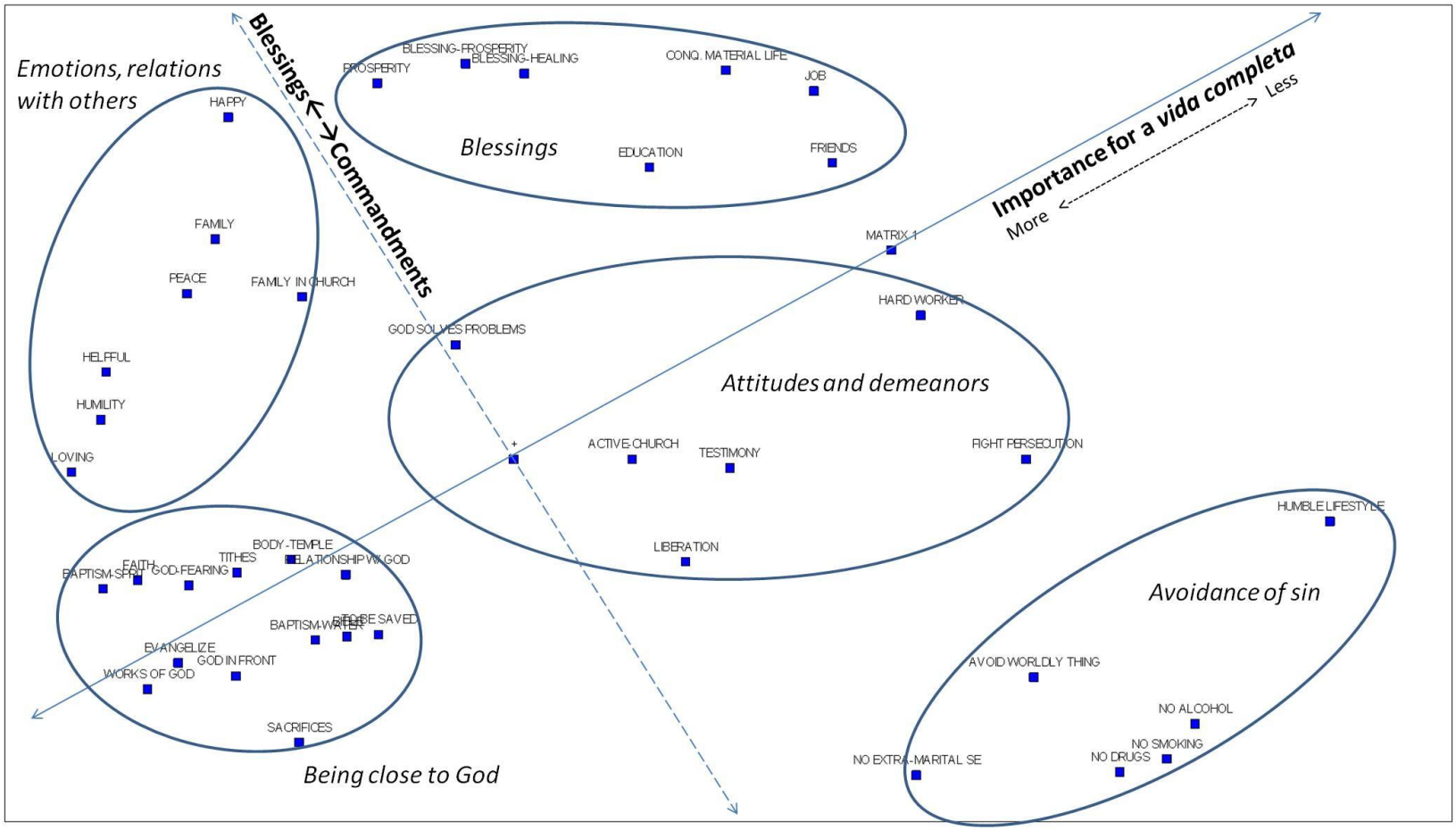

Figure 8.5: Pentecostal cognitive map for *A Vida Completa*

The MDS map (Figure 8.5) of the aggregate Pentecostal sample has a stress of 0.195, suggesting that there is a less than 1 percent chance that this organization lacks an underlying structure. Through hierarchal cluster analysis, five distinct item groupings are identified. Referring to respondent classification schemes, as well as my own interpretation as a researcher, these five group can be generally categorized (clockwise) as items classified as "Blessings"; "Attitudes and Demeanors" of a Pentecostal needed to persevere in a secular world; terms that describe the "Avoidance of Sin"; items that allow an acolyte to "Be close to God"; and terms that denote the ideal "Emotions and Relations with Others." PROFIT analysis with the aggregate cultural consensus answer key results in an R-squared of 0.85, suggesting significant organization along the object attribute of "importance." Items located lower along the line perpendicularly are more important for achieving *a vida completa* than those located in a more northeastern direction. For instance, the terms indicative of being "close to God," and "emotions and relations with others" are more important than some of the extrinsic benefits of their faith and compliance with more specific behavioral taboos. A second, weaker dimension was identified *post hoc*, and organizes items according to being either a blessing or a commandment to receive such a blessing. Items further north along this dimension are generally conceived as spiritual rewards, such as health and wealth, as well as emotional well-being. Items further south along this line are concerned with the pro-religious behaviors and taboos, such as the avoidance of sin, necessary for receiving said blessings.

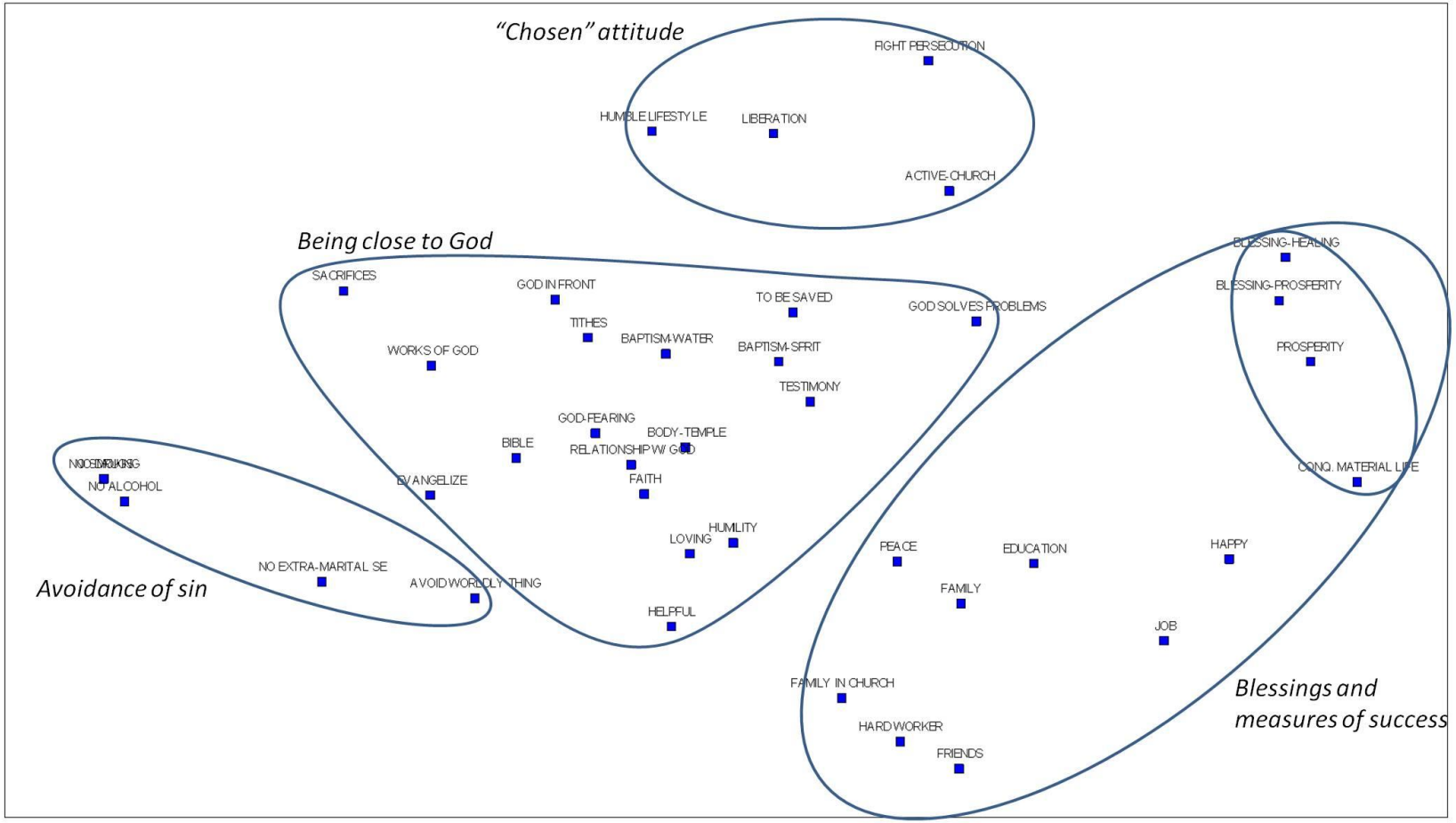

Figure 8.6: AD cognitive map of *A Vida Completa*

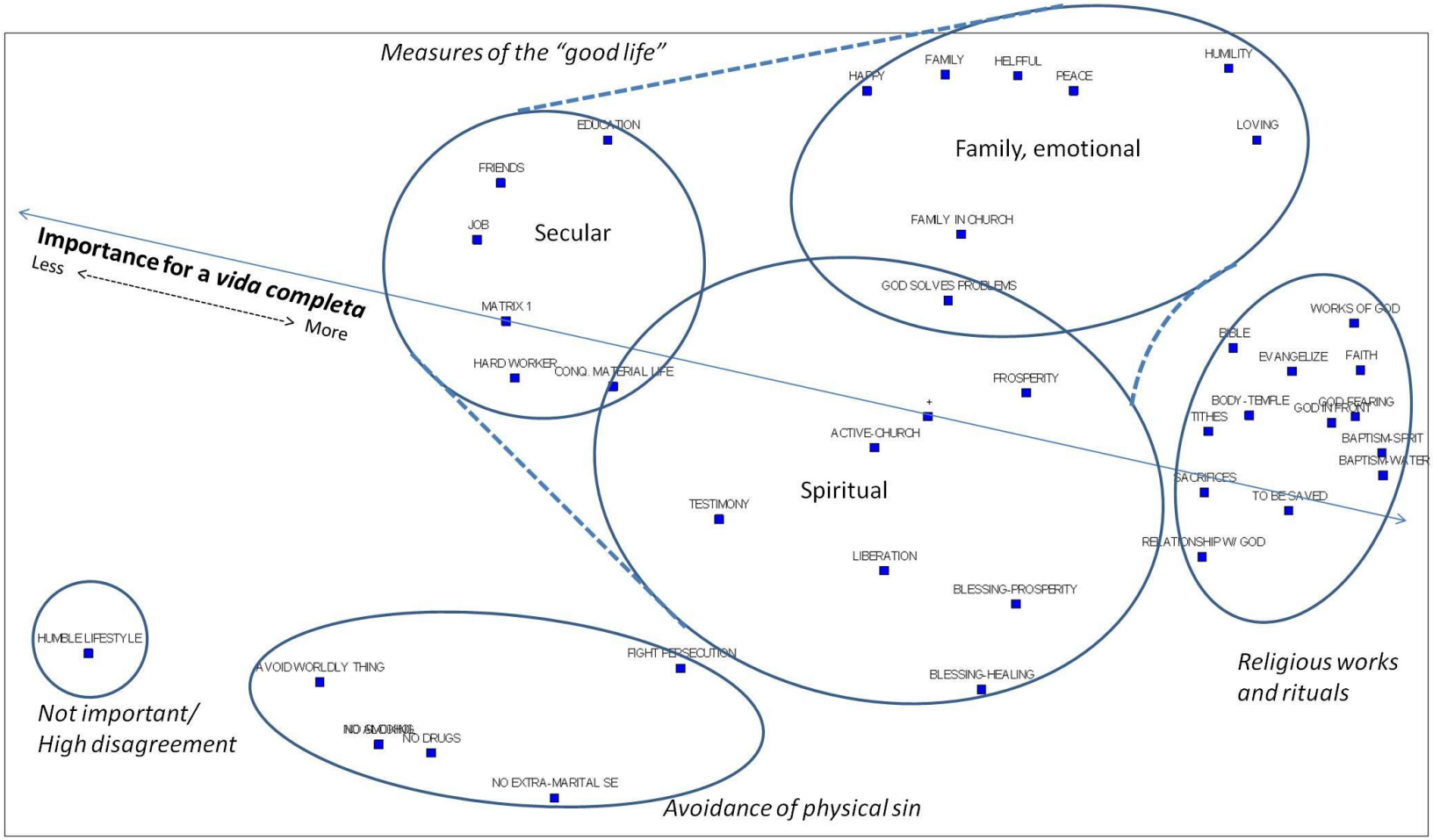

Figure 8.7: IURD cognitive map for *A Vida Completa*

The *Assembléia de Deus* (Figure 8.6) has a MDS stress of 0.19, indicating an underlying structure. Hierarchal cluster analysis identified four groups and one subgroup. There is a cluster of items that denote a "chosen identity;" "blessings and measures of success"—with the blessings of health and prosperity linked together with other measures of prosperity (which AD respondents view as all blessings from God); a cluster of terms associated with behavioral taboos; and finally a large central cluster of items indicative of religious involvement and participation. However, PROFIT analysis of the AD specific cultural answer key yields an R-squared of only 0.17, well below the 0.8 threshold. In other words, while there is structure, the items are not cognitively organized around "importance."

Finally, the IURD MDS map (Figure 8.7) has a stress of 0.16, indicating that this cognitive map has less distortion than the other two, and is organized by an underlying structure not due to chance ($p<0.01$). Hierarchal clustering analysis shows very clear delineations of groups, with one group showing three clear subdivisions. The largest group is comprised of various measures of the "good life," including family/emotional, spiritual, and secular. The most tightly bound group, or the group in which there was near unanimous consensus, is for religious works and rituals. A smaller group included behavioral taboos for the avoidance of sin. Finally, *vida simples,* or being content with a simple, modest lifestyle was rejected by many IURD respondents as being important or necessary for *a vida completa*. Or as one informant put it,

> I disagree with this, *contente com a vida simples* (content with the simple life). God does not want you to be poor and he absolutely does not want you to be content being poor. He wants you to be a *vencedor* (winner, victor)! He wants you to *ganhar a conquista da vida material* (achieve the conquest of the material opulent lifestyle). That is why I don't include it with the others (terms).

With regard to the underlying dimensions, PROFIT analysis with the IURD cultural consensus answer key produces an R-squared of 0.82. Thus, PROFIT does not reject the hypothesis that

IURD respondents organize their cognitive model of *a vida completa* by the relative importance of each item.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the results of the first phase of research. The two Brazilian Pentecostal denominations were shown to have a shared understanding of *a vida completa*, as demonstrated through cultural consensus theory. Shared deviation from the aggregate model does exist. Residual agreement analysis identifies this shared disagreement originating from subtle differences between the two denominations. Further analysis demonstrates that this residual agreement stems from the AD valuing aspects of intrinsic religiosity greater than the aggregate answer key, whereas IURD respondents over-value extrinsic displays and proofs of faith. The MDS graphs show that there is a common way that all Brazilian Pentecostals in this sample order the aspects of the model, and that it is organized along a dimension of importance, and perhaps a secondary dimension of commandments versus blessings. A similar ordering scheme was identified for the IURD. However, the AD sample, while having a distinct structure, was less ordered than the IURD, and was not organized along any discernible dimensions. The implications of this first phase of research are discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 9: Discussion of *A Vida Completa* Model

Structured anthropological methods provide a means of testing assumptions and hypotheses in an objective, falsifiable manner. Qualitative ethnography provides context and meaning to these findings. This research uses several different types of data to understand how *crentes* form a model of the ideal Pentecostal life, and how this model shapes their behaviors, interactions, and ultimately, their well-being. The previous chapter outlined the construction, testing, and analysis of the *Vida Completa* model; this chapter focuses on the larger implications of these findings and how the religious model is variously embodied by Brazilian *crentes* in Ribeirão Preto. I argue that the two Pentecostal denominations in Ribeirão Preto share an essential common perception of what constitutes the ideal Pentecostal life. They differ however in the emphasis that they place on specific aspects of their religious discourse and ritual.

Cultural Domain Analysis

Cultural consensus and residual agreement analysis provide a way to identify shared cultural aspects of a domain, its distribution in social space, and areas of shared convergence or conversely, shared disagreement. The data presented in the previous chapter show that there is a common model of *A Vida Completa* upheld by Brazilian Pentecostals. Shared historical and doctrinal roots, as well as common experiences associated with living in a Catholicized Brazilian society, have led to a common perception about the "complete life." The existence of a shared model shows that despite variation in theology, ritual, and member composition Pentecostals do draw from joint cultural understandings. These commonalities are apparent in the results from the free-listing and the cultural consensus portions of this project. Although the AD is a 1st wave

congregation and the IURD is a 3rd wave church, members similarly view what constitutes the complete life. Many of these items are things that any Brazilian and probably most human beings would find necessary for their own *vida completa*. For instance, elements of the complete life, such as having a good personality, a loving family, or friends, are important to many people regardless of religious persuasion or nationality. An important detail that is specific to Pentecostals is that they view their life and their world primarily through a religious lens, thereby projecting their faith onto other cultural domains. For example, informants mention the importance of a loving family "who have accepted Christ into their heart;" friends are also important, but especially those "who have been saved and serve as righteous role models." The significance of religion is similarly supported by the consensus ordering of the model of *A Vida Completa*. Items in the upper third of the answer key (see Appendix A)—those listed as the "most necessary" for achieving the ideal Pentecostal lifestyle—are all explicitly religious in nature. Items deemed "important" (ranked in the middle third) focus on one's emotional development and relationships with others. Items that are most similar to secular models of status—such as the traditional SES measures of education, job status, and wealth are ranked as "least necessary" (in the bottom third) for achieving *a vida completa*. This is not dissimilar to John Burdick's (1998) study of women and race in Brazil, where he found racial identities are subsumed by religious identities. In a similar way, the cultural domain analysis suggests that other aspects of a *crente's* identity such as economic status, race, or even gender become secondary or tertiary identities. They are, first and foremost, *crentes*. These other indicators of identity and status are then reinterpreted through the religious lens.

For Pentecostals, their religion colors all other aspects of their life. Members of both churches would repeatedly tell me, "the measure of a true Pentecostal is one who puts his/her

faith in the forefront of their life." Their religious identity is as much about theological beliefs as it is about daily behaviors. As one deacon in the AD church told me, "Brazil isn't a Catholic nation. Sure, you have many people who call themselves Catholic, but they don't act like it. They drink and smoke and cheat, and then they go to church, take communion, and everything is all right….They are not true Catholics, they are not true Christians." Church members view majority culture as sinful and try to distance themselves from it. To do so, they install behavioral barriers that are designed to curb temptation and define themselves in Holy opposition to what one IURD pastor referred to as "Sodom and Gomorra." Unsurprisingly, a great many items that compose *A Vida Completa* serve to create a boundary between the righteous self and the sinful world of the other. IURD church sermons regularly warn of drinking, smoking, and *prostituição* (i.e., visiting prostitutes—a common form of sex outside the confines of marriage). For example, one IURD meeting invited members to crush and throw their cigarettes and bags of drugs at the foot of a 10 foot tall wooden cross. In doing so, they publically acknowledged their transgression, symbolically showed repentance, and promised in front of others to make a structural shift in their private lives. Similarly, both churches invoke public signaling to demonstrate compliance with the particular rules and how they embody *crente* identity. For instance, the AD is known in Brazil for their behavioral restrictions. Men and women must comply with a strict dress code, as well as refrain from playing soccer and dancing, which are two national pastimes. The reason for these rules, or "customs," is not because jewelry, soccer, or the samba are sinful, but rather that these activities often manifest in conjunction with sinful behaviors (e.g., drinking, gambling) that distance one from the Spirit. As a result, these costly signals constitute bans and badges that restrict membership and create a "chosen" identity for *Assembléia* members (Sosis 2006).

While not as strict as the AD about enforcing behavioral taboos, the IURD still seeks to distance itself from Brazilian culture by other means. They cast themselves as warriors in a Spiritual war: IURD pastors often preach while wearing army fatigues and the city's flag draped around their shoulders like a cape (see Kramer 2005). They encourage skepticism of wider society and government by telling members that the world and its people are literally possessed by the Devil and his demons, and that constant vigilance is the only way of ensuring one's own salvation and earthly success. The "chosen" *crente* identity is not attained through passive separation; rather the IURD pastors maintain that one can only be saved by forcefully confronting sin (and the source of sin) in active antagonism. The ideal IURD member is defined by putting God before everything, and by sacrificing time and money to do His works. This message is given every day by pastors and embodied by faithful congregants.

Perhaps what most unites the AD and IURD is their emphasis on the power of individual transformation through the Spirit. As Pentecostal denominations, both churches put the focus of the human-divinity relationship onto the Holy Spirit of the Trinity. In accordance with the Book of Acts, they believe that, for the faithful, miracles can and do take place. They contend that with sufficient faith and with the power of the Holy Spirit, miraculous healings and turns of fate can and do occur. For both congregations, invocations of such blessings take a prominent role (arguably more so for the IURD than the AD), and members regularly recount the life changing events that accompanied their conversion to the faith and acceptance of Christ into their heart.

For example, Michell is 27 years old and an active member of the IURD and its youth group, *Força Jovem*. He grew up in a Catholic family in one of the *conjuntos* that occupy the perimeter of the city. In the church, he is extremely gregarious: he is always quick to flash a smile and can often be found teaching others how to street dance in the parking lot of the church.

His testimony reflects that of many other young, male, and lower SES Brazilians. Before joining the church, Michell did not consider his future and focused instead on immediate gratification. The psychological distress of his life situation was displaced onto others, furthering his feelings of alienation and a need to temporarily assuage this stress through drinking, womanizing, and violence.

> I was a young *briguento* (troublemaker), I was violent towards my family, robbed people, liked to drink and party, and visit prostitutes. I lived with many family issues and problems, to the point of wanting to kill my loved ones. I came to church and *Força Jovem* for a few months, but did not take anything seriously and eventually pulled away (from the church) for a year. At this time, many things have happened in my life…at a party I attended people were killed and I was afraid for my life. In December 2009, I definitively returned to the IURD, returned to *Força Jovem* and became *firme* (unwavering faith) towards God. Today, I have peace with myself and my family, I'm happy, I respect people and I have my transformed life…I have learned to *colocar Deus na frente* (to put God in front)…When thinking about the future, you should always consider what God wants (and not yourself).

Raphael shares a similar story. Raphael is 25 years old, recently married, and studying to be a sign language instructor—a skill he regular practices as a volunteer translator at church. His family has deep roots in the AD since his great-grandparents converted to the faith. Until recently, however, neither he nor his mother was baptized in the faith. Twice a week, Raphael and his wife travel together on their moped scooter from Parque Riberão to *Templo Sede*. While they have an AD church literally around the corner from their studio apartment built off of his wife's family's house, they prefer to attend *Sede*, for the friends and the *surdo* (deaf) community there.

> Being a Pentecostal has validated my choice of friends. When I was younger I had a group of friends…we did everything together, we were a very tight group. And when I converted, it was difficult because none of them were Pentecostals—it was not in their character. For example, when I was in the church, they were off going to music shows and festivals—having other experiences, partying. At first this made me very depressed. But I knew this was a compromise… I stopped drinking to instead go to the church. I learned to have responsibility in my life so I could

> have a future. But still, it was very difficult to lose those friends. But it has been for the best. My mother and my stepfather fought a lot when I was growing up. He would drink and come home and hit her. I made a promise to myself that when I was old enough I would fight back. But then I converted—I no longer wanted to do this. Instead I prayed for my stepfather. It was hard; I was asking why God would permit this? I asked him to give me a miracle—to speak to my stepfather and change him. What happened? I started talking to my mother about the church and she converted, then my stepfather started going to church, 17 years after leaving the church, he returned. God provided this miracle. After my stepfather returned, he quit drinking and smoking and fighting. Now the house is very *tranquilo* (calm, peaceful)...it is good. And I received other blessings from the church. I met my wife, my best friend there. I met many good friends, friends that are more important than my old friends; those friends in the church help each other a lot. Because of the church I have had more good experiences in life than *ruim* (bad).

For both Michell and Raphael, the Pentecostal faith provides them with a way to reject the male normative roles of Brazilian society. They can distance themselves from the *machista* expectations of both other males and potential female conquests to be aggressive, competitive, and daring (Parker 2009). Behaviors such as drinking, intrasexual competition, and intersexual conquests on the streets and in bars and parties create a volatile mixture that can lead to depression and violence. The domesticated male identity that is encouraged by Pentecostalism allows Brazilian men to reject the dominant male gender role without being labeled a *bicha* (effeminate or homosexual male) and to gain status within the faith rather than through competition and conquest (Brusco 1995; Burdick 2007). Many young male members optimistically believe that their conversion will provide them with a future—one that was not available to them within the dominant Brazilian machista culture.

Though more significant for Brazilian men, gender roles also change for Brazilian women. Female converts often reinterpret feminine power, not through the virgin mother-whore dyad, but through their own personal relationship with God and the power in the Spirit. For example, Elaine is a 27 year old member of the IURD who works at a local bodega selling

snacks and basic grocery items. Her calling is in the church where she is very active as an *obreiro*. Elaine is very sought after for her skills as a spiritual healer: between church meetings, members often seek her out for an individual liberation session where she casts out demons and provides blessings of well-being. Before the church, however, she tried to find self-worth through the men in her life rather through her own talents.

> When I arrived at the IURD, I was very sad and had depression to the point where I wanted to commit suicide. I was empty inside; I tried to fill this space with parties, drugs, alcohol, and boyfriends. I thought I was never happier than when I was with them, but I always felt alone inside…I felt like I was happy, but I wanted to die. So when I arrived at the IURD, I started to fight for my liberation, which was not easy, and I did not rest until I won. Today I am free from all (the demons) that imprisoned me, all because of God. I have no more depression and no willingness to die; on the contrary, I want to live my life rescuing those who are suffering.

During one conversation with Elaine, she confided in me that the ultimate reason for her conversion was a violent encounter she had with an ex-boyfriend. He was convinced that she was seeing another man, and in a fit of jealously, he violently hit her and pulled out a gun. She was able to talk him down, something she credits as a miracle. Soon after, she realized that she did not want to die but that she needed a change in her life—something she felt that the IURD, which she had known about through friends and television, would be able to provide. Unfortunately, while Elaine's account is disturbing, her story is far from unusual in Brazil. Exact rates of domestic violence are difficult to ascertain; gender attitudes, stigma, and lack of enforcement prevent many of these events from being reported. Domestic violence was only formally made illegal in Brazil in 2006. Prior to this, "defense of honor" was a legitimate excuse for domestic violence and even uxoricide (Roure 2009). For Elaine, the Pentecostal faith provided her with an alternative space for personal development and the acquisition of status

using her skills rather than her gender. Faith also provided her with a new social network of potential romantic interests comprised of non-*machista* Brazilian males.

Gender roles in Pentecostal Brazilian churches are not entirely equal. There remains limited female leadership and an emphasis on deference to male authority that arguably reproduces some male-normative ideals that disempowers women. A Pentecostal woman thus simply transfers her male-dependent identity from a secular male authority to a religious male authority. This perspective, however, values unconscious hegemony at the expense of the agency these women feel. Unlike in other cultural spheres, a *crente's* status is largely decoupled from her reproductive capacity; Pentecostal Brazilian woman are valued for their individual abilities in the Spirit, not just for her womb (Lorentzen and Mira 2005; Rosado-Nunes 2003). Arguably, the Pentecostal faith provides a space for the realization of female power and (relative) autonomy, helping women to cultivate the skills necessary to advocate on behalf of themselves and their families (Brusco 1995; Woodhead 2007).

Differences between the Congregations

While both the AD and IURD respondents share many things in common, there are several key differences between their cultural models of *A Vida Completa*. The CCT provides insights into these Brazilian Pentecostals that have not been fully appreciated in the existing ethnographic literature. For example, the IURD as a third wave neo-Pentecostal denomination is often portrayed as a liberal congregation, formally prohibiting few individual behaviors and composed almost entirely of converts who worship in megachurch-like settings (Abumanssur 2002; Chesnut 1997; Freston 2002). The size of the IURD, its high rate of turnover, and its focus on prosperity theology rather than community-building does not permit nor require a high degree of social monitoring or conformity to the rules of the church (Oro 2003). On the other hand, the

AD is the oldest Pentecostal denomination in Brazil and preaches a more traditional doctrine, while it rigidly structures individual behaviors that are monitored within the small, close-knit neighborhood church (Abumanssur 2002; Burdick 1998; Chesnut 1997; Freston 2002; Mariz 1994). Membership records are closely kept by the church, documenting tithe fidelity and meeting attendance. The proximity of many members to one another in the city allows social monitoring long after the *culto* has ended.

Yet, interestingly, there is stronger cultural consensus within the massive IURD congregation than within the local AD. There are 28 congregations of the Missão branch of the AD in Ribeirão Preto. Each congregation is overseen by a head-pastor who runs his church and its members independently. As a result, it is not uncommon for subtle doctrinal and ritual variation to exist between local AD churches. The congregation in my study, *Templo Sede,* is headquarter of the church in Ribeirao Preto; members of other congregations attend *Sede* for important celebrations (e.g., Centennial celebration), baptisms, or just to be in the presence of the church leader, Pastor Santana. Members do regularly speak of different *costumes* (customs) among the various congregations: a congregation in the Parque Ribeirão neighborhood strictly forbids women from wearing makeup, while *obreiros* in a Jardim Aeroporto church walk up and down the aisles looking for dress-code transgressors. Manifestations of the Holy Spirit differ slightly between neighborhood churches as well. The Parque Ribeirão church maintains that baptism in the Spirit must manifest in at least glossolalia, but it may also include jumping up and down and other uncontrollable bodily movements. A *crente* in the Jardim Paulista church exhibits the rare Pentecostal gift of translating spoken words into the language of angels. During prayers and invocations for blessings, this *crente* stands next to the pastor, translating each word into glossolalic utterances. Pastor Santana is well aware of these variations in *costumes* and tries

to create space within *Sede* to accommodate these disparate forms of worship. For instance, one member's glossolalic utterances take on the quality of an ululation. During one particularly inspiring sermon, the ululation became nearly constant, at times drowning out the speaker. Afterwards, Pastor Santana remarked that "the Spirit was strong in the building tonight. It is remarkable how the Spirit can manifest in many different ways. Everyone has their own relationship with God—and that is why each person's experience in the Spirit is different." Santana's ecumenical stance is not lost on the members. For example, Robert, a geography school teacher, explains: "all my life I have never been able to speak in tongues. I tried and I prayed, but the Spirit never manifested in that way to me. In some *Assembléia* churches, they teach that that is the only sure sign of being baptized in the Spirit. But in *Sede*, it is different. Pastor Santana says that it can take different forms…For me, the experience is feeling overwhelming joy and peace." As a network of affiliated churches operating under a common leadership, the AD must have a multivocal approach to faith. For the regular members of *Sede*, this is incorporated as part of their faith. As the pastor of Parque Ribeirão explained to me:

> I am friends with Baptist and Lutheran preachers. Sometimes we will send our missionaries to be trained by them. There is actually very little difference between our churches. We are all Christians. It is the same thing with the various *Assembléia* traditions…It is like we (Protestant churches) are the cars of the train and Jesus is our locomotive. Some cars may be blue or red, some may be dining or for sleeping, but we are all following Christ. We are all following his track.

These different messages contrast with the ways in which the IURD is organized and how it disseminates religious discourse. The church is a centrally organized institution that is led by Bispo Macedo in Rio de Janeiro (though the IURD will be based out of São Paulo after the construction of a life-size replica of the Temple of Solomon). In Ribeirão Preto, there are 6 churches scattered throughout the city, though the *Templo Cenáculo* located in the *Centro* neighborhood is the primary meeting place. These IURD churches exist in a hierarchal

arrangement—the local churches defer to *Templo Cenáculo* and its leader, Pastor Carlos, who defers to regional leader Bispo Fabio, who in turn takes orders from Bispo Macedo. As such, the IURD clergy are entirely paid professionals who must follow the guidelines set forth by church headquarters. Further, local pastors regularly circulate among IURD churches throughout Brazil, which prevents any pastor from accumulating too much influence and ensures homogenous delivery styles and discourse. Throughout my tenure in Brazil, I witnessed the departure of Bispo Fabio and the introduction of Pastor Carlos. According to my informants, Carlos left shortly after my fieldwork ended and was replaced by Pastor Passos. Indeed, IURD churches operate like franchises—they make great efforts to ensure that the experience that one receives at any congregation is identical to that received at the next. The result is the creation of a system of IURD churches across Brazil (and the world) that have identical structure, symbols, and discourse. For example, sermon topics are dictated by a daily schedule that is set nationally across Brazil: Mondays are reserved for topics of financial prosperity; Tuesdays for health and healing; Wednesdays for blessings of salvation; Thursdays are for the sanctity of the family; Fridays focus on the liberation from demonic influences; Saturdays are concerned with matters of the heart; and Sundays are reserved for developing a relationship with Christ.

The message of the IURD church extends far beyond the boundaries of its grandiose buildings. Local as well as national *cultos* are shown on the church's three television stations. The IURD flagship channel, *Record*, is arguably the second most popular national channel after *Globo*; the televised sermons and biblical mini-series offered on these channels serve as a lucrative church recruiting tool. As a result, very few Brazilians are not exposed to the IURD church or its messages. Ana, a woman in her 60s who works as an *empregada* (maid), told me that she first became exposed to the church through the television.

> I would watch the church meetings every morning before work. I have arthritis from my years of (domestic) work; and one day the pastor told everyone to grab a bag of salt and put it on the television to be blessed. I then rubbed the salt onto my (arthritic) hands, and the pain stopped. Since then I try to attend to at least once a week.

Her account is far from unusual; many seek the church to address elements of "dis-ease" in their lives (Chesnut 1997; Smilde 2004). And through the IURD's successful self-marketing, many "neophytes" are already enculturated into the church's orthodoxy through the televised meetings and the widely circulated *Folha* church newspaper when they begin to attend services.

Based on the church leadership and its authoritative control over religious discourse, it is unsurprising that the IURD has nearly double the intra-informant agreement as the AD, as well as higher than average competency scores. On the one hand, the AD is multivocal. The congregation recognizes that the Bible and one's relationship with God can take on many forms. The sign of people with "mature faith," one *Assembléia* respondent explained, "is that they think for themselves…they don't simply repeat what the pastor said without understanding *why* he said it." On the other hand, the IURD's franchise approach is applied to its sermons. Repetition of scripted sermons encourages converts to quickly become enculturated into the orthodox discourse and provide little variation for pastors or members. Individual interpretations of faith are not sanctioned and members often attribute their own doctrinal views to the sermons or blogs of pastors (e.g., http://www.bispomacedo.com.br/) to emphasize their authoritative (rather than individual) origins. For example, members constantly repeat the phrases of pastors in their daily talk to one another. Copied phrases such as *Ahh que dia!* (Ahh, what a day!), *Meu nome é revolta* (my name is rebellion) and *Vou vencer!* (I will win/overcome/vanquish), taken directly from the sermons, show a level of deference and respect IURDians give to the church leadership.

Discussion of Residual Agreement

The results of the residual agreement analysis further highlight important variations between the congregations of AD *Templo Sede* and IURD *Templo Cenáculo*. The items most valued by the IURD are also the least valued by the AD, and they tend to cluster around the domain of ritualized obligations (tithe, sacrifice, baptism) and the rewards of such piety (prosperity and the conquest of the material lifestyle). AD congregants differentiate themselves by highly valuing items associated with a separation from "worldly behaviors" (drinking and smoking), while at the same time focusing on the more emotional aspects of *A Vida Completa* (being happy, helpful, and having a loving relationship with others).

The residual agreement of the IURD can best be understood as an alteration of the traditional Protestant relationship between supplicant and God, from a familial union to one that is contractual. Prosperity theology creates a unilineal direction of exchange (Smilde 2007). It reduces the relationship between acolytes and deity to a market transaction of determinate obligation: to receive God's blessings, one must first sacrifice and tithe; the faithful will be prosperous and cannot be poor. Likewise, those who do not give to God will not receive His favor. In short, the obligatory nature of the relationship removes divine agency, and constrains the human-supernatural relationship to an immediate reciprocal exchange.

In fact, IURD discourse, which borrows heavily from neo-liberal capitalism, frames the human-God relationship as a contract. Pastors regularly speak of "investing" in God through tithes and sacrifices, and "having returns of double or triple [in value]." They view blessings as the natural and guaranteed result of a faithful relationship with God. This view carries into their rituals, when members literally sign a contract with God, binding *crente* and God to a legal relationship (see Figure 9a). Similarly, IURD prosperity sermons often integrate notions of

economic retribution which demand that the prosperity blessings are contractually obligated. Against the literal backdrop of a legal courtroom, members seek out divine justice (Figure 9b). The Holy Trinity makes up the judge's panel and various guilty parties are subject to its Holy Wrath. Often the corrupt business practices of bosses, owners, and politicians are blamed for the penury of members. Other times, acolytes are put on trial for failing to fulfill their end of the bargain. Ultimately however, it is Satan and his demons that are the focus of legalistic inquiry, working through (possessed) humans and worldly institutions to stymie the execution of contractual obligations.

Figure 9.1 (left): An IURD contract with God. "I promise to make a covenant with God, where I will put all my strength on the altar and do all that my faith demands. I will pledge to do all that the Angel of Prosperity asks. I will be faithful in my tithes, vows, and sacrifices to the Nation of Winners (IURD), thereby making God my partner."

Figure 9.2 (above): A courtroom tribunal for economic justice at the IURD.

This pattern is further reinforced in the MDS graphs (Figure 8.7) of IURD members. For them, two of the most salient terms groupings are the rituals and religious works needed to gain divine favor, and the spiritual, emotional, and secular rewards of such faith. Indeed, most of the meeting themes focus explicitly on one of these rewards: financial prosperity, physical and psychological (i.e., emotional) health, finding love, or maintaining familial harmony. It is

unsurprising that in each meeting, the promises of such rewards are conditioned by the displays of faith or sacrifices that one is willing to perform. Pastors remind parishioners that "for God to show faith in you, you have to first show faith in Him," and that "God sacrificed more than you will ever know for your salvation. He sacrificed his Son on the cross for you…Your sacrifice doesn't seem as much now, does it?" In response, members are willing to give 10 percent of their income as a tithe and further monetary sacrifice as a show of faith. Regarding sacrifice, Pastors encourage their members into additional monetary giving: "Is a sacrifice supposed to be easy, yes or no? Was Abraham's sacrifice of his son easy? But he was willing to go through with it. Your sacrifices should show God that you have a *fé sério* (serious faith) (and give accordingly)."

Members, however, do not simply give with the expectation of a return at some later moment in time. The use of spectacle helps to keep members engaged and entertained, while at the same time enculturating people into believing and visualizing the rewards of their faith. Faith today is expected to be repaid through blessings in a timely fashion. For example, during prosperity meetings, IURD pastors often talk about *sucesso* (success) and the ability to visualize ones *sonhos* (dreams). "It is not good enough to want your *sonhos*," pastors often remark, "but *knowing* that God will make your *sonhos* come true!" Such positive visualization is further extended by writing their specific life goals on paper with the header, "What are your dreams?" In one instance, the pastor asks, "who wants to be a millionaire? You have to visualize the money in your hands!" The pastor then signals for a *crente* to hand him a briefcase which he opens and shows is full $R100 notes. The pastor continues:

> If this is what you want, this is what you need to visualize—God having the power to perform miracles. Your lack of success is not the fault of God, your success is in your hands. But in order for God to shower you with miracles, you have to show faith in him. You have to practice your faith. Just like in the Old Testament, you must be like Abraham and sacrifice things that are important to

> practice and increase your faith in God. If you invest in God, He will invest in you.

Through this and similar ritualized spectacles, the IURD provides an imagined (near) future reality of success. As I discuss further in Chapter 11, such optimism and hope for a better life influences conversion and shapes the well-being of members (see Benzein et al. 1998; Smilde 2007).

The IURD also applies positive affirmation towards religious healing practices. *Obreiros* often pass out talismans—ranging from sea salt, to pieces of cloth or crystal fragments—which are said to confer the healing power of the Holy Spirit. During church rituals, members are instructed to rub an afflicted area with these Holy objects in order to withdraw the demonic force which is causing their pain. These rituals are accompanied by testimonies from members. The pastor typically inquires about individuals suffering from joint or back pain, and brings a selection of these people onto the stage with him. He briefly interviews each member and has them demonstrate the limits of their flexibility by rotating their arms or bending over to touch their toes. After the healing ritual, the pastor re-interviews these same people, and demonstrates the healing power of God through the members' newfound (though often temporary) mobility. As this and other examples show, a common theme between all IURD *cultos* is an emphasis on blessings and the importance of ritual—especially as it pertains to the practice of sacrifice and tithes.

Following a more multivocal approach, AD members are more concerned with the intrinsic motivations of religious participation and the resulting positive emotional dispositions and improvements to interpersonal relationships. These *crentes* maintain that the benefit of being among the faithful is the promise of salvation and earthly joy. Material, economic, and professional prosperity may be a part of this, but they are not guaranteed and are rather

conditioned by His greater plan. The pursuit of such things, AD *crentes* maintain, are often vices that push people away from God's light; therefore quest for secular success must be tempered. Accordingly, many AD members advocate a separation, if only symbolically, from the world. The strict behavioral code valued by AD members is not necessarily about Biblical authority. "Jesus never said you can't play soccer," one informant explained. Rather, it is more about avoiding contexts that can potentially lead to sinful experiences: "It's what happens after the soccer game [drinking, visiting prostitutes] that is sinful." The separation from majority culture conventions serve to create a "chosen" identity and helps to redirect monetary and personal investments from the *rua* (streets) back to the *casa* (homes), thereby allowing positive kin and kith relationships to develop.

Once again, this pattern is reinforced in the MDS of AD respondents (Figure 8.6). The clusters are not as tight or clearly organized as the IURD, once again befitting the multivocal approach of the congregation. Respondents created a category of items which was called a "chosen attitude," advocating behaviors and a mentality that define them as separate and apart from worldly values. One of these items, "being content with the simple life," is located in this group and is the most disproportionately over-ranked item for AD respondents in the residual agreement analysis. Within the IURD MDS, this item was singled out by respondents as being "unimportant," or "against the wishes of God, who wants us to have everything we want in this life." For AD members, contentment with a simple but comfortable lifestyle keeps their priorities in line and prevents them from coveting the prosperity of others. Vivianne, a homemaker in her mid 40s and mother of three grown children explains:

> I am renting the house we live in. It is small, but it has suited us for the last 10 years we have lived here. We could (buy and) move into another house—but it would be outside the city—and Carla (her deaf daughter) still lives at home, it is close to her university, and it is close to the church. I see the way other people

> work and work—for cars, big homes—but that's not what makes a home. It is being able to spend time, relaxing with your family.

For her and many other Pentecostal women, the integrity of the family is a primary concern. The material blessings that Vivianne seeks from God do not have to manifest in opulence (though she and most others would not be averse to such windfalls); rather, these blessings should engender stability so that they may divert their energies towards cultivating self-growth and positive relationships.

Chapter Summary

The Pentecostal model of *A Vida Completa* provides church members with a religious world view that provides distance from secular society and that creates important social spaces for the creation of alternative identities and sources of power. For men and women, this view mainly comes from the renunciation of machismo and its associated behaviors, and a reinvestment of attention and resources toward the familial unit. These churches also provide meaningful lessons for surviving and competing in a neo-liberal economy in a developing nation. Sobriety, individualism, hard work, and positive affirmation are oft repeated descriptions of the Pentecostal lifestyle; they are characteristics that have been cited by local employers and academic researchers for *crente* upward mobility (Smilde 2007; Stoll 1990, 1993).

While each church generally values the same life goals, the values attributed to each item in relation to the others and how they are enacted make the difference. From the perspective of Bourdieu, the IURD values material and economic capital (i.e., the conquest of the material lifestyle) while AD members value cultural and social capital (see Bourdieu 1986). In many ways, this can be attributed to the significant socio-economic differences between each church. In my study, AD members are substantially better off than IURD members on average, making over 1 minimum salary more or nearly $R6500 more every year. It is thus less difficult to make

ends meet for AD members than those in the IURD congregation. While many AD members have a modest lifestyle, they are comfortable and stable enough so that they can pursue education (e.g., learning to play instruments, foreign languages, higher education) and develop meaningful and healthy kin and kith relationships.

Within the IURD church, there is a wider wealth discrepancy in the church. Many members live among the lowest echelons of Brazilian society. I regularly encountered members who are currently or have been homeless, illiterate, living in *favelas*, going hungry, or who have endured horrific violence. The story of my respondent Samuel in Chapter 6 is one example. These stories are told and retold by acolytes during testimony segments of prosperity meetings. Indicators of cultural capital are less of a priority because they do not address an immediate crisis. Thoughts of future investment are "irrational" amid their current precarious situations. Thus, the prosperity theology of the church and the promises of financial security and opulence are more salient ambitions for these believers. Material capital offers them a way out of their current situations, and as such, they focus on the aspects of their religion that will bring about such change.

The religious club-goods produced and consumed by acolytes reflect these divisions in SES and capital interests (see McBride 2007). The AD church encourages communal solidarity and individual development through lay and leadership positions in choirs, orchestras, and Sunday school classes. Prosperity and liberation rituals help the IURD to address the material deprivation and insecurity of its members, and encourage them with positive affirmation. Differential deference of members towards church authority similarly reflects this SES divide among the congregants. In Alberto Carlos Almeida's (2007) sociological analysis of Brazilian attitudes, he finds that individuals with lower education and lower income are more likely to

value the institution of *patrimonialismo* and the integrity of social hierarchies. A similar attitude manifests through the greater consensus of IURD members and the multivocal religious approach of AD *crentes.* These particular characteristics of each church are both framed by existing members and are reproduced by appealing to a specific type of Brazilian for new converts. While a comprehensive study of conversion choice is beyond the purview of this research, it is likely that converts utilized rational decisions when choosing churches (see Fink and Stark 2001).

David Smilde (2007) provides an appropriate perspective for the role of religious goods influencing conversion and life change. In a study of Pentecostal converts in Venezuela, he argues that conversion is a rational choice. That is, through "rational imaginings," people convert explicitly to change current life crises, or "dis-ease." They believe in their new faith by witnessing testimonies and concurrent changes in their own lives, which are often a result of a new ascetic lifestyle that disrupts the cycles of violence, poverty, and distress. My research among Brazilian Pentecostals reflects a similar relationship. Regardless of whether or not life changes preceded conversion, my informants reinterpret their biographies through new religious cultural models. In doing so, they find the hand of God in their newfound fortunes (however humble they may be), which ensures – for a time – continued faith. In the following section, I examine how the model of *A Vida Completa* shapes the well-being of Brazilian Pentecostals. I show that the religious models of this faith interact in complex ways with dominant culture. In doing so, Pentecostals create imagined realities that reframe or "transform" secularly oriented models to carry religious meanings, thereby altering how cultural models are cognitively organized and ultimately how they shape their connection towards psychological well-being.

CHAPTER 10: Cultural Consonance and Mental Health

This chapter reviews how consonance with the religious model of *A Vida Completa* influences the well-being of *crentes.* These data form the final part of my objectives and represent the final hypothesis tests. This research argues that consonance with the religious model will exert a significant effect on psychological well-being. I further hypothesize that the correlation between religious models and well-being will be greater than in more secularly-oriented models because Brazilian Pentecostals interpret their lives through a religious paradigm rather than through secular standards from which they advocate a separation.

The data presented here were gathered through structured interviews utilizing surveys, or interview schedules. A representative sampling was used in order to match the age and gender characteristics of Pentecostals within the state of São Paulo as identified by the most recently available national survey (IBGE 2000). All data were analyzed in SPSS v.21.

Table 10.1: Sample Characteristics

	AD	IURD	Pentecostal
Number of respondents	62	56	118
Age (range, s.d.)	35.77 (18-76, ±14.8)	36.71 (18-76, ±15.29)	36.22 (18-76, ±14.98)
Gender (% female)	58	57	58
Household income-minimum salaries (s.d.)*	5.97 (±3.88)	4.64 (±3.81)	5.33 (±3.89)
**Job Prestige (s.d.) ** **	3.92 (±1.89)	2.96 (±1.6)	3.47 (±1.81)
Education Level (s.d.)**	3.31 (±0.86)	2.73 (±0.77)	3.03 (±0.87)
Years in Church (s.d.)**	24.64 (±14.11)	6.75 (±5.96)	16.15 (±14.18)
(*: significant at 0.10 level; **: significant at 0.01 level			
Note: minimum salary = R$540.00/month; job prestige is ranked as 0 (low) - 6 (high), derived from Pastore (1982); Education level is ranked from 0 - 4, with 0 = no formal schooling, 1 = MOBRAL/literacy training, 2 = elementary/middle school, 3= high school, 4 = (some) college/university			

The age and gender distribution of both Pentecostal denominations are nearly identical. The monthly household income differs significantly ($p<.10$), with members of the AD on average earning a full monthly salary over their IURD brethren. Similarly, the AD has significantly ($p<.01$) higher levels of job prestige. For instance, a mean occupation level score of 3.92 for the AD is equivalent to the job prestige of medical technicians and small business owners. whereas the IURD score of 2.96 is more indicative of public servants (e.g., police) or skilled laborers (e.g., machinist). Likewise, the mean education levels are a reflection of income and job prestige. The average education level for the AD sample is just above that of a high school graduate, where as the average IURD member has less than a high school education. Taken together, household income, job prestige, and education levels form the generalized measure of socio-economic status, accounting for 61 percent of the shared variance.

Another characteristic identifies a difference between the two denominations: IURD members have fewer average years within the church community than do AD acolytes. In fact, the average time in the church was nearly 18 years longer for AD informants. This demographic characteristic is actually a product of the different ages of the denominations. Since the AD has existed in Brazil for 100 years, several generations of members have been born into the church. Alternatively, the IURD has only existed a little over 30 years, making it a church composed nearly exclusively of converts. Finally, there are some slight racial compositional differences within the two samples. The AD has a greater number of members who self-identify as *branco* and *moreno,* while the IURD has a greater number of *negros*. These numbers generally reflect the composition of the overall membership of each church. The IURD actively recruits and busses in members from *favelas and conjuntos*, neighborhoods that are disproportionately made up of people of darker skin color. Further, the higher socio-economic status of many AD

members allows for all but the darkest to self- *embranquecer*, accounting for some of AD's numerous *moreno* and *branco* members (see Figure 10.1).

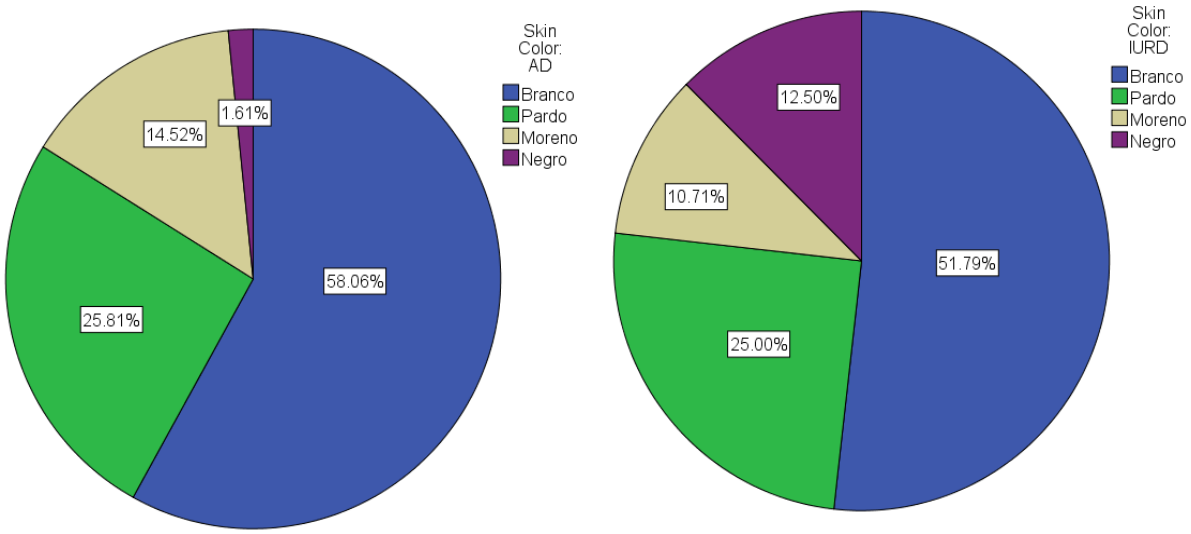

Figure 10.1: Racial/color composition of questionnaire sample

Cultural Consonance

Cultural consonance is the theoretical mechanism which describes/explains how culture shapes the well-being of individuals. Within this research, the cultural domain of religion is hypothesized to exert greater influence on psychological well-being than majority culture. The identification and makeup of religious consonance was described in the previous chapters. To briefly reiterate, 39 items comprised the initial religious model. For the survey and consonance testing, only the 27 most highly ranked and salient items were used (see Figure 10.2). Despite already finding evidence of model salience, relevance, and wide-sharing, reliability analysis was run on the final 27-item vida completa model. For the measure of religious consonance, reliability analysis indicates that *A Vida Completa* holds together very well as a scale, with a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.84 (see Appendix B for item-total correlations and mean scores).

4-Likert Scale of Agreement

1. I was baptized by immersion in water.
2. I am saved by Christ.
3. I am a God-fearing Christian
4. I put God before all the other things in my life.
5. I treat my body like a temple of God, avoiding things spiritually and physically damaging as drugs, alcohol and tobacco.
6. Unlike Christ, sometimes I have trouble loving my neighbor.
7. I have faith that God will resolve all the problems in my life.
8. Members of my family completely love each other.
9. I always pay my tithe in full.
10. I do not believe that success and financial prosperity are part God's plan.
11. I feel a deep sense of peace and harmony in my life.
12. All members of my family are saved by Christ.
13. I feel that I am completely free from demons in my life.
14. I like to consume movies, television, music, and other things considered "worldly" and do not directly strengthen my relationship with God.
15. I'm happy with having only enough prosperity to live a simple, but comfortable lifestyle.
16. Generally I do not consider myself a humble person.

Weekly Frequency of:

17. Experiencing baptism in the Holy Spirit?
18. Reading and studying the Bible?
19. Giving offerings and sacrifices to the church?
20. Evangelizing to others about your faith?
21. Praying to God for blessings of health and healing?
22. Praying to God for blessings of prosperity?
23. Doing "God's work" such as volunteering time and services to the church?
24. Studying to develop personally?
25. Attending worship services or other events at your church?

4-Likert Scale

26. How active are you considered in your church community?
27. What is the strength of your testimony?

Cronbach's Alpha = 0.84

Figure 10.2: A Vida Completa Scale-27 items

Figure 10.3 shows the means (and 95% confidence intervals) of consonance in secular and religious models for both congregations. For consonance with Family Life, there is no difference between denominations, a result which reproduces the findings of Dressler et al. (2005) who found that consonance in Family Life did not differ between economically stratified neighborhoods. Material consonance is significantly higher for the AD ($p<.01$), a reflection of their higher overall SES. These two measures of secular life consonance are combined through principal components analysis to form the generalized measure of secular consonance, accounting for 65.5 percent of the shared variance. Religious consonance, however, is much

higher for the IURD (p<.01) than the AD. The reasons for this result will be discussed in Chapter 11. The results likely represent a confluence of factors, including a culturally informed response bias that limits the amount of deviance a member will admit to others (as well as to themselves).

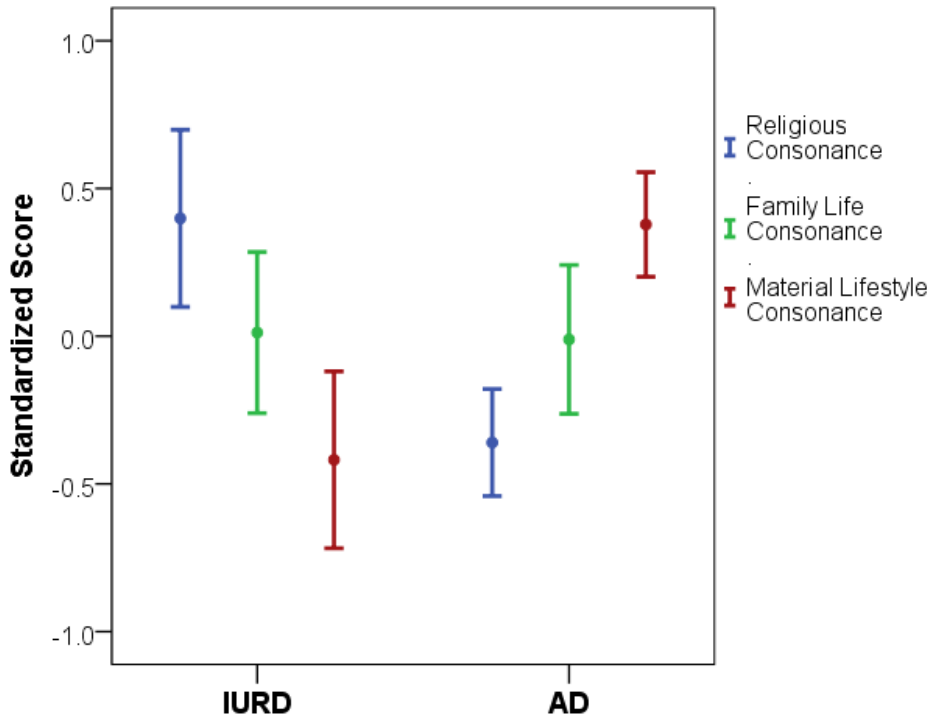

Figure 10.3: Comparison of Consonance Scores

The two outcome variables used in this study are psychological stress and depression, measured by the PSS and CES-D, respectively. There is no significant difference between the AD and IURD informants' measures of depression; however, there is significantly higher (p<.01) stress among AD than IURD respondents (see Figure 10.4). Again, the possible reasons for this trend will be discussed in the following chapter, but they may represent a response bias or an actual lower level of perceived stress facilitated by the unique dissociative rituals employed in IURD services. Multivariate analysis utilizes a generalized measure of psychological health. Through principal components analysis, an overall measure of psychological health is created

from these two psychological scales; Generalized Psychological Distress shares 79.5 percent of the combined variance of PSS and CES-D measures.

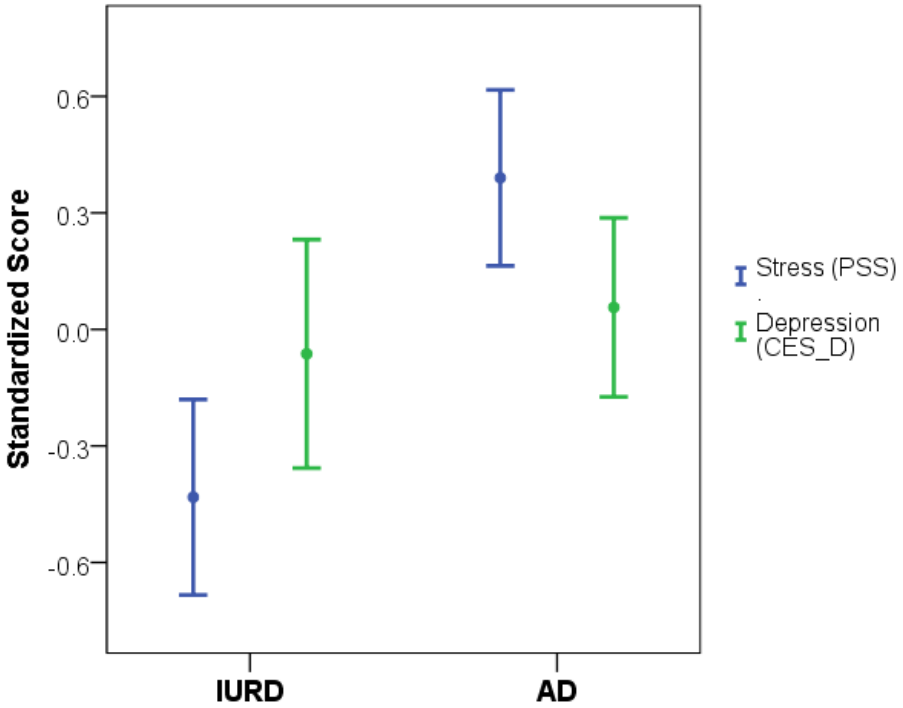

Figure 10.4: Comparison of mental health measures

Regression Analyses

Multivariate data analysis represents the final hypothesis testing phase of the research project. Multivariate linear regressions test for significant effects of the independent variables (cultural consonance) on the outcome variable (psychological distress) while controlling for known confounders (see Table 10.2). This first set of models tests the association of religious cultural consonance and generalized psychological distress. Model 1 shows that denomination is significantly associated with psychological distress: the AD exhibit higher levels ($\beta = 0.25$, $t=2.71$, $p=0.01$). Additionally, perceived social support (how many people you can call upon for favors) is negatively correlated with psychological distress ($\beta = - 0.28$, $t=2.93$, $p=0.00$). The introduction of generalized secular consonance in Model 2 does not change the influence of

denomination and social support. The measure of secular consonance itself is negatively associated with psychological distress (β = 0.27, t=2.63, p=0.01), which supports the earlier findings of Dressler et al. (1996, 1997, 1998, 2007). Finally, in Model 3 the introduction of religious cultural consonance removes the explanatory power of social support and diminishes but does not eliminate the association of generalized cultural consonance with psychological health (β = 0.18). Religious consonance is by far the most powerful predictor variable in the model (β = - 0.63, t=-7.87, p<0.00), accounting for 29 percent of additional variance for a total model R-squared of 0.48.

Table 10.2: Regression Models of Generalized Psychological Distress

	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	t	Sig.
MODEL 1**			
(Constant)	----	1.29	0.20
Age	-0.06	-0.69	0.49
Gender	0.00	0.01	0.99
Socio-economic Status	0.01	0.09	0.93
Denomination**	0.25	2.71	0.01
Social Support**	-0.28	-2.93	0.00
	N=118; df=112; R^2=0.14; p=0.00		
MODEL 2**			
(Constant)	----	1.10	0.28
Age	-0.08	-0.86	0.39
Gender	-0.04	-0.41	0.69
Socio-economic Status	0.11	1.05	0.30
Denomination**	0.29	3.18	0.00
Social Support**	-0.22	-2.36	0.02
Secular Cultural Consonance**	-0.27	-2.63	0.01
	N=118; df=111; R^2=0.19; p=0.01		
MODEL 3**			
(Constant)	----	0.67	0.51
Age	-0.03	-0.45	0.65
Gender	0.03	0.47	0.64
Socio-economic Status	0.16	1.87	0.06
Denomination	0.02	0.28	0.78
Social Support	-0.08	-1.07	0.29
Secular Cultural Consonance*	-0.18	-2.18	0.03
Religious Consonance**	-0.63	-7.87	0.00
	N=118; df=110; R^2=0.48; p<0.00		
***= significant at 0.05 level; **=significant at 0.01 level**			

Below, Figure 10.5 graphically shows the correlation of religious cultural consonance with generalized psychological distress. Psychological distress is adjusted to control for age, sex, SES, and denomination, which results in an R-squared of 0.33 ($p<0.00$). Accordingly, for every 1 s.d. of increased religious consonance, individuals experience over 0.6 s.d. fewer symptoms that are associated with psychological distress.

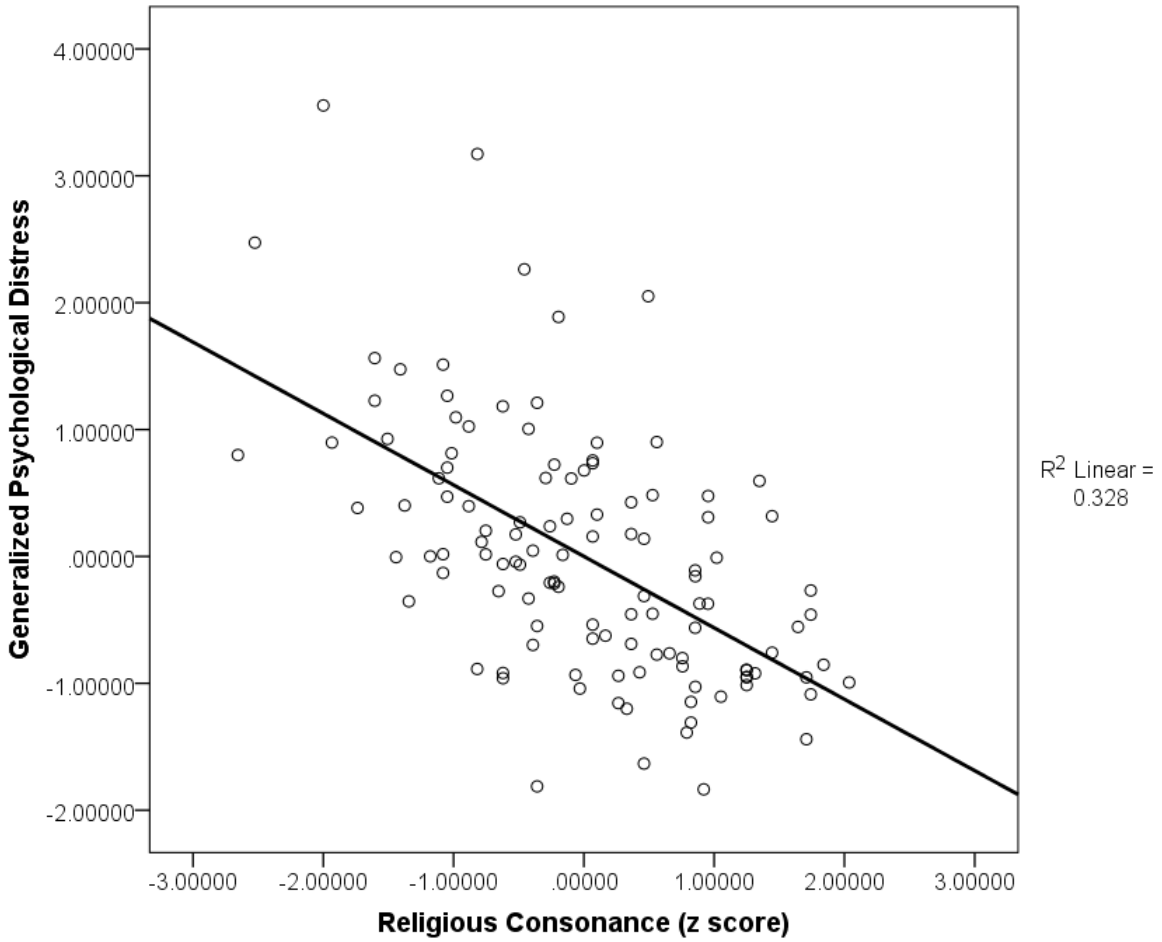

Figure 10.5: Multivariate linear regression of religious consonance and psychological distress

Interaction Effect

The next hypothesis tested here is the interaction of religious consonance and secular consonance on well-being. The initial hypothesis of this research predicted that high levels of

religious consonance would buffer the influence of low secular consonance. As models discussed above demonstrate, while religious consonance does exert a greater effect on the psychological health of Pentecostals, secular consonance does still exert a smaller, yet significant effect.

Table 10.3: Interaction of Regression Model of Generalized Psychological Distress

Interaction Regression Model of Generalized Psychological Distress			
	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	**t**	**Sig.**
MODEL 4*			
(Constant)	----	0.69	0.49
Age	-0.02	-0.22	0.83
Gender	0.03	0.47	0.64
Socio-economic Status	0.16	1.88	0.06
Denomination	0.00	0.05	0.96
Social Support	-0.09	-1.12	0.26
Secular Cultural Consonance*	-0.17	-2.11	0.04
Religious Consonance**	-0.65	-8.26	0.000
Interaction of Religious X Secular Consonance*	-0.15	-2.21	0.03
	N=118; df=109; R^2=0.51; p<0.03		
***= significant at 0.05 level; **=significant at 0.01 level**			

Model 4 in Table 10.3 shows a moderately strong and significant (β = - 0.15, t = -2.21, p=0.03) interaction of religious consonance and secular consonance on psychological well-being. A graphical representation of this interaction effect demonstrates the nature of the modifying effect. Figure 10.4 below graphs the interaction effect according to the standardized coefficients of the linear regression. This can be written in the following equation, where SC denotes secular consonance and RC represents religious consonance:

$$\text{Psychological Distress} = -0.17\ SC + -0.65\ RC + -0.15(RC \times SC) + 0.2$$

The interaction shows that religious consonance modifies the effect of secular consonance on psychological distress. Informants with low religious consonance experience similar levels of psychological distress, regardless of their level of generalized secular

consonance. An individual with a religious consonance score that is -1 s.d. will have psychological distress approximately 0.65 s.d. higher than average, no matter their level of combined material and family lifestyle consonance. That is, the difference of psychological health between very high secular consonance and very low secular consonance are negligible for those with low religious consonance. As one increases their level of religious consonance, well-being improves. However, those with higher combined secular consonance (≥1s.d.) and religious consonance (≥1 s.d.) have the fewest symptoms of psychological distress (-1 s.d.). Those with lower levels of secular consonance still experience therapeutic effects of high religious consonance, only at significantly lower levels (~ 0 s.d.). Finally, a brief mention needs to be made that the role of denomination, that is differences between AD and IURD samples, was tested. There were no interactions of denomination and religious consonance; denomination and secular consonance; or denomination, religious and secular consonance in relation to psychological distress. In short, cultural consonance shapes patterns of psychological well-being in similar ways, regardless of membership in the AD or IURD congregation. These findings will be more fully discussed in Chapter 11.

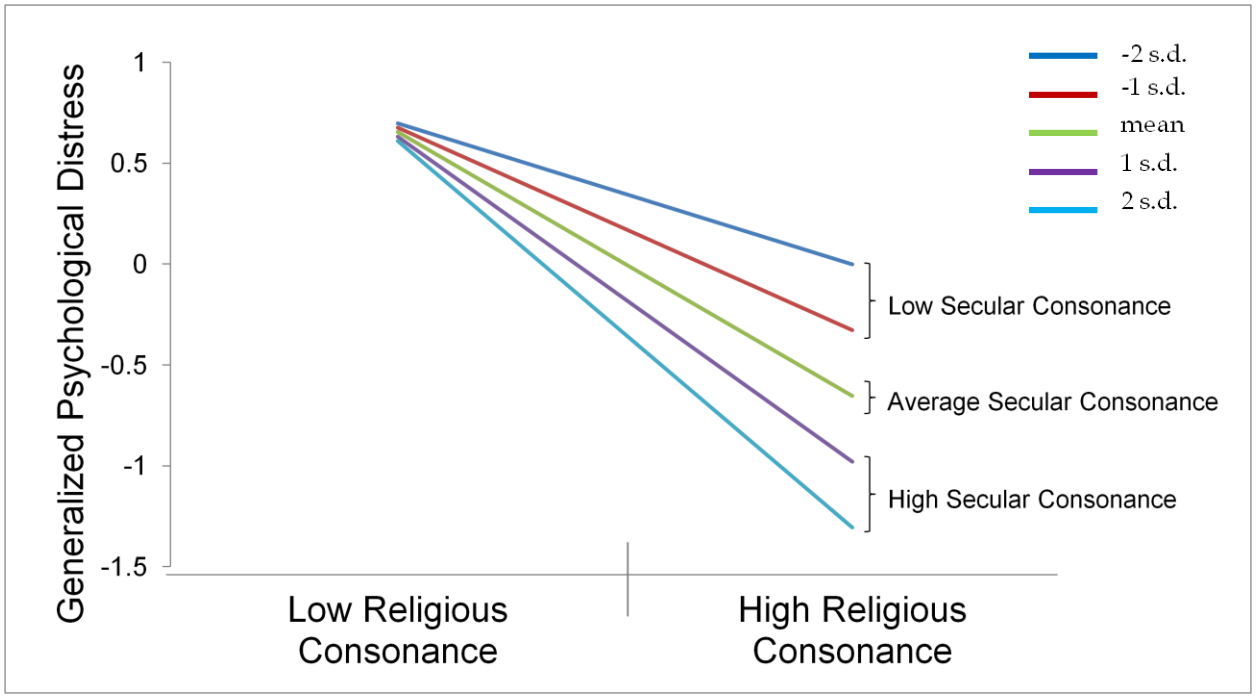

Figure 10.6: Interaction of religious consonance and secular consonance in relation to psychological distress

Finally, this chapter investigates how religious cultural consonance, as a predictive and explanatory measure of religion's affects on well-being, compares with other established religiosity and spirituality scales. Utilizing the same predictor variables in the linear regression models, this section compares the explanatory power of common religious measures: self-reported strength of faith/testimony; intrinsic religiosity; frequency of private worship; frequency of public worship; frequency of perceived spiritual experiences.

Most of these measures are fairly self-explanatory. The self-reported strength of an informant's faith is based on a 1-10 point scale. Intrinsic religiosity and frequencies of private and public worship (i.e., church attendance) are taken from the Duke University Religion Index (DUREL). The measure of spiritual experiences is the Daily Spiritual Experience Scale (DSES), an index of how informants imbue the day-to-day life with transcendent experiences and meanings. All these measures have been more fully described in Chapter 7.

The above items and religious consonance were entered into a stepwise linear regression in Model 5 (Table 10.4). Stepwise regressions insert a variable with the most explanatory power into the model first. If another variable is capable of explaining further variance with a significant confidence level, then it enters the model and the process repeats. After controlling for age, gender, SES, denomination, and social support, the interaction of religious and secular consonance explains 36 percent of the variance in the model. Only the DSES adds any more explanatory power at 3 percent.

Table 10.4: Stepwise Regression of Religious Measures on Well-being

Stepwise Regression of Religious Measures on Well-being			
	Standardized Coefficients (Beta)	**t**	**Sig.**
MODEL 5**			
(Constant)	----	2.79	0.01
Age	-0.00	-0.03	0.97
Gender	0.06	0.94	0.35
Socio-economic Status	0.16	1.95	0.05
Denomination	0.02	0.22	0.83
Social Support	-0.12	-1.56	0.12
Secular Consonance*	-0.17	-2.14	0.04
Religious Consonance**	-0.50	-5.31	0.00
Interaction of Religious X Secular Consonance*	-0.16	-2.41	0.02
DSES**	-0.24	-2.83	0.01
		N=118; df=108; R^2=0.54; p<0.01	
***= significant at 0.05 level; **=significant at 0.01 level**			

Finally, models 6-10 (Table 10.5) provide a comparison of measures of religiosity. While the primary model of this study is the interaction effect of secular and religious consonance, the models below test how the main effect of religious consonance compares to some established religiosity measures. In other words, does an emically valid cultural domain better predict the health effect of religion than common religiosity measures? As shown below, all of the commonly used measures of religiosity provide some degree of explanatory power, with the exception of frequency of religious attendance. DSES, the measure with the largest correlation besides religious consonance, explains 23 percent of the variance, much more than the other

measures, but nearly 10 percent short of *a vida completa*. The main effect of religious consonance explains 32 percent of the variance—making it much more predictive than the other metrics.

Table 10.5: Comparison of Religiosity Measures on Well-being

MODELS 6-10 Beta (t)	**6. Church Attendance**	**7. Freq. of Private Worship**	**8. Intrinsic Religiosity**	**9. DSES**	**10. Religious Cultural Consonance**
(Constant)	--(1.40)	--(2.39)*	--(3.58)**	--(5.797)**	--(0.82)
Age	-0.07(-0.72)	-0.03(-0.29)	-0.02(-0.22)	-0.02(-0.22)	-0.02(-0.30)
Gender	0.00(0.04)	0.02(0.20)	0.05(0.59)	0.10(1.25)	0.06(0.85)
Socio-economic Status	0.01(0.14)	0.01(0.11)	0.05(0.50)	0.06(0.64)	0.09(1.15)
Denomination	0.25(2.75)**	0.22(2.38)*	0.28(3.20)**	0.15(1.84)	-0.01(-0.17)
Social Support	-0.27(-2.79)**	-0.25(-2.64)**	-0.31(-3.42)**	-0.26(-3.18)**	-0.11(-1.46)
Religious Variable (6-10)	-0.6(0.71)	-0.22(-2.47)*	-0.31(-3.56)**	-0.50(-6.36)**	-0.65(-8.11)**
R^2	0.15	0.19**	0.23**	0.37**	0.46**
***= significant at 0.05 level; **=significant at 0.01 level**					

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the results of the final phase of research. Religious cultural consonance with *A Vida Completa* is shown to exert a large and significant effect on the psychological well-being of Brazilian Pentecostals. Despite denominational differences of socio-economic status, material lifestyle consonance, and psychological stress, the correlation of religious consonance and overall psychological health does not differ between IURD and AD respondents. Religious consonance appears to be the dominant influence on the psychological health of the Pentecostals, as its effect is greater than that of known correlates of well-being: including secular consonance, SES, and social support. Additionally, *A Vida Completa* is more predictive for levels of psychological stress when compared to other conventional measures of religiosity. Importantly, the data show that the religious cultural model does not negate secular models. Rather, they exist alongside one another and interact with each other. The meanings of and reasons for these findings are fully elaborated upon in Chapter 11.

CHAPTER 11: Religious Consonance and Health

Pentecostals are not born—they are made through enculturation and conversion. John Barker (1993) in his study of Christian conversion in Papua New Guinea, argues that conversion to and membership in a faith-based community results in the interaction and juxtaposition of multiple cultural logics. Through continuous processes, novel religious models along with existing cultural frameworks are negotiated and modified in relation to one another. This view may be contrasted with the theories of some religious scholars who maintain that conversion leads to the complete or radical replacement of world views (e.g., Gooren 2007; Richardson 1985). In my view, *crentes* must negotiate between the dominant cultural models of their society and the limitedly-distributed (sub)cultural models of their faith. Some secular models may be replaced or superseded by faith-based cultural models, whereas others may be incorporated, or continue to exist relatively unchanged. This depends on the specific constellation of relationships for the cultural models in question. In the previous chapters, I have shown how a Pentecostal model of *A Vida Completa* is formed both in relation to and in opposition to some of the more dominant Brazilian cultural models. In Chapter 10, I presented the results of my cultural consonance questionnaire. These data show that consonance with *A Vida Completa* correlates with increased well-being; that the religious model exerts a greater effect on well-being than generalized secular cultural models; and that there is an interaction of religious and secular models influencing patterns of psychological health. As a result, these data support the assertion that religious and secular cultural logics, worldviews, and cultural models are pluralistic, operating simultaneously and concurrently in the lives of those who hold them. Importantly, this

approach to the study of religion—as a series of shared cultural models—provides a more nuanced and emically validated understanding of religion that is better at predicting measures of psychological well-being than traditional measures of religiosity. In this chapter, I will discuss some of the meanings that these interactions have in relation to both my respondents and to the study of religion and health.

Towards a Conceptual Model of the Relationship and Interaction of Cultural Models

In a study of religious cultural change among Pentecostals in Papua New Guinea, Joel Robbins (2004) shows that opposing cultural models exist concurrently and coherently within the minds and public performances of church members. Advocating a theory of cultural change, Robbins' research seeks to explain the cultural persistence of the paradoxical integration of traditional Urapmin and Western Pentecostal legal-moralistic cultural systems. His theoretical approach combines aspects of Marshall Sahlins' (1985, 1992) modes of cultural change and Dumont's (1986) theory of value. This combination of theories provides a valuable starting point to examine my own research on two interacting cultural systems.

Religious conversion is cultural change on an individual level. Individuals who convert from similar backgrounds create a cultural system that continuously negotiates its position in relation to dominant society (see Mauss 1994). Inspired by Robbins' use of Sahlins and Dumont, I examine how models of culture change and values, combined with cognitive anthropological perspectives, provide insights into my study of cultural consonance and health across multiple domains. Marshal Sahlins (1985, 1992) identifies three non-exclusionary means by which cultural change can take place. First, assimilation is the means by which a culture incorporates new elements into existing models, without altering relationships between larger domains and schemas. In what Sahlins (1985:xiv) calls the "structure of the conjuncture," cultural models are

compared to the reality that they organize and explain. When these models fall short (due to technological innovation, immigration of people, or other phenomena), newly acquired information is incorporated into the existing cognitive-cultural structure, allowing these models to extend and attain new information without changing the fundamental relationships between schemas. On this point, Robbins (2004:7) explains that "even as categories are forced to change somewhat, their successful application also constitutes a reproduction of traditional cultural understandings in the face of new realities." The second type of cultural change identified by Sahlins (1985) is structural transformation, which involves the changing relationship between cognitive elements. Such alterations are caused by gradual changes to domains over time (such as assimilation), which in turn alters prior meanings and creates new relationships between cognitive cultural structures. The final model is modernization, or what Robbins calls adoption. As efforts toward traditional cultural reproduction diminish, adoption occurs through the acquisition of foreign models, schemas, and domains. These are then incorporated within the existing cultural framework with minimal integration between traditional and novel cognitive-cultural structures.

As outlined in Chapter 4, cultural models are not simply a matter of taxonomic significance. They organize how members of a group interact socially and conceive the world around them. Thereby, all of a culture's models carry with them meanings, or what Dumont (1986) calls "value-ideas." That is, "values are a part of a culture (not solely the individual) and a culture's values are expressed in the way that culture is organized" (Robbins 2004:11). In cognitive anthropological terms, values are expressed in the meanings attached to models, and how they organize other models and schemas. It can be reasonably argued that the value attached to a domain can be ascertained by how they directly influence well-being and how they alter the

relationship of consonance and health in other models. Domains which are valued more should carry greater psychological weight than domains of lesser importance.

When the ideas of Dumont and Sahlins are integrated, it is clear how the introduction of new cultural models and the associated values, or Weber's (1946) "value-spheres," can interact with prior existing cultural frameworks. A cultural domain that is devalued will be readily exchanged for new cultural elements that provide status or respite. According to Sahlins (1992:24), during such episodes, people come to "hate what they already have, what they have always considered their well-being." This animosity towards one's own culture stems from a variety of sources, ranging from envy and prior existing cultural debasement to devaluation as a result of forced acculturation. Importantly, many appropriated cultural institutions such as Christianity feed on this cultural humiliation by selectively codifying existing cultural models as immoral and depreciated.

Taking into account the ways in which *crentes* speak about their faith and the way by which religious consonance shapes well-being, I find that Brazilian Pentecostalism, for the models of material lifestyle and family life, is most represented by Sahlins' model of cultural transformation. The integration of Pentecostal cultural models is not adopted alongside pre-existing models as in the modernization model. While aspects of the assimilation model are undoubtedly taking place—the integration of religious ideals into preexisting cultural models—it does not satisfactorily explain the high correlation of *A Vida Completa* with well-being singularly, as well as interactively with secular models. Rather, Brazilian Pentecostalism builds upon the pre-existing knowledge of members from other religious backgrounds, and reorganizes these beliefs so that they are incorporated or subordinated by Pentecostal-specific limitedly distributed models (Steigenga and Cleary 2007). In Chapter 3, I examined how instead of

denying the realities presented by spiritualist and Catholic religions, Brazilian Pentecostalism selectively adopts aspects of each (e.g., pneumatic spirituality, charismatic faith, the Trinity), and then reframes these competing religions as incomplete truths (e.g., Catholicism, Judaism) or devil-worship (spiritualism). A similar process occurs with dominant Brazilian culture. Aspects of the world perceived as "good" and "virtuous" are sought after, whereas things deemed as "sinful" and "evil" are rejected and avoided. "God is everywhere in the world," explained an AD pastor to me, "but not everything in the world is of God."

The religious cultural model of *A Vida Completa* integrates and subsumes the secular models of material and family lifestyle. As discussed previously in Chapters 8 and 9, *A Vida Completa* is not exclusively comprised of explicitly religious concepts. A combination of religious beliefs, rituals, as well as aspects of a good family life (e.g., having a family in the church) and financial security (e.g., good job, education, prosperity blessings) are central to what comprises the complete Pentecostal life. Some dominant cultural markers of the good life become religious by conceiving them as divine blessings acquired by a faith-based lifestyle. In other words, the increased valuation of the religious sphere alters the appraisal and meaning of traditionally "secular" indicators of success.

Consequently, it is not accurate to conceive of a distinction between widely distributed secular cultural models and limited distributed religious models. The data discussed in this study show that the two exist in an interactive relationship. Rather than being ends in themselves (as is arguably the case for many Brazilians), the secular models of this study serve as secondary indicators of *A Vida Completa*, they are the blessing of being a good Pentecostal. This is unsurprising because the desire for family and security are intertwined with Pentecostal belief and doctrine: "the basic well-being of the individual as well as the life of the family are

themselves considered ‘spiritual’ issues” (Smilde 2007:123). These widely distributed Brazilian cultural models are, in fact, the primary instrumental motivation for conversion and continued involvement. Pentecostalism promises to change lives – the evidence for this is embodied in the personal narratives of each member. This change can be existential, such as the forgiveness of sin and the promise of salvation. Or, this change can be more grounded, such as familial harmony, financial security, and/or well-being (Chesnut 1997; Mariz 1994; Smilde 2007).

The Interaction of Secular and Religious Models

When examined together, the transformational relationship of religious and secular cultural models becomes increasingly clear. As Figure 10.4 in Chapter 10 shows, *crentes* with low religious consonance experience the same level psychological distress, regardless of their level of generalized secular consonance. To review, an individual with a religious consonance score that is 1 s.d. below the mean will have psychological distress 0.6 s.d. higher than average, no matter their level of combined material and family lifestyle consonance. That is, the difference of psychological health between very high secular consonance and very low secular consonance are negligible for those with low religious consonance. As one increases their level of religious consonance, well-being improves. However, those with higher combined secular consonance (~1s.d.) and religious consonance (1 s.d.) have the fewest symptoms of psychological distress (-1 s.d.). Those with low levels of secular consonance still experience therapeutic effects of high religious consonance, only at significantly lower levels (~0 s.d.).

For the active (not to be confused with consonant) members that make up the questionnaire sample, low religious consonance seems to negate the expected psychological benefit of secular consonance seen in other Brazilian studies (see Dressler et al. 2005, 2012). The reasons for these trends are straightforward when viewed through the religious cultural

framework. As Jefferson, an IURD *evangelista* explains, blessings without God can result in a tenuous and potentially dangerous situation. Familial harmony and financial prosperity decrease in value if they are not built upon the foundation of God.

> You know of the *favelas* in Rio right? (The houses built along the hills and mountains?) Could you build a house upon the hillside? Yes. Could you build a mansion with many rooms? If you want. But what happens when it rains? What happens when the *tempestade* (storm) comes? It will fall. The same is what happens when you build a life on a foundation that is not God—you may look prosperous, but it will be taken away in an instant.

By invoking images of a house in an impoverished neighborhood, Jefferson devalues success without God. Just as a mansion holds less value when it is surrounded by slums, prosperity from worldly sources is similarly tainted. Jefferson further questions whether these sources of capital are derived from solid and legitimate foundations. He maintains that only things from God possess any sort of permanence. Wealth from any other source is at best temporary and at worse can lead to demise as *crentes* fall off of the proverbial cliff of sin and despair.

This religious cultural logic is widespread. Religious and secular successes exist together in a complex relationship, as Pastor Gilberto of the AD church explains:

> All the churches in Brazil promise something. Everything in the world promises something, promises to change your life! And this is where many people become confused, become lost. God wants his children to be happy, healthy, and successful. But the Devil will promise the same things. Do you remember the story of Jesus in the wilderness? How the Devil tempted him with nourishment and power? It is difficult for many to know what is of God and what is a temptation from Satan; a ploy to pull people away from the Spirit. [*How can you tell?*] You cannot have these blessing be your motivation. You cannot, like it says in Matthew, test God. Blessings are that, blessings are given according to his will.

Thus, while financial security is important within the church, money, power, and greed are also recognized as being tools of Satan.[6] Faith without prosperity is infinitely greater than prosperity

[6] Because money is viewed as both a tool of God and Satan, tithes and monetary sacrifices are often placed into cloth bags or paper boxes inscribed with images of holy objects (such as the Ark of the Covenant), or directly onto

without faith. Similarly, Roberto, a young man in his 30s told me, "Prosperity that is not of God is prosperity that is tainted, it is of the world," suggesting that it is destined to bring misfortune, pain, and misery. He continues:

> Can someone be successful without the Holy Spirit? Certainly. It happens all the time—just look on television, all around you. But it is not safe. Some make deals with the Devil, some just have it, but it doesn't matter, if it's not of God, you will lose it and you will fall. Prosperity without God is like building a house with a rotten foundation, it won't last.

According to the Pentecostal worldview, wealth comes in two different forms: the wealth of God and the wealth of the world (see also Mesquita 2007; Swatowiski 2007). One type is corrupting and damning while the other is a sign of God's grace. On occasion, this is brought forth in member's testimonies, as they speak about "losing it all," or "having everything but being empty inside." That is, while manifestations of material lifestyle success may be similar, the source of the prosperity makes all the difference in the world.

As the interaction of secular and religious consonance shows, members who have low levels of religious consonance have higher levels of psychological distress, no matter their level of consonance with family and material lifestyle. The sampling of members who occupy this space are active in the church, yet do not meet all of the criteria of *A Vida Completa*. The reasons vary— an inability to experience baptism in the Spirit; being penurious with tithes and sacrifices; not consistently following behavioral taboos; or an inability to convert members of their family. The lack of religious consonance in their lives leads to increased stress and depression. Even when they have high levels of family and material prosperity, the religious logic that views such prosperity as at best temporary and at worst sinful negates any positive psychological benefit.

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an open Bible. Such acts represent the literal transformation of money from a worldly object into a form usable by the Holy Spirit.

Greater religious consonance leads to better mental health. And greater combined religious and secular consonance leads to the lowest levels of psychological distress. These findings are unsurprising since individuals experience less dissonance and psychological distress depending on their success in a high number of complementary social spheres. Individuals with high levels of religious consonance and low levels of secular consonance do not however experience the same levels of well-being as their multi-consonant counterparts. The reasons for these trends are similar to those discussed above. Members integrate aspects of dominant cultural models to inform, validate, and reinforce their status within religious spheres. In short, consonance in domains such as family and material lifestyle provide proof that their Pentecostal faith has brought about the life changes and conditions that many *crentes* seek. Members who achieve consonance in these domains proudly testify to the faith and sacrifices they made in order to have received these blessings. As Maria, a middle-aged woman wearing a red shirt imprinted with "*Fé + Sacrifício = Sucesso*" testified before the IURD congregation:

> I was making only $5 a week as a seamstress, with 2 children to support. I had debt over R$50,000. I was depressed, overcome with self-doubt…Thanks to the *Fogueira Santa* (literally, "the Holy Fire, but understood as blessing of the Holy Spirit), my life has changed, I now own my own business, I have 4 cars, my marriage is beautiful, and I no longer have depression. God transformed my life.

In other words, success in other aspects of life is expected results from *firme* (steadfast) faith and participation in the Pentecostal church (Smilde 2007).

Importantly, individuals who have high religious consonance and low secular consonance have mental health comparable to the overall sample average. By comparison, these individuals also have significantly better mental health than those with low religious consonance. They do not, however, show the extremely low levels of distress by those who are consonant across domains. It is important to remember that Pentecostals still live, function, and interact with the

wider dominant society in which they are dissonant. As Dressler (1993b) has argued, one's status within a cultural setting is constantly evaluated and affirmed in even mundane social interactions. Low secular status is still met by negative feedback by dominant cultural bearers, resulting in distress that is not completely negated by high religious consonance. While these members receive some psychological support from coherently thinking and acting in the faith that they believe, they have not received all of the associated blessings *expected* as a result of their faith. Consequently, their religious life is incongruent with their secular life. The respect afforded to them within the church community as a result of high religious consonance is not replicated outside the chapel doors. Therefore, psychosocial stress, while largely influenced by levels of religious consonance, is also subject to measures of consonance with other cultural models. The dissonance between religious success and secular success leaves them with more distress than those who are consonant across domains.

Despite this incongruence, such Pentecostals' unfulfilled imaginative realities serve to strengthen rather than discourage their faith. These *crentes* reconcile cognitive dissonance by explaining their life status as "God's will" or a "test" of their faith similar to Job (see Festinger 1962). This view is seen in the AD churches, where blessings cannot be *expected* from God. Citing Deuteronomy 6:16, members claim that "you shall not put the Lord your God to the test." Alternatively, some Pentecostals in the IURD congregation attribute the lack of success to the Devil, rather than to the Lord. Also citing scripture (e.g., Malachi 3:10), they claim that God will "pour down" blessings to the faithful. A faithful IURD member who is dissonant in other aspects of life often attributes a lack of success not to God or him/herself, but rather to demonically enslaved family members, friends, co-workers, and bosses who are compelled to stymie the

individual successes of God's chosen faithful. In response, IURDians take up the mantle of Holy Warriors to fight such examples of injustice.

Such cognitive reasoning around incongruent consonance measures can be demonstrated in how *crentes* understand why familial harmony does not follow the faithful lifestyle. Pentecostals view salvation as achievable through the relationship between an individual and his/her creator. As IURD pastors constantly reminded their members, "you cannot be saved for a family member. You cannot liberate them from their demons against their will." As is often the case in Brazil, the source of familial stress may be related to *machista* activities of drugs, alcohol, and violence (Chesnut 1997; Hecht 1998; Mariz 1994). Instead, *crentes* pray that the Spirit of the Lord will "speak to the hearts" of wayward family members. Faithful members try to serve as role models, allowing the "Lord to speak through (their) actions." For some such as Lucas in Chapter 6, family members convert, change their lives, and improve the family condition. For others, conversion to an *evangélico* faith is a new source of conflict in an already stressed environment. For example, recent IURD convert Danilo experienced such stress. For him, the conversion of him and his sister continued rather than alleviated family problems.

> My parents were really unsupportive of the conversion of me and my sister. Only my sister and I are evangelicals. The rest of the family is Catholic, and they for the most part are very intolerant. I was staying at my uncle's house not too long ago and I left a few copies of the church newspaper out in the living room. My uncle then tells me, "I don't want these in my house!," and rips them in front of me. I responded: "I respect your religion, why don't you respect mine? What are you afraid of?" He told me that he thought the Bispo Macedo was a thief and liar, promising blessings that couldn't be achieved and stealing people's money on these false promises. I responded, "If that is so, why is the church growing so rapidly? How can so many people be fooled? Why is it in 180 countries around the world? If it wasn't working, surely it wouldn't be THIS successful?!" It is difficult to bring your family to God, to the church. Sometimes it's easier with your friends or with strangers. They have their traditions and identity and trying to convert your family is sometimes seen as attacking your family, their traditions, their history.

This sentiment is common among Brazilian *evangélicos*; attempts to convert family members can often be a stressful experience. Danilo and his sister continue to pray for their family members. They hope that their lifestyle will serve as a model for their parents and extended family—a sober, cultivated approach to life that provides them with security, optimism, and strength.

A Conceptual Model of *A Vida Completa* and Well-being

This research provides a model for the interaction of multiple models in relation to well-being. This "transformation" model is only one such possible configuration of cultural models among many possibilities. The Pentecostal religion carries with it a set of values, beliefs, behaviors, and world views that members draw upon to experience supernatural forces and to apply their wisdom and power to life situations. With its penchant for ascetic behaviors and essential religious identity, Pentecostal faith distances itself from many aspects of dominant secular society. It draws upon the *mozambismo* that many Brazilians feel, and uses it to create an imagined community where many *crentes* feel they have more in common with an American or African Pentecostals than with non-*crente* Brazilians. Such devaluing of Brazilian society has led the members interviewed in my study to use the religious model of *A Vida Completa* to organize many elements of their lives. This is the dominant way by which they interpret themselves, others, and the world around them. Yet, while Pentecostals may seek to distance themselves from the world, they do not exist apart from it: religion is not a separate sphere of existence from material or worldly concerns; rather, members interact, inform, and at times come into conflict with one another, all of which requires them to justify, negotiate, and reconcile their beliefs and behaviors (Barker 1993). Valued aspects of dominant society are often integrated within religious cultural models. Family life and material lifestyle, as such, do not exist apart from *A*

Vida Completa. On the contrary, the former constitute aspects of the latter. What is meaningful is that *A Vida Completa* subsumes these models so that they carry religious meaning. Success in the family and in the material lifestyle are largely seen as proof of their position vis-à-vis God, and their secular consonance is a blessing of this positioning. In an example of transformation, the inclusion of cognitive Pentecostal models does not replace prior held dominant culture models. Instead they are re-valued through religious models, subtlety altering their meanings, but not their ability to exert force as *habitus* in the lives of my respondents (see figure 11.1).

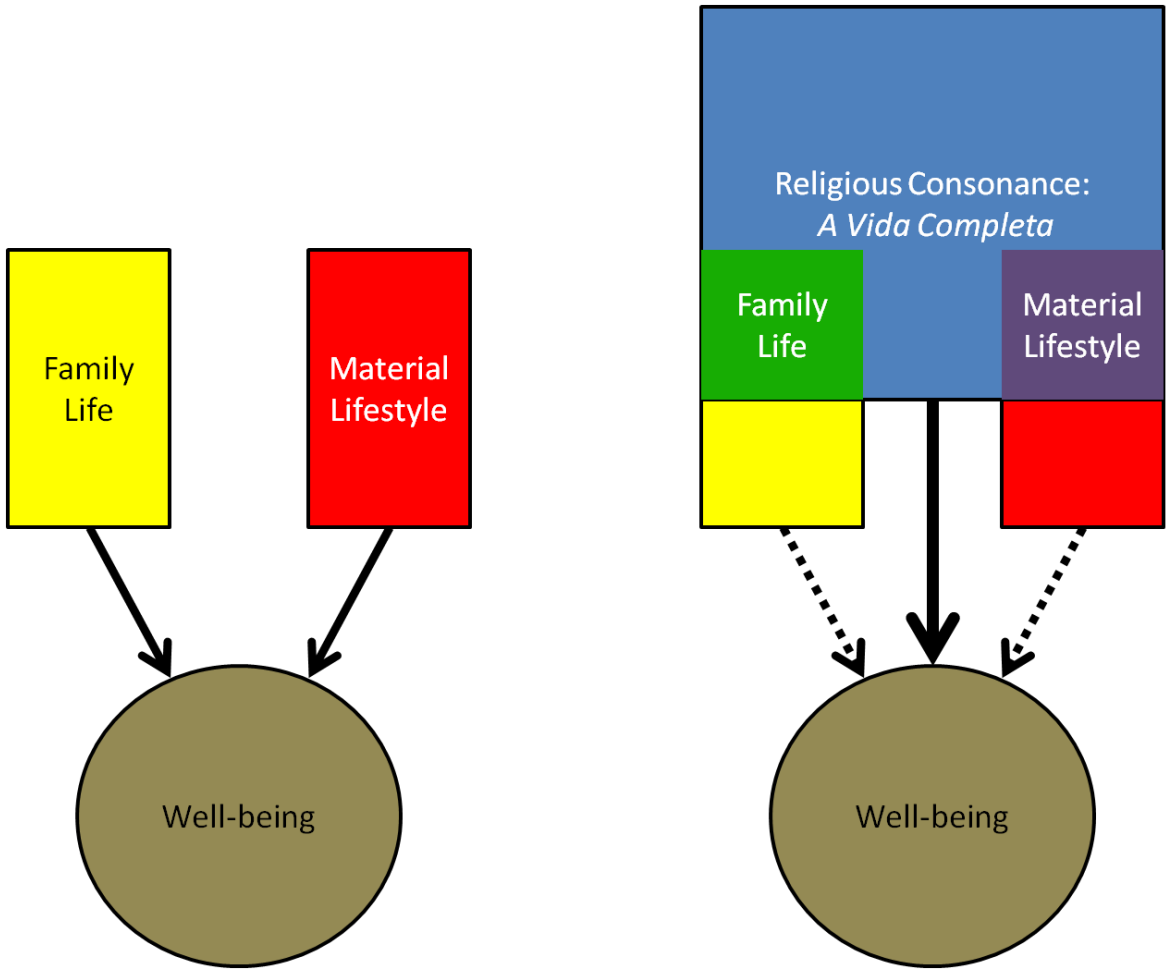

Figure 11.1: The transformation of cultural models: the introduction of the superior (both in relation to position and value) religious model reframes aspects of the two widely distributed secular models. Their affective influence on well-being is altered, as is their appraisal. These secular models are "converted" and are viewed in relation to and as part of the religious model.

This transformation of the constellation of models is further apparent when simply considering the relative correlation of secular consonance and mental health with those of other Brazilians. As described prior, in 2012, Dressler et al. found that the subsample of Pentecostals exhibited a slightly lower correlation of secular consonance and psychological distress than other religious groups, especially when considering the lower SES of these *crentes.* This research seeks to understand this "anomaly" in the data by explicitly looking at the role of religious cultural models in influencing well-being. This research similarly finds that, as compared to the larger sample of Brazilians complied by Dressler et al. (2005, 2012), Pentecostal respondents show a lower correlation of secular cultural consonance and psychological distress. The weakened influence of secular cultural consonance measures shows that these measures of status are devalued as independent markers of success. Rather, they hold value only in conjunction with religious success.

This proposed transformative structure of cultural model interaction bears some similarity to Claudia Strauss' (1990) notion of heteroglossia—the cognitive integration of multiple, seemingly contrary cultural models. In this article, Strauss examines the interaction of two discrete and seemingly opposing models of economic ideology: individualistic and populist outlooks. In praxis, Strauss argues, these schemas are not exclusionary, but exist as a heteroglossia of cognitive schemas. She posits that the arrangement and interaction of these schemas, rather than the constituent contents of each, determine the ways by which the schemas are internalized and enacted. In her example, Strauss identifies three ways of internalizing heteroglossia: beliefs may be in a horizontal relationship where each is equally articulated, though are largely compartmentalized, so they can be expressed in distinct settings separately; vertically organized beliefs are those where one set of schema is more salient than the other,

resulting in it being more easily articulated; finally, integrated beliefs are internalized into an over-arching meta-theory, denying any exclusivity to schematic boundaries. These configurations result in differing "dynamic potential" influencing both behaviors and resiliency of beliefs to change (Strauss 1990:323).

While this formulation of heteroglossia is informative, it does not capture the nuances of Brazilian *crentes'* limitedly distributed cultural models existing as high-level schema and reframing the meanings of subordinated secular models. Most generally, the data shown here suggests that the interaction of religious and secular models exists somewhere between a horizontal and integrated arrangement. The secular models of family and material lifestyle are to some degree incorporated within *A Vida Completa*, suggesting an integrated model. However, both still exert effects separately and are conceived of, at least in part, separate from religious schema—akin to a horizontal arrangement. Therefore, it is more accurate to speak of these cultural models in a transformative relationship a la Sahlins. The inclusion of the religious model does not change the constituent aspects of the secular models—nor does it negate its effect as *habitus*. Rather, *A Vida Completa* takes a position as high-level schema: interacting with lower level models. This changes the overall meaning of these lower schemas from one of being solely a marker of secular success to one that denotes a degree of religious success as they are revalued as blessings of a religious lifestyle.

Denomination Differences in Consonance and Well-being

To this point, differences between the AD and IURD denominations have not been discussed. As shown in Chapter 10, the IURD sample report higher levels of religious consonance and lower levels of psychological distress than their AD counterparts. Yet, as demonstrated by the linear regressions, there is no interaction of denomination with consonance

and well-being. That is, the relationships between *A Vida Completa* and well-being, and the interaction of religious and secular consonance on well-being are not shaped by church affiliation. Given the difference in raw mental health and religious consonance scores of the two churches, these results may be surprising. The reason for these divergent scores can be understood through the discussion in Chapter 9. IURD congregants exist in a strict hierarchal arrangement with their parishioners, which limits the amount of individual interpretation of doctrine that is allowed, particularly as compared to many AD congregants. This likely influences their reporting of greater adherence to religious directives. Through a combination of mandated deference to church authority, communal monitoring, and cultural pressures to publically declare their unquestioning, unwavering faith through testimonies and catch-phrases (*Firme!* (Unwavering (in my faith)!); *Vai vencer!* (I will be victorious!); *Ahh, que dia!* (Ahh, what a day (for baptism in the Spirit)!); *Vamos para a guerra!* (Let us go to war (against Satan)!), IURD members are more likely to report higher levels of testimony, less doubt on beliefs, and overall greater religious consonance. Doctrinally, the IURD views mental distress as the result of demon's and devil's possession. Liberation meetings often specifically address the illnesses caused by the demons of stress, depression, sadness, and low self-esteem so that members are less likely to admit to these psychological experiences. I have no reason, though, to think that they consciously misreport their stress levels in this study. Rather, I suggest that the vast majority of respondents convince themselves that they are largely free from mental illness.

This suppression of psychological distress and emotion would be deleterious if it were not for the release provided during the dissociation inducing church rituals. My respondents, who are active core members, attend meetings nearly every day of the week in order to participate in the activities that bring them closer to God, create an imagined community, and help them to

experience the stress reduction that accompanies dissociative states. And it is through these states that members may be able to achieve lower levels of stress than expected for their SES. As discussed prior, the rituals and sermons of the IURD facilitate altered states of consciousness (Greenfield 2008). It is reasonable to assume that the combination of positive affirmation discourse and ASC results in an effect not unlike hypnosis, where cultural information is transduced onto individual members (Greenfield 2005, 2008). Through a combination of physiological changes that accompany dissociation and embodied discourse, the cognitive appraisal and physiological response of stress may be reduced. Even the neophyte, who may not have complete knowledge of church doctrine, can still receive therapeutic outcomes through the information available in sermons and testimonies combined with an altered state of consciousness. Thus, when a newcomer exclaimed to me: "I was skeptical, I didn't believe the claims of the Universal Church, until I came to see it myself—the power of the blessings of the Spirit," she may have been speaking scientific *and* spiritual truths.

Chapter Summary

Brazilian Pentecostals meet the expectations of their religious communities and achieve enhanced psychological well-being. Through the joint application of Sahlins' models of culture change and Dumont's theory of value, this chapter shows how to understand the interaction of limitedly distributed religious and widely circulated dominant cultural models. Brazilian Pentecostals distance themselves from broader society, and yet they do not remove themselves from the world. They strive for good familial relations and material security that make life sustainable, and often comfortable and enjoyable. Pentecostals are members of dominant society and occupy cultural spheres where dominant models still carry weight as *habitus*. Within these spaces and places, dominant cultural models (or other limitedly distributed cultural models) are required to navigate cultural interactions and social relationships. My informants indicate that

dissonance with some of these more widely circulated ideals—particularly in the form of gender roles, economic status, and race—are a contributing factor for their conversion and continued involvement in the faith. This conclusion has been observed by Pentecostal scholars around the world (e.g., Burdick 1998; Chesnut 1997; Freston 1995; Hess 1995; Ireland 1991; Smilde 2007; Vásquez 1999). Prior to or as a result of conversion, members devalue aspects of secular society that they see as sinful, immoral, or dangerous. I have shown in this chapter and others that various respondents converted to and participate in the faith as a result of a past life that involved street violence, machismo, poverty, and racism. Through a religious culture and community, they come to find solace, power, identity, and value. Their religious cultural paradigm becomes the dominant cultural logic in their lives, and they reinterpret their past to form a coherent religious biography of life change as a result of their faith. These converts look forward to the future with optimism reified by their own experiences and those of their religious brothers and sisters.

In the final chapter of this study, I will review the implications of these findings for the study of the epidemiology of religion and for the cognitive approach to medical anthropology. This study offers new methods for conceiving and studying religion and provides insights into how cultural models act in concert to shape well-being. I argue that individual's hold organizing cultural models which transform the relationships of other subordinate models. Religious cultural models are just one of many such cultural logics that can alter how consonance in other domains influences well-being.

CHAPTER 12: Conclusion

Research Review

Scholars have long attempted to define the varied phenomenon that we call religion (Saler 2008). Nineteenth century English thinkers such as Herbert Spencer, James Frazer, and E.B. Tylor argued that religion was an illusion—a false belief that controlled classes and stymied social advancement, and an evolutionary product of an earlier stage of human development (Evans-Pritchard 1962). Contemporary post-modernists have suggested that religion is an ideological and Western construct, comprised of colonial and capitalistic interests (Chidester 2007; Fitzgerald 2000). From this perspective, the idea of religion must be viewed through the lens of power, knowledge, and resistance. This study departs from these previous perspectives and demonstrates that religion is a cultural institution that can be studied scientifically (see Lowie 1963). Here I have in part followed Durkheim's view that religion is fundamentally a social system, or more specifically, "a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say set apart and forbidden, beliefs and practices which united into one single moral community, called a church, all those who adhere to them" (1915 [1912]:62). Durkheim's view maintains that religion is a set of beliefs and rituals that are distinct from the mundane, everyday world (i.e., profane), but that ultimately reaffirm social norms and reproduce the social structure. Religion is fundamentally a source of social cohesion—a system that integrates individuals into larger cultural units. These social networks assuage *anomie* and reproduce cultural and social frameworks that facilitate solidarity and cohesion of the group. This study, through cultural consensus and consonance theory, examines, in part, the relationship of religion

with the everyday world and the psychological effects of successful adherence to its cultural ideals.

In this dissertation, I demonstrate that religion is explicitly social, and that it blurs the boundaries between the "sacred" and the "mundane" (*contra* Durkheim). This study also stands in contrast to Max Weber's (1946) argument that modernism and globalization must ultimately lead to secularism; rather, I show how Brazil and much of the world are experiencing a "re-enchantment" with charismatic and pneumatic faiths. A combination of displaced prior social structures due to globalizing forces (see Burdick 1993a; Robbins 2004a) and increased vibrancy of open religious marketplaces (see Finke and Stark 1998) has reenergized populations to fill pews and to commune with the supernatural. My study builds upon the research that shows how the rapid rise of Pentecostal faith in Brazil can be attributed to its abilities to assuage social anomie, provide new identities and social support systems, and address issues of structural violence (Burdick 1998; Chesnut 1997; Mariz 1994). It is thus unsurprising that *evangélico* religious goods (e.g., blessings, sermons, rituals) provide "healing" to the discomforts, insecurities, and "dis-ease" felt by members due to the conditions of their placement within larger social body and body politic. Until now, however, research on the transformative power of faith has largely relied on a qualitative ethnographic approach. This perspective is valuable: it provides a cultural context that explains the perceived transformations of identity, power, and agency that so often accompany conversion. My dissertation extends previous research by focusing on the mechanisms by which religious assuages "dis-ease," and how we can empirically measure the effects of such mechanisms.

Conceptually, I viewed religion as similar to other cultural institutions which are comprised of knowledge, beliefs, behaviors, and artifacts that hold shared meanings and are

publically enacted. Although religion does uniquely involve ideas of superhuman agents (Spiro 1987), anthropologists can study religion in the same way as we study other cultural phenomena. Cognitive anthropology in particular provides a framework to study religion through the verification, comparison, and ultimately the ability to evaluate its effects on mental health. By examining a specific domain of Pentecostal culture, the ideal Pentecostal lifestyle or *A Vida Completa*, I was able to elicit common and salient terms that captured the essence of a successful religious life. While there was variation around the domain, such as AD members who value intrinsic aspects of the faith more than extrinsically oriented IURDians, Pentecostals overall shared a common understanding of what a good life entails.

Stress research has shown that humans, like other primates, exist in social hierarchies that confer varying degrees of status, coping resources, and stress exposure. Socio-economic status is among the most studied and replicated human hierarchy, and is associated with a wide range of physical and psychological health outcomes (Adler and Ostrove 1999). Recently, stress researchers in anthropology have examined how socio-cultural status in other culturally constructed hierarchies impacts well-being (e.g., Dressler et al. 2005; McDade 2001). Based on this background, I hold that religious ideals constitute measures and standards of one such culturally constructed hierarchy. My results show that consonance in a religious domain does influence patterns of psychological health. In addition, I find strong evidence that religion interacts with some secular cultural models. Despite being limitedly distributed, these religious models are high level schemas—altering the cognitive configurations of other models and moderating their effect on well-being.

My dissertation specifically demonstrates that the religious cultural model of *A Vida Completa* is not isolated from widely distributed models. Rather, as the dominant cultural logic

of these *crentes*, *A Vida Completa* interacts with other models and transforms their relations with one another (and with well-being). For example, familial and material lifestyles are incorporated into the religious model, denying any rigid distinction between members' existential experiences with the supernatural and the physical conditions of their earthly experience. There is thus no simple additive effect of various cultural models on mental health. The full salubrious effects of secular consonance occur only when it occurs in conjunction with high religious consonance. Cultural measures of success within other spheres of social life are reframed through faith, so that they become markers of *A Vida Completa*. These other measures of status are so ingrained within religious discourse that *a vida mudada* (a changed life) and the reception of blessings are the basis of nearly every sermon, testimony, and ritual. Secularly dissonant members who have not yet fully achieved *A Vida Completa* also receive psychological solace through these optimistic discourses. Such sermons and testimonies of other members show the dissonant members that their lives will improve if they participate in Pentecostal religious practices. As a result, their faith provides hope that the insults accrued in daily life as a result of their low status in dominant culture will not last for long.

Research Impacts and Contributions

This dissertation begins by describing the cultural and historical conditions that gave rise to contemporary Brazil. In Ribeirão Preto, I examined two religious denominations that occupy divergent ends of the Pentecostal continuum. Both denominations share a cultural construct of *A Vida Completa*, yet variations of the model exist. Residual agreement analysis found that each denomination emphasized certain aspects of the model more than the other. That is, while there is overall consensus between AD and IURD members, subtle variations show that the IURD hold ritualistic behaviors in higher regard, whereas the AD emphasize personal development and

relationships. These results affirm the external structure of the domain while they reaffirm the essential characteristics of each church (see D'Andrade 1995).

Importantly, this research provides a nuanced understanding of Pentecostalism in Brazil. Although the AD is typically considered more sectarian and conservative (see, for example, Burdick 1993a; Chesnut 1997), my study reveals more inter-group variation among AD members than among the more secularly oriented IURD mega-church (Oro 2004). These results suggest that conservative doctrine does not necessarily result in greater homogeny of ideas and discourse. Similarly, a church with lax social monitoring such as the IURD may still effectively communicate a singular ideal version of religious interpretation and behavior. My dissertation shows that the authoritative structures of each church as well as the characteristics of the congregants (i.e., low SES in Brazil ~ greater deference to authority) may better explain the patterns of orthodox and heterodox discourses. Such differences, however, are only a matter of varied emphasis around a shared core of *A Vida Completa.* Despite all of the perceived differences in ritual and discourse (including in the resulting antagonism) AD and IURD *crentes* are more alike than they are different. In Ribeirão Preto, *A Vida Completa* is a shared characteristic of religious identity that spans two popular Pentecostal churches.

This project also contributes to the study of religion-health interactions. Religion has long been associated with health (Koenig 2002). Initially, researcher bias over-emphasized the negative psychological traits and illnesses associated with fervent religiosity (e.g., Freud 1953). Later research examined the salutogenic associations of participating in a religious community (see Koenig et al. 2001). In both cases, the mechanism for the association was placed onto psychological and social structures which were external to religion. On one hand, the *act* of believing (regardless of content) was thought to either retard cognitive development or to instill

hope and optimism. The communal aspect of worship was thought to increase social networks and to decrease perceived anomie with larger society (see George et al. 2002; Moreira-Almedida et al. 2006). As a result, the vast majority of religion-health research has not considered religion as a cultural system. Rather, religion is often atomized as a social support, coping strategies, or behavioral taboos—essentially stripping culture out of religious practice. Consequently, measures of religion, religiosity, or spirituality lack any grounded specificity and are not rigorously examined or incorporated into larger psycho-social biological models.

This study views religion as a type of cultural system that is composed of prototypes, models, and schemas of ideal thoughts, discourses, and behaviors. I use cultural consonance and stress theories, which argue that individuals with the ability to meet religious community expectations build increased status while dissonance results in social sanctions and lower status. This formulation of religion has several benefits over previous studies of religiosity. First, my approach operationalizes religiosity as the cultural domains of a faith-based community. Second, the ideals of a religion are emically defined which avoids generalization and ensures validity. At the same time, the use of cultural domain analysis enables robust cross-group comparison of religious domains while adherence to religiosity can be empirically compared with measures of physiological and psychological health. Further, the incorporation of religious models within cultural consonance theory provides pathways for both positive *and* negative health associations. Finally, the approach used here demonstrates that religion and religiosity are not static concepts; cultural domain analysis of religion can account for variation and subtle changes over time.

Ultimately, this research contributes to the study of cognitive anthropology and towards understanding how culture shapes well-being. This study shows that cultural consonance is an effective theory and methodology for understanding the association of cultural expectations,

psychosocial distress, and health. This research also demonstrates that while the theory is developed, it is capable of further growth through the analysis of cultural models in different contexts (e.g., the role of negative cultural models; constellations of models; changing models over time). Through this study, I have sought to develop a model that explains how multiple cultural models interact as they shape psychological health. My data indicate that Pentecostal religion inserts itself as a high-level schema, shaping the configurations and relationships of other, sub-order cognitive structures. Resulting from the value placed of this cultural domain, religion has the ability to influence the attributes and values of other models.

This dissertation illustrates how enculturation of certain high-level domains may subtly and not so subtly reconfigure and reshape more widely distributed models. Just as an architect remodels a house from the inside-out, some cultural models occupy a central position as secondary models reorganize around them. For example, the architect may rearrange a floor plan by making a kitchen the central area of the house rather than living room. Such a shift may not change the fundamental functions of the bedrooms or bathrooms, but it will alter the flow of people and the meanings ascribed to different spaces. Importantly, the structure as a whole is still recognizable and functional as a house. Similarly, the enculturation of certain religious models will alter how other models are used, valued, and enacted. Though a diverse Christian denomination, Pentecostals share many things in common with one another. In Brazil, these *crentes* value a personal relationship with God that invokes a "chosen" identity that mandates a separation (or at least a distancing) of themselves from a secular world which they view as corrupt. They do, however, also operate within the dominant cultural milieu and hold its associated cultural models. Indeed, it would be difficult to find a member of any religious group in Brazil who does not aspire to familial harmony and a comfortable material lifestyle. Rather,

for Pentecostals, these aspirations are tempered and subordinate to the demands and expectations placed upon them by their religious community. They do not cease to be Brazilians, they are simply Brazilians with a Pentecostal-flavored worldview.

The ability of highly valued cultural models to alter the interpretation and configuration of subordinate models can be roughly equated to the impact of ideology shaping worldviews. The prevalence of such impactful cultural models is arguably limited. Only very valued and therefore, powerful, systems of knowledge will reconfigure how other, priorly held knowledge is invoked and understood. Domains such as religion, politics, ethnic identity; certain rights of passage (e.g., military boot camp); material cultural innovations (e.g., birth control, the internet); and social configurations (e.g., free-market capitalism) can radically change how cultural models are cognitively perceived and enacted (see Robbins 2004; Swidler 1986; Steward 1972). Thus, while the number of such high-level organizing schemas may be limited in any cultural group—the patterns of ripple effects they have on other cultural domains are numerous. This research, through a mixed-methodological approach grounded in cognitive anthropological theory, offers a way to understand the cybernetic networks of cultural models; it offers an empirical approach towards understanding how multiple cultural domains relate to one another and how they are embodied in the behaviors, experiences, and psychologies of cultural-bearers.

Limitations of the Research

This research was designed to test the interaction of specific cultural domains between two religious congregations in a major urban area of Brazil. The conclusions and patterns elucidated from this research may not apply to other cultural domains or other Pentecostal populations. The interactions of alternative religious and secular cultural models, such as the comparison between the ideal Pentecostal male with the *machismo* ideal of larger society, will

undoubtedly exist in different configurations than those displayed here. Additionally, the similarities and differences between any Pentecostal denominations' models are shaped by the domain of focus, as well as by local specificities of the population and congregational leadership. I could have looked at other religious models that would have elicited greater disagreement between (and possibly within) Pentecostal churches. Similarly, *A Vida Completa* may take other forms in different contexts. I would be surprised if the model holds the same configuration in a Pentecostal community living in abject poverty within the shanty towns of northeastern Brazil. Future research must examine the role of specific political-economic structural conditions that shape specific cultural models.

Another constraint of this research concerns the sampling methodology. I relied on convenience and snowball sampling. As a result, my findings can only be extended to the active, core membership of the AD and IURD churches in Ribeirão Preto. The reason for this methodology was simple: (1) I wanted to elicit an authoritative viewpoint of the ideal Pentecostal life; and (2) I wanted to see how adherence to the model shaped health. Backsliders and occasional attendees may not have had the acquired knowledge of the model, nor would they necessarily value the model to the extent it exerts a significant effect on behavior and well-being as a form of *habitus*. Occasional attendees do make up an important part of the congregation and research that includes their understanding of religious domain is useful; however their incorporation in this study would have introduced a number of confounding variables (e.g., split religious allegiances, lower investment in religious community). Future research must develop a longitudinal study of religious model acquisition in order to understand how these models become high-level, organizing schemas in the minds of *crentes*. A study that focuses exclusively on backsliders would be similarly insightful: backsliders of various faiths report "guilt" for not

following certain religious models, even though they may not fully believe in the faith system or claim membership. The persistence of former cultural schemas could shed important light on how religion operates as a cognitive-cultural structure.

Additionally, I do not claim *A Vida Completa* to be *the* model of the ideal Pentecostal life. Rather, it is an approximation of a salient and shared model shared by my respondents. This is unfortunately a common misunderstanding of cultural domain analysis. *A Vida Completa* is more similar to a psychological test such as the Perceived Stress Scale. Just as the psychological questionnaire approximates stress through commonly associated experiences of stress, *A Vida Completa* approximates this shared cognitive-cultural construct through terms associated with the model. Through the methods employed in the cultural domain analysis, I am confident that I have captured the most important aspects of this domain. However, it is conceivable that a slightly different sample, at a different time or location could produce slightly altered results, such as the exclusion or inclusion of a few terms. As such, an attempt to replicate the various salient terms of the model is warranted.

There may be specific confounders that are correlated with religious consonance and influence well-being. This research has attempted to control for known correlates of psychological well-being, including socio-economic status and social support. Drug and alcohol abuse is one such confounder, but this is incorporated as part of *A Vida Completa,* given the behavioral taboos of these items within Pentecostal discourse. Stressful events throughout the lives of informants also shape current well-being. These events, such as those described in the Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale (Homes and Rahe 1967), were not explicitly tested given their similarities with aspects of the PSS, CESD, family life, and material lifestyle scales. However,

the robust findings of this study suggest that controlling for these effects would increase rather than decrease the correlation of religious consonance on psychological well-being.

Finally, a possible limitation of this study may be the encompassing nature of *A Vida Completa.* The model spans explicit aspects of religious life such as worship, blessings, and rituals; it includes interpersonal relationships such as friends and family; and it incorporates indicators of personal success and development such as having a satisfying job and an education. Nonetheless, models are often complex in nature, composed of many interlocking schemas and submodels. Further, as discussed prior, *crentes* do not conceive their faith as distinct from the world around them. They bring their religion to bear on many other aspects of the lives. My informants included all these terms under the rubric of the ideal Pentecostal life, because this is how they conceive of *A Vida Completa.*

Chapter Summary

This dissertation examines how religion shapes mental health. This research uniquely operationalizes religion as a constellation of cultural models. It identifies a specific religious model that influences psychological well-being alongside and together with secular models. As a result, my dissertation sheds new light on the religious marketplace of Brazil, the nature of the religion-health interaction, and how cultural consonance in a constellation of models is associated with health. Specifically, *A Vida Completa* moderates the influence of secular markers of status on psychological well-being. For Pentecostals, secular consonance carries less weight when one is perceived as not following the dictates of his/her faith. As religious consonance increases, mental health also improves. Importantly, secular consonance provides additional protection from stress, as successes within other spheres of life are interpreted as blessings received from living a righteous and godly lifestyle.

In many ways, this project expended much time and effort to show a culture-health interaction that most members, in their own religious experiences, already knew existed. The primary religious good of the Pentecostal faith is the promise of decreased psychological distress through the improvement of material, familial, and spiritual conditions. The testimonies of *crentes* overheard in the church and on the street corners and *praças*, or seen on televised sermons late at night, enculturates the public to Pentecostal cultural logic. Brazilians from many walks of life flock to the *Assembléia de Deus*, the *Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus*, and similar churches for what they view as a guarantee of relief from the "dis-ease" of their lives. Minimally, distance from the world offers neophytes the opportunity to create new identities and to gain new status that is not available in other cultural spheres. More optimistically, these Brazilians hope that their faith will provide them with the miraculous cures and blessings that will radically reshape their spiritual, emotional, and financial lives. Along these lines, I give one of my respondents the final word. Nicolas is a 40 year-old construction worker, who confides in me during an all-night prayer vigil. With *cachaça*-flavored breath and tears that mix of sadness, regret, and hope, he tells me:

> I destroyed my life. I lost my family and my job. All I do is drink. I earn money, and I immediately spend it on drink…I tried to stop. When I wake up I tell myself that I won't drink today. It happens every day. Today, when I arrived at my work, loading trucks, my friend gave me a bottle to drink with him in secret. I couldn't, I couldn't say no…I know it is destroying my life. I want to change. I hope, I believe that Jesus will do this. I heard that this church, from television, and people, changes people lives, can heal them, can make them have *a vida completa*. I need this. I need liberation from the devil and my demons. That is why I am here at this vigil. I know God can change my life.

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Appendix A:

Aggregate Pentecostal 1st Factor Answer Key

A Vida Completa items	Weighted average rank
God-fearing	6.71
Putting God before all things	7.52
Relationship with God	7.97
Baptized in the Holy Spirit	8.36
Baptized in water	10.33
Faithfulness/fidelity	10.77
Treating the body like God's temple	11.56
Reading and studying the Bible	11.58
Give tithes	12.04
Doing the works of God	13.29
Humility/humbleness	15.10
Evangelizing to others	15.34
To be saved	15.49
Loving thy neighbor	15.92
Giving sacrifices	16.80
Faith that God will resolve all problems	17.02
Helping others	17.63
Having a loving family	20.00
Feeling peace in one's life	20.66
Having one's family in the church	21.29
Liberated from demons	21.72
Avoiding worldly things	22.24
Never having sex outside of marriage	22.73
Being active in the church community	23.25
Happy with one's life	23.67
Receiving blessings of health and healing	23.81
Having a strong testimony	24.88
Never using drugs	27.11
Working hard	27.13
Education	27.27
Receiving blessings of prosperity	27.52
Material and economic prosperity	27.59

***A Vida Completa* items (cont.)**	**Weighted average rank**
Fighting against persecution	27.89
Never smoking	28.00
Never drinking	28.58
Having a good job	29.99
Good friends	30.55
Content with a simple, but comfortable lifestyle	30.67
Conquering/achieving the material life	30.70

Appendix B:

Scale of Religious Cultural Consonance/ *A Vida Completa*

Item	Item Mean from Survey Data[b,c]	Item-Total Correlation
I was baptized by immersion in water.	2.74	.12
I am saved by Christ.	2.85	.26
I am a God-fearing Christian.	2.81	.37
I put God before all the other things in my life.	2.71	.54
I treat my body like a temple of God, avoiding things spiritually and physically damaging as drugs, alcohol, and tobacco.	2.81	.42
Unlike Christ, sometimes I have trouble loving my neighbor.[a]	1.46	.48
I have faith that God will resolve all the problems in my life.	2.64	.29
Members of my family completely love each other.	1.93	.20
I always pay my tithe in full.	2.47	.47
I do not believe that success and financial prosperity are part of God's plan.[a]	2.03	.35
I feel a deep sense of peace and harmony in my life.	2.41	.31
All members of my family are saved by Christ.	1.78	.16
I feel that I am completely free from demons in my life.	2.66	.35
I like to consume movies, television, music, and other things considered "worldly" and do not directly strengthen my relationship with God.[a]	1.50	.28
I'm happy with having only enough prosperity to live a simple, but comfortable lifestyle.[a]	1.64	.16
Generally, I do not consider myself a humble person.[a]	1.98	.47
Weekly frequency of experiencing baptism in the Holy Spirit.	1.68	.57
Weekly frequency of reading and studying the Bible.	2.17	.51
Weekly frequency of giving offerings and sacrifices to the church.	1.67	.50
Weekly frequency of evangelizing to others about the faith.	1.70	.64
Weekly frequency of praying to God for blessings of health and healing.	2.47	.24

Scale of Religious Cultural Consonance/ *A Vida Completa* (cont.)

Item	Item Mean from Survey Data[b,c]	Item-Total Correlation
Weekly frequency of praying to God for blessings of prosperity.	2.36	.35
Weekly frequency of doing "God's work" such as volunteering time and services to the church.	1.63	.46
Weekly frequency of studying for personal development	1.64	.42
Weekly frequency of church attendance.	1.98	.49
How active are you considered in your church community?[d]	2.02	.50
What is the strength of your testimony?[e]	1.42	.49

a. These items were reversed in direction prior to scoring.
b. Responses for items 1-16 ranged from completely disagree (0) to completely agree (3).
c. Responses for items 17-25 ranged from *never* (0), to *almost everyday* (3).
d. This item was measured from *not active at all* (0) to *very active* (3).
e. This item was measured from *not strong at all* (0) to *very strong* (3).

Appendix C:

Phase II Questionnaire

A. Demografia

1. Idade_____2. Sexo: masc. _____ fem. _____3. Estado civil_____

4. Profissão_____ 5. Cor_____

6. Até que ano você frequentou a escola?

a. ( ) Nunca frequentou
b. ( ) Educação de jovens e adultos/mobral
c. ( ) Ensino fundamental 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8
d. ( ) Ensino medio 1 2 3
e. ( ) Ensino superior 1 2 3 4 5 6 [Completa? _____]

7. Por quanto tempo você estava nesta igreja? _____

B. Modelo de vida religiosa

Agora, gostaria de falar sobre as suas opinões sobre a sua fé. Vou ler a você uma afirmação, e só quero saber se você concorda ou discorda com esta afirmação.

	Discorda totalmente	Discorda	Concorda	Concorda totalmente
1. Fui batizado por imersão em água.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
2. Eu fui salvo por Cristo.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
3. Eu sou um cristão temente a Deus.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
4. Eu coloquei Deus na frente de todos as outros coisas na minha vida.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
5. Eu trato o meu corpo como um templo de Deus, evitando coisas espiritualmente e fisicamente prejudiciais como drogas, álcool e tabaco.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

	Discorda totalmente	Discorda	Concorda	Concorda totalmente
6. Ao contrário de Cristo, às vezes tenho dificuldade em amar meu próximo.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
7. Tenho fé que Deus vai resolver todos os problemas em minha vida.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
8. Membros da minha família amam completamente um ao outro.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
9. Eu sempre pago integralmente meu dízimo.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
10. Eu não acredito que o sucesso financeiro e prosperidade material é parte do plano de Deus para os fiéis.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
11. Eu sinto um profundo sentimento de paz e harmonia em minha vida.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
12. Todos da minha família foram salvos por Cristo.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
13. Sinto que fui completamente libertado de demônios em minha vida.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
14. Eu gosto de consumir filmes, televisão, música, e outras coisas secular que são considerados "mundanos" e não fortalece diretamente o meu relacionamento com Deus.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
15. Estou contente com ter apenas conforto material suficiente para viver uma vida simples, mas confortável.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
16. Geralmente eu não me considero uma pessoa humilde.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

Por favor, fale-me sobre quantas vezes você fez isso durante o mês passado.

	Nunca	Duas/três vezes por mês	Duas/três vezes por semana	Quase todo dia
17. Experimentou batismo no Espírito Santo?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
18. Leu e estudo a Bíblia?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
19. Deu oferendas e sacrifícios para a igreja?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
20. Evangelizou e falou com não-evangélicos sobre a sua fé?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
21. Orou a Deus pelas bênçãos de saúde e cura?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
22. Orou a Deus pelas 23. bênçãos da prosperidade?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
24. Foi "obra de Deus", como voluntariado tempo e serviços para sua igreja?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
24 . Estudar para se desenvolver -pessoalmente?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
25. Passar um tempo só descansando?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
26. Praticar esportes?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
27. Conversar com amigos só pelo prazer?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
28. Ler só pelo prazer?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
29. Usar o internet?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

Por favor, responda às seguintes perguntas:

30. Sobre suas finanças, como você classificaria a sua situação financeira?	Ruim	Boa	Muito boa	Excelente
	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

31. Ao longo do próximo ano, você acha que a situação financeira sua e de sua família vai ser:	Muito pior	Pior	Melhor	Muito melhor
	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

32. Em média, quantas vezes por semana você assiste cultos ou outros eventos em sua igreja?	Nunca	1-2	3-5	6 ou mais
	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

33. Em geral, quanto ativo você se considera em sua comunidade da igreja?	Não ativo	Um pouco ativo	Ativo	Muito ativo
	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

34. Em uma escala de 1-10, com 10 a ser mais forte, onde você classificaria a força de sua fé?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Mais fraca									Mais forte

C. Estresse percebido:

Agora eu tenho um novo grupo de questões sobre algumas coisas que pode acontecer na vida de uma pessoa. Por favor, fale-me sobre quantas vezes você sentiu isso durante o mês passado.

Durante o mês passado, com que frequência:	Nunca	Uma vez por semana	Duas/três vezes por semana	Quase todo dia
1. Você se sentiu sem controle sobre importantes acontecimentos de sua vida?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
2. Você sentiu que estava realmente conseguindo importantes mudanças em sua vida?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
3. Você sentiu com capacidade de controlar sua vida?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
4. Você sentiu confiança em lidar com seus problemas?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
5. Você sentiu que as coisas tomaram o rumo que você pretendia para elas?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

	Nunca	Uma vez por semana	Duas/três vezes por semana	Quase todo dia
6. Você foi capaz de resolver as coisas que te preocupavam?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
7. Você sentiu que havia muitos problemas, que você não podia resolver?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
8. Você foi capaz de controlar o modo como você usou seu tempo?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
9. Você se sentiu nervoso, com estafa. (cansado, irritado)?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
10. Você se sentiu zangado porque aconteceram coisas que você não pode controlar?	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

D. Saúde

Agora quero perguntar algumas questões muito similar às outras, mas questões relacionadas a sua ultima semana.

Durante a semana passada:	Raramente (< de 1 dia)	Pouco tempo (1-2 dias)	Um tempo moderado (3-4 dias)	A maior parte do tempo (5-7 dias)
1. Senti-me incomodado com coisas que habitualmente não me incomodam.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
2. Não tive vontade de comer, tive pouco apetite.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
3. Senti não conseguir melhorar meu estado de ânimo mesmo com a ajuda de familiares e amigos.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
4. Senti-me, comparando-me às outras pessoas, tendo tanto valor quanto a maioria delas.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
5. Senti dificuldade em me concentrar no que estava fazendo.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
6. Senti-me deprimido.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

	Raramente (< de 1 dia)	Pouco tempo (1-2 dias)	Um tempo moderado (3-4 dias)	A maior parte do tempo (5-7 dias)
7. Senti que tive que fazer esforço para dar conta das minhas tarefas habituais.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
8. Senti-me otimista com relação ao futuro.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
9. Considerei que minha vida tinha sido um fracasso.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
10. Senti-me amedrontado.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
11. Meu sono não foi repousante.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
12. Estive feliz.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
13. Falei menos que habitual.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
14. Senti-me sozinho.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
15. As pessoas não foram amistosas comigo.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
16. Aproveitei minha vida.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
17. Tive crises de choro.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
18. Senti-me triste.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
19. Senti que as pessoas não gostavam de mim.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
20. Não consegui levar adiante minhas coisas.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

E. Estilo de vida

Agora, eu gostaria de perguntar sobre aspetos do seu estilo de vida. Dos seguintes objetos, quais você possui?

1. máquina de lavar roupas_____
2. carro_____
3. acesso à internet_____
4. fogão_____
5. TV_____
6. sofá e poltronas_____
7. mesa e cadeiras_____
8. casa própria_____
9. computador_____
10. geladeira_____
11. telefone fixo_____

F. Vida familiar

Agora, gostaria de falar sobre as suas opinões sobre a sua família. Vou ler a você uma afirmação, e só quero saber se você concorda ou discorda com esta afirmação.

	Discorda totalmente	Discorda	Concorda	Concorda totalmente
1. Na minha família, nós nos sentimos próximos uns dos outros.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
2. Às vezes eu desejo que a minha família seja organizada.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
3. Às vezes, quando eu preciso, não tenho ajuda para resolver os problemas.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
4. As pessoas na minha família são trabalhadoras.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
5. Às vezes evitamos uns aos outros.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
6. Às vezes, eu desejo que em minha família poderiamos sentir mais amor uns aos outros.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
7. Nós somos tão bem ajustados como qualquer família poderia ser.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

	Discorda totalmente	Discorda	Concorda	Concorda totalmente
8. Quando eu faço alguma coisa, eu faço o que eu quero sem pensar na família.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
9. Eu acho que a minha família faz críticas demais.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
10. Minha família enfrenta os problemas com firmeza.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
11. Normalmente minha família é uma família alegre.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
12. Eu e minha família nos entendemos completamente.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
13. Nós nos ajudamos a lidar com os nossos problemas quando eles aparecem.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
14. Nós não temos tempo para ouvir uns aos outros.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
15. Às vezes, parece que não temos respeito suficiente na família.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
16. Eu posso conversar de coisas importantes com a minha família.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
17. Nós nos sentimos amados na nossa família.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____
18. Às vezes eu desejo que minha família não brigue tanto.	0_____	1_____	2_____	3_____

G. Religiosidade

Agora eu tenho um novo grupo de questões sobre o seu ponto de vista sobre a religião. Durante o ano passado:

1. Com que freqüência você foi a uma igreja, templo ou outro encontro religioso?
    0. _____Nunca
    1. _____Uma vez por ano ou menos
    2. _____Algumas vezes por ano
    3. _____Duas a três vezes por mês
    4. _____Uma vez por semana
    5. _____Mais do que uma vez por semana

2. Com que freqüência você dedica o seu tempo às atividades religiosas individuais, como preces, rezas, meditações, leitura da bíblia ou de outros textos religiosos?
    0. _____Raramente ou nunca
    1. _____Poucas vezes por mês
    2. _____Uma vez por semana
    3. _____Duas ou mais vezes por semana
    4. _____Diariamente
    5. _____Mais do que uma vez ao dia

A seção seguinte contém três frases a respeito de crenças ou experiências religiosas. Por favor, anote o quanto cada frase se aplica a você.

3. Em minha vida, eu sinto a presença de Deus (ou do Espírito Santo).
    0. _____Não é verdade
    1. _____Em geral não é verdade
    2. _____Não estou certo
    3. _____Em geral é verdade
    4. _____Totalmente verdade para mim

4. As minhas crenças religiosas estão realmente por trás de toda a minha maneira de viver.
    0. _____Não é verdade
    1. _____Em geral não é verdade
    2. _____Não estou certo
    3. _____Em geral é verdade
    4. _____Totalmente verdade para mim

5. Eu me esforço muito para viver a minha religião em todos os aspectos da vida.
    0. _____Não é verdade
    1. _____Em geral não é verdade
    2. _____Não estou certo
    3. _____Em geral é verdade
    4. _____Totalmente verdade para mim

H. Escala de Experiências Espirituais Diárias

A lista a seguir inclui itens com assuntos que você pode ou não ter experiência com eles. Por favor, reponda, com que frequência você tem essas experiências, e tente não levar em conta se você acha que deveria ou não ter essas experiênicas.

	Muitas vezes por dia	Todos os dias	A maioria dos dias	Alguns dias	De vez em quando	Nunca ou quase nunca
1. Eu sinto a presença de Deus.						
2. Eu sinto uma conexão com tudo o que é vida.						
3. Durante um culto religioso ou em outros momentos quando estou em conexão com Deus, eu sinto uma alegria que me tira das preocupações diárias.						
4. Eu encontro forças na minha religião ou espiritualidade.						
5. Eu encontro conforto na minha religião ou espiritualidade						
6. Eu sinto profunda paz interior ou harmonia.						
7. Eu peço a ajuda de Deus durante as atividades diárias.						
8. Eu me sinto guiado por Deus durante as atividades diárias.						
9. Eu sinto diretamente o amor de Deus por mim.						
10. Eu sinto o amor de Deus por mim, através dos outros.						
11. A beleza da criação me toca espiritualmente.						
12. Eu me sinto agradecido pelas bênçãos recebidas.						
13. Eu sinto carinho desinteressado pelos outros.						
14. Eu aceito os outros mesmo quando eles fazem coisas que eu acho que são erradas.						
15. Eu desejo estar mais próximo de Deus ou em união com o divino.						

	Nada próximo	Um pouco próximo	Muito próximo	Tão próximo quanto possível
16. Em geral, quanto você se sente perto de Deus?				

I. Apoio Social

1. Quantas pessoas você tem por perto que você poderia facilmente contar com a ajuda real em tempos de angústia ou dificuldade, como por exemplo, vigiar animais de estimação ou crianças, dar passeios em lojas ou visitas em hospitais, ou ajuda-lo caso você adoeça?

___0 ___1 ___2-5 ___6-9 ___10 ou mais

J. Renda familiar

1. Renda mensal aproximada do chefe de casa:

0 a 1 salários mínimos ( )
1 a 2 salários mínimos ( )
2 a 3 salários mínimos ( )
3 a 4 salários mínimos ( )
4 a 5 salários mínimos ( )
5 a 6 salários mínimos ( )
6 a 7 salários mínimos ( )
7 a 8 salários mínimos ( )
8 a 9 salários mínimos ( )
10 a 11 salários mínimos ( )
12 a 13 salários mínimos ( )
14 a 15 salários mínimos ( )
16 a 17 salários mínimos ( )
mais de 18 salários mínimos ( )

2. Renda mensal aproximada da família:

0 a 1 salários mínimos ( )
1 a 2 salários mínimos ( )
2 a 3 salários mínimos ( )
3 a 4 salários mínimos ( )
4 a 5 salários mínimos ( )
5 a 6 salários mínimos ( )
6 a 7 salários mínimos ( )
7 a 8 salários mínimos ( )
8 a 9 salários mínimos ( )
10 a 11 salários mínimos ( )
12 a 13 salários mínimos ( )
14 a 15 salários mínimos ( )
16 a 17 salários mínimos ( )
mais de 18 salários mínimos ( )

K. Saúde do corpo

1. Altura_____ 2. Peso_____ 3. Pressão Arterial 1._____/_____

2.____ /_____

3.____ /_____

Appendix D: IRB Approval

Office of Research

Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects

THE UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA

R E S E A R C H

September 18, 2012

Henri Dengah, II
Department of Anthropology
College of Arts & Sciences
Box 870210

Re: IRB#: 10-OR-299-R2 "Religiosity, Cultural Consonance and Well-Being in Brazil. A Study of Cultural Models and Health among Brazilian Pentecostals"

Dear Mr. Dengah:

The University of Alabama Institutional Review Board has granted approval for your renewal application.

Your protocol has been given expedited approval according to 45 CFR part 46. Approval has been given under expedited review category 7 as outlined below:

(7) Research on individual or group characteristics or behavior (including, but not limited to, research on perception, cognition, motivation, identity, language, communication, cultural beliefs or practices, and social behavior) or research employing survey, interview, oral history, focus group, program evaluation, human factors evaluation, or quality assurance methodologies.

Your application will expire on September 17, 2013. If your research will continue beyond this date, complete the relevant portions of the IRB Renewal Application. If you wish to modify the application, complete the Modification of an Approved Protocol Form. Changes in this study cannot be initiated without IRB approval, except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to participants. When the study closes, complete the appropriate portions of the IRB Request for Study Closure Form.

Should you need to submit any further correspondence regarding this proposal, please include the above application number.

Good luck with your research.

Sincerely,

Carpantate T. Myles, MSM, CIM
Director & Research Compliance Officer
Office of Research Compliance
The University of Alabama

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