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REVITALIZATION AND THE CHURCH
A Study of the Renewal Movement in the Sixth Conference of
the Brazilian Methodist Church.

A Dissertation

Presented to the Faculty of

The E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism

Asbury Theological Seminary

in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirement for the Degree of

Doctor of Missiology

by

João Carlos Lopes

October 1989

To
My wife Audir,
My sons: João Paulo and Pedro Henrique
and
My parents: João Lopes and Lázara das Dores

REVITALIZATION AND THE CHURCH

A Study of the Renewal Movement in the Sixth Conference of the Brazilian Methodist Church

João Carlos Lopes, E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism, Asbury Theological Seminary, Doctor of Missiology 1989.

ABSTRACT

This dissertation is an analysis of the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference of the Brazilian Methodist Church, which began in 1976 and has brought significant changes to the churches in that conference. The history of the Methodist Church in Brazil is described and analyzed in order to understand the context which gave rise to this renewal movement.

Using Anthony F. C. Wallace's (1956) anthropological model of revitalization, I seek to understand the dynamics of this movement. This then enables one to address two questions that are raised today by Methodists in Brazil: (1) Why do some people perceive the movement positively, while others view it negatively? (2) Contrary to what one would expect, why has the movement not broken away from the national church?

The study concludes that the "code" of this revitalization movement, namely, its theology of life and ministry, differs significantly from what has been traditionally understood has a proper Methodist identity in Brazil. Nevertheless, the movement has remained within the larger Methodist Church primarily because the "prophet" of the movement was surprisingly elected bishop of the conference; therefore, while his experience links him to the movement, his position links him to the national church.

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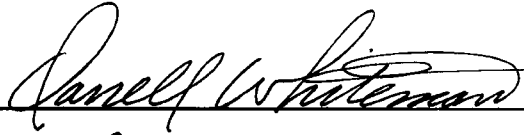
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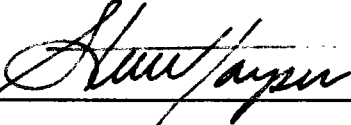
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E. Stanley Jones School of World Mission and Evangelism
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To God be the Glory.

CHAPTER 1

The Study of Religious Change

A. Introduction

It was a Sunday morning in May of 1976. The "Weekend of Evangelism and Revival" at the Central Methodist Church in Londrina, Southern Brazil, was in its third and last day. The guest speaker, Rev. Moises Morais, had been talking about the extreme importance of letting the Spirit of God take complete control of one's life. Throughout that weekend many people had accepted the challenge of recommitting their lives to God. But on Sunday morning a surprising event took place. During the service, while the guest speaker was still ministering to the church, the local pastor, Rev. Richard Santos Canfield, left the pew and walked down toward the altar. He wanted to address the church in order to share the great spiritual battle that was taking place in his heart. As he tried to do so, Canfield was taken by a feeling of weakness and literally fell down at the altar. Many people surrounded him in a mixture of prayer and words of praise. Some twenty minutes later, when Rev. Canfield left the altar, "he was a different person" (A. de Oliveira 1989). Canfield (1989) talks about the results of his experience:

After that experience which I cannot quite describe, my ministry changed completely. It was a very impressive thing. I began to preach and people were converted. My ministry began to bear fruit as never before. It surprised me because I was preaching in the same way I used to preach before. But I became open to the work of the Spirit and things began to happen.

Canfield's experience was a turning point in the history of the Sixth Conference. It marked the end of an era of stagnation and the beginning of a new era of great dynamism.

Even though the process that brought about that event began long before 1976,¹ that morning is popularly recognized as the beginning of a renewal movement which began in the city of Londrina and spread throughout the Sixth Conference of the Brazilian Methodist Church. That movement has given the Sixth Conference some unique characteristics as compared to the other conferences of that church.² One of the characteristics is its numerical growth. While the Methodist Church in Brazil as a whole is growing at a rate of two percent a year, the Sixth Conference is experiencing a steady growth rate of between six and seven percent a year.³ That growth is a result of an increasing emphasis on evangelism and church planting. Another characteristic is the style of worship. Since 1976 the worship services in the congregations throughout the Sixth Conference have become more participatory, exciting

and alive. The worship sessions can last for two hours without the people getting bored or tired. The order of service is flexible and there is plenty of room for spontaneous expressions of joy and praise, such as hand clapping and hand raising. A more popular hymnology has been developed by the young people, new songs -- many of them based on Scripture -- have been composed, and new tunes have been set to familiar hymns. The singing in the congregations has become more alive, and instruments, such as drums and guitars, which are very integral to Latin American culture, are now being used in the worship services as well as in other meetings.

However, talking to various members of the Brazilian Methodist Church, one will notice that there are at least two different interpretations of the relevance of that renewal movement: 1) Most members of the Sixth Conference recognize the movement as relevant and as being a response to a situation of stagnation experienced by the Methodist Church throughout the country. 2) A large number of people (especially leaders) of other conferences view the movement as something alien to the identity of the Methodist Church in Brazil.

Despite these different opinions, the fact is that, unlike those examples in the more distant past (in the Methodist Church as well as in other

Brazilian denominations),⁴ no split has been caused by that movement in its thirteen years of existence. On the contrary, it has remained within the established Brazilian Methodist structure and it has apparently had a positive influence in the life of that church even at the national level.⁵

B. Statement of the Problem:

The Sixth Conference has obviously experienced tremendous change. As I think about these changes, many questions come to my mind. For example, what were the conditions and factors that brought about the renewal movement? Why were people willing to change their traditional view of religion? How did the movement spread throughout the conference? How strong is the movement today? What were the new elements brought about by the movement? How relevant has the movement been to the Methodist community in Brazil? Throughout this study I intend to find answers to these questions. But there are two basic questions that are the primary concern of this study:

1. Why do people have such different perceptions of that renewal movement?
2. Why hasn't the movement broken away from the national church?

My interest in the first question is personal. I am a clergy member of

the Brazilian Methodist Church in general and of the Sixth Conference in particular. The different perceptions of that renewal movement have created some tension among the leaders within the national church. Understanding the reason for the different opinions can certainly help us to overcome that tension.

The second question is an important one because the tendency of most renewal movements is to break away as soon as resistance is found. I believe that the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference is an important example of resistance to the temptation of division so common in Christian movements today (cf. Barrett 1968).

The above questions are foundational in formulating the following theses in this study:

1. The different perceptions could be related to a "conflict of codes."⁶ In other words, the code (theology of life and ministry) developed by the leaders of the Sixth Conference as a means for achieving revitalization has been perceived by the leaders of other conferences as being in conflict with the code under which the Methodist Church as a whole has functioned in the country since its beginning.

2. The leader of the movement is also the bishop of the conference.

Therefore, while his experience links him with the movement, his position

links him with the national church. That may have been an important factor in avoiding a break-away situation.

C. Theoretical Framework

1. Religious Change as a Part of Socio-Cultural Change:

We must not assume that we can really study religious change in isolation from society and culture. Religions are part of larger socio-cultural systems and, therefore, religious changes affect people's relationships with the rest of the system and vice-versa. To study religious change is, consequently, to study a specific aspect of social change (Lessa and Vogt 1972:261).

Social change is the result of any modification of customs, values, modes of thinking or acting in a society. As existing values and institutional terms of reference are re-shaped, new traditions and patterns of behavior are formed. According to missiologist Richard L. Schwenk (1972:497), social change is "an inevitable process characteristic of all societies and cultures."

Like other aspects of culture, religious systems are constantly changing. Anthropologists have become interested in the subject of religious change because, according to Lessa and Vogt (1972:496),

"changes in the religious sphere have given us some of our most important data and insights on the general processes of culture change."

According to missiologist Alan Tippett (1987:60), "there probably never has been such a period in history when such a large percentage of the world's people have been so open for religious change." This current mood for religious change can be seen in the more than ten thousand new churches that have emerged all over Africa (Barrett 1968, Hayward 1963, Murere 1976), the thousands of cargo cults and prophetic movements that have risen in New Guinea and Oceania (Flannery 1983, 1984, Whiteman 1984a, Burrige 1969), the hundreds of new religions that have appeared in Japan and the Philippines since the Second World War (Kitagawa and Miller 1968, Thomsen 1963, Elwood 1967), and the scores of religious movements that have been recorded in South America (COMIBAM 1987), North America (Cohen 1975, Towns 1973), and Asia (Spencer 1971).

As I look at various models of religious change, it seems to me that Anthony Wallace's (1956) anthropological model of revitalization movements, in combination with Homer G. Barnett's (1953) theory of innovation, can provide a useful framework for examining and understanding the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference within the larger context of the Brazilian Methodist Church.

The value of the use of specific models in the study of religious change lies in the fact that they provide for consideration of aspects which might easily be ignored. They also offer a basis for the comparison of the specific movement under study with other movements which occurred in apparently different circumstances.⁷

2. The Revitalization Model:

Anthony Wallace's revitalization concept first appeared in the American Anthropologist for April, 1956 (pp.264-281). Since then, it has been frequently quoted in socio-anthropological writings and, most recently, in church growth and missiology as well. The missiologist Alan Tippett (1987:179) says that "although I certainly do not accept all of Wallace's ideas on religion, I consider him one of the most important theorists in the area of religious change today." In his book *Church Growth and the Word of God* (1970), Tippett discusses organic church growth in terms of Wallace's concept of revitalization. The Presbyterian missiologist Paul B. Long (1981) has also made extensive use of Wallace's concept as a theoretical approach to evaluating the historical events in the growth of Presbyterianism in Brazil. Some other writers, such as Kasdorf (1980), have used this concept for analyzing conversion

movements. Kasdorf (1980:123) has found Wallace's model helpful in the task of delineating "the Christianization process or conversion of pre-Christian pagans." Still other writers, such as Ramseyer (1970), have found Wallace's concept useful for examining and understanding new religious movements. Ramseyer has used that concept as the theoretical framework of his study of the early stages of the Biblical Anabaptist (Mennonite) movement in Switzerland and Germany between 1525 and 1560.

Wallace (1956, 1964, 1966, 1973) believes that both the process of religious change and the process of cultural change follow the same basic pattern. The attempts at the reform of whole cultural systems or substantial portions of them are always characterized by a uniform process which he calls "revitalization" (1956:265). Nativistic movements, reform movements, cargo cults, religious revivals, messianic movements, sect formations, all go through that same basic process which Wallace (1956:279) defines as "a deliberate, organized, conscious effort by members of a society to construct a more satisfying culture." At least three factors are present in the persons involved in the process of revitalization: 1) the perception of their culture as a system, 2) dissatisfaction with that system, and 3) an organized effort to change that

system.

Wallace contends that, although the general content of revitalization movements varies from case to case, the basic course of such movements follows a very uniform program. Revitalization processes share a common structure, consisting of the following five stages which, despite being temporarily overlapping, are functionally distinct:

a. Steady State:

Even though changes take place during the steady state, it is a period of equilibrium when things are in balance. Changes are slow and easily assimilated. They don't disturb the steady state and don't create strong needs that can't be met.

b. Period of Increased Individual Stress:

This period emerges as a result of the system's decreasing ability to deal effectively with existing needs. The cause of this decreasing efficiency of certain cultural stress-reduction techniques may come from many different sources such as economic distress and pressure toward acculturation. Consideration of a substitute way, such as, for instance, a family considering leaving a region or a country which is in economic decline, serves only to increase stress because it arouses anxiety. During this period, individual behavior becomes more egotistic. Society is moving

toward instability and disintegration.

c. Period of Cultural Distortion:

This is a period of continuous decline in organization as the failure of the attempt to reduce stress adequately becomes more and more obvious. When an individual's identity is unsatisfactory, religion provides a ritual to which he may turn in order to achieve salvation. Wallace (1966:157) argues that a crisis comparable to an individual's identity crisis may occur in an entire community. Some members of the society adopt socially disfunctional expedients, such as alcoholism, gambling for gain, "black market," and using or dealing in drugs, as attempts to restore personal equilibrium. Those individual deviances become almost institutionalized efforts to overcome the evil effects of the system. "The symptoms of anxiety over the loss of a meaningful way of life become evident: disillusionment with the mazeway,⁸ and apathy toward problems of adaptation set in" (Wallace 1956: 266).

This period of disorganization sets the stage for the period of revitalization, a period of mazeway reformulation from which the new social institution which relieves the stress emerges. According to Tippet (1987:140), "many of the independent churches of Africa are, in point of fact, revitalization movements, and also Cargo Cults if they bring about a

new steady state and relieve the stress."

d. Period of Revitalization:

The period of revitalization includes the following six functions:

(1) Formulation of a Code (or "mazeway reformulation"):

An individual, or a group of individuals, constructs a new utopian image of socio-cultural organization. It is a kind of blue print of an ideal society against which the existing culture will be contrasted. Specific sets of activities, rituals, and procedures, either primarily political or primarily religious are developed. The final goal is to transform the existing culture into that ideal culture. In a flow chart, it would look like this:

EXISTING CULTURE --- TRANSFER CULTURE --- UTOPIAN CULTURE

The transfer culture is the system of operations that need to be carried out in the process of transformation.

The idea of the formulation of a code may come to the individual ("formulator") in an abrupt and dramatic occasion, a moment of insight and revelation. The source of the revelation is very often regarded as a supernatural being.

(2) Communication:

The formulator of the code communicates it to others. The code is presented as a means of "salvation" for both the individual and the society.

The goal of the communication is, of course, to make converts. As the formulator gathers disciples around him/her, those disciples will take the responsibility to communicate the code to others.

(3) Organization:

As the group of converts increases, "an embryonic campaign organization develops with three orders of personnel: the prophet; the disciples; and the followers" (Wallace 1956:170).

An important factor here is the formulator's use of charisma. The success of the organization will be directly related to the leader's ability to distribute leadership power among his disciples who work under the higher leadership of the formulator and who are accountable to him/her. Although organization is obviously very critical, it is not the most important factor in the process of revitalization.

(4) Adaptation:

Any innovative, transforming movement will face opposition and resistance from those interested in either maintaining or only moderately reforming the *status quo*, thus necessitating the use of a variety of strategies to minimize objections. The formulator and his/her disciples usually respond to those resisters by making some adaptations to the code. It happens especially because the opposition tends to help the movement

by pointing out its inconsistencies, inadequacies, predictive failures and ambiguities.

(5) Cultural Transformation:

Cultural transformation happens whenever the movement is able to capture the allegiance of a substantial proportion of a local population (without destructive coercion). Only then can the "transfer culture" be put into action. If their allegiance is successfully captured, the symptoms of anomie will decline and the cultural distortion will disappear.

Revitalization movements can not be pressured on people. Therefore, in order to capture the allegiance of the majority of the people in a certain society, the movement must have inner attraction. This is why the charisma of the founder is generally so crucial to the success of a revitalization movement.

(6) Routinization:

When the transfer culture is fully operating, the functional reasons for the movement's existence as an innovative force disappear, and it begins to lose its innovative and revolutionary characteristics.

Consequently, the movement's function tends to shift from the role of innovation to the role of maintenance, and its charismatic tendencies tend to decrease.

e. New Steady State:

While the transitional stages can best be characterized by instability, the new steady state is characterized by routinization and stability. The culture of this state will likely differ in pattern and structure, traits and organizational operation from the earlier steady state (Wallace 1966: 160).

If the new religious movement is successful, it produces, in effect, a new conservatism. Thus, according to Wallace (1966:36), "in the revitalization model, the religious institutions of a society are seen as passing more or less regularly, over the generations, through a cycle of revitalization, stabilization, and decline."

In sum, Wallace's model begins with a steady state, a period of dynamic equilibrium. As time goes by, the equilibrium is disturbed by increased individual stress that soon becomes a period of real cultural distortion, "a general stress situation for the whole communal group" (Tippett 1987: 180). In a situation like that, unless the process of revitalization begins to take place, the society (or church) is ready to die. The revitalization process -- *formulation of a code, communication, organization, adaptation, cultural transformation and routinization* -- is required to save the social group from disintegrating or being absorbed by some other group. The revitalization process

restores the social group to a new steady state of dynamic equilibrium.

According to Tippet (1987:182), the new steady state has something new in it -- maybe a reform, or a new element of worship, or a new program, or maybe only the fact that the felt needs of the group are now met in a more satisfactory manner.

3. Revitalization and Leadership:

As one studies the dynamics of religious change, the issue of leadership must not be ignored. The first critical point of Wallace's theory of revitalization for a society going through cultural distortion is the formulation of a "new code." This code is formulated by "an individual, or a group of individuals" and "not infrequently the code, or the core of it, is formulated by one individual in the course of a hallucinatory revelation" (1964:148). While hallucinatory revelations are apt to be found in religiously oriented movements, non-hallucinatory input is the kind of formulation more likely to be found in politically oriented movements. In either case, the formulation of the new code is necessary and the role of the formulators (or leaders) is fundamental.

The missiologist Eugene Nida (1960:148) makes an important point about leadership in the process of religious change. He suggests that the

success of any religious movement is directly related to how indigenous⁹ its leadership is. While agreeing with Wallace's emphasis upon the importance of the leader in the process of religious change, Nida also helps us to discern the kind of leadership that will really help to bring about relevant and long-lasting change. Kietzman (1954:74) supports Nida's viewpoint by suggesting that "change is almost always initiated by someone within the cultural community. Even though the idea may have been sparked by contact with another culture, it still must be introduced from within to be accepted." In chapter 6 of this study, we will see the importance of this insight for understanding the process of revitalization in the Sixth Conference.

The anthropologist Darrell Whiteman (1984a:74) has also worked with Wallace's revitalization model and suggests that it is one of the most helpful models for "understanding the cultural dynamics that underlie religious movements." Whiteman also helps us to clarify the role of charismatic leaders in religious movements. He says:

...religious movements do not suddenly appear in response to a prophet with charismatic leadership. An event or a prophet may be the catalyst that activates or stimulates a movement and makes it manifest, but seldom, if ever, do they cause it. Rather, religious movements are responses to deeply felt needs which have often been building up for many years, if not for several generations. There are often many antecedent conditions that prepare the soil in which

a movement will grow. (1984a:74-75)

4. Revitalization and the "Felt Needs" Concept:

While addressing the issue of revitalization and leadership, Whiteman brings up another important issue that I will be dealing with as I seek to understand the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference: the issue of "felt needs." Religious change in general and revitalization movements in particular are directly related to the concept of felt needs. They seek to provide hope, comfort, and liberation for people who perceive that their needs are not being met by a present social and/or religious structure. Smalley (1957:233) has suggested that "cultural change comes only as an expression of a need felt by individuals within a society. People do not change their behavior unless they feel a need to do so." Even though the need may be unconscious in the sense that people have not analyzed it or given it a name, it has the power to motivate behavior.

The rituals and myths of a new religious movement during the revitalization phase are usually closely and consciously relevant to the real functional needs of the society. Therefore, break-away movements are usually the result of frustrated attempts to revitalize traditional, irrelevant institutions. But, like everything else, people's needs also change and the rituals and myths of a new religious movement gradually lose their appeal

and eventually function only as a conservative influence. Thus, if a revitalization movement is to be kept alive, the leaders must be acutely aware of the changing character of people's needs.

As we have seen, the issues of leadership, indigeneity, and felt needs can not be ignored as one deals with Wallace's revitalization model. Neither can those issues be ignored as I seek to understand the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference.

5. The Theory of Innovation:

Though Wallace's revitalization model will be the primary theoretical framework for my analysis of the Sixth Conference's renewal movement, I believe that Wallace's model can be enriched when used in combination with the theory of innovation as expounded by Homer Barnett (1953). Alan Tippett (1987) has made use of that kind of combination. He says that Barnett and Wallace are:

...deep researchers who have pondered the nature of the innovative process and the stress situation (and) have revealed to us what we know of the dynamics of social and religious change in periods of stress and population mobility. (1987: 255)

People in the field of applied anthropology have written extensively on innovation and the acceptance of and/or resistance to new ideas. In his study of innovation as the basis of cultural change, Barnett (1953:7)

defines an innovation as "any thought, behavior, or thing that is new because it is qualitatively different from existing forms." We notice that he places the emphasis upon qualitative difference as opposed to quantitative difference. Innovation does not occur by the mere addition of new elements. It occurs rather by the recombination of parts. And the result of that recombination should be a new pattern, distinctly different from a previous pattern.¹⁰ Whiteman (1983:26) says that "innovation is a recombination, not something emerging from nothing."

As far as the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference is concerned, the "new code" developed by the leaders as a means to achieve revitalization was, of course, a set of new ideas, resulting from the recombination of many elements related to the tradition of the Methodist Church in Brazil -- biblical doctrines and cultural characteristics of the people. This "new code" needed to be somehow communicated to the rest of the conference. Here is the point where I see Wallace's revitalization model and Barnett's theory of innovation strongly relating to each other.

The "communication of the new code" is nothing more than the diffusion of an innovation that may be either accepted or rejected by the people. If it is important to understand the nature of innovations, it is also important to understand how innovations are communicated. According

to missiologist Hans Kasdorf (1980:130), the "prophet-leader" is the innovator who "communicates his experience to others who become his disciples and in turn tell still others. The content of their story is determined by their leader's experience."

In his study of the diffusion of innovations, Everett Rogers (1983:18) has suggested that "the transfer of ideas occurs most frequently between two individuals who are alike, similar or homophilous." People tend to make their decisions about accepting or rejecting a new idea on the basis of both their own individual experiences and the observed experiences of people they trust. Therefore, the more the change agent is like the people, the greater are the chances for the innovation to be successful. And if the advocate of change is someone from outside the society, it is important to remember that the individual members of the recipient society are the ones who make the decision to innovate and accept, modify or reject the proposed change.

In dealing with innovation, we must remember that societies reach a point in time that is propitious for major change. According to Tippet (1987:255), "great religious change tends to come when people are ready for it." If we take the Sixth Conference's renewal movement as an example, Rev. Canfield's experience could have been just an individual,

isolated experience had not the local church of Londrina and the Conference as a whole been ready for change. Tippett (1987:222) has said that "great social, political and religious changes are more the result of developing situations than single events." In other words, there are preliminary factors which make religious change possible. It is therefore important to view the context of stagnation of the Sixth Conference as a precursor to its revitalization in the form of a renewal movement.¹¹

D. Methodology

I have used two basic methods of collecting data for carrying out my research: (1) ethnohistory and, (2) interviewing.

1. Ethnohistory:

a. Definition:

Carmarck (1972:232) has defined ethnohistory as "a special set of techniques and methods for studying culture through the use of written and oral traditions." According to Sturtevant (1966), that method has three distinct features: (1) a focus on the past condition of a culture, (2) the utilization of oral or written tradition, and (3) an analysis of changes over time.

According to Whiteman (1986:28-30), it is possible to learn much

about the development of a church in a specific culture by looking at documents, such as: (1) written records and official reports, (2) people's formal letters to friends, (3) documents created by the workers, i.e. records for their own use, such as statistics, (4) personal documents, such as informal letters to family and friends, personal diaries and private journals, (5) lesson books, and catechisms.

In some cases, those kinds of documents are the only sources of information about past events. Of course, in the case of the renewal movement which I am analyzing, most participants were still available for interview. Even so, the published and unpublished documents have provided useful complementary information.

I have also been able to study some informal and formal letters which have been made available to me by some of the interviewees. Those letters have helped me to see the events that have been taking place in the Sixth Conference from a perspective that was not available to me through the study of official church documents. The documents have been particularly useful in those parts of my study dealing with statistics, as well as with official decisions related to the philosophy of work within the Brazilian Methodist Church.

b. Limitations of the Ethnohistorical Method:

Generally speaking, documents may be limited by their accuracy, comprehensiveness, and relevance to an investigator's research topic.

According to Whiteman (1986:36-40), in using documents, one must remember that: (1) history is relative, (2) most documents are not written for posterity, and (3) documents must be placed in the context of a person's experience. In other words, one must understand that the situation in which the document was created affects the contents of that document. Accuracy may be affected by the feelings and, for instance, the theological tendency of the compilers. Therefore, having certain knowledge about the people who prepared a certain document is important for an accurate understanding of it.

Documents are also limited by the fact that they are virtually useless for any information about future behavior, and, although some future event may be predicted by looking at documents, the interviewing method is certainly more effective in that sense.

Whiteman also reminds us that every document is biased, but the biases do not necessarily invalidate the record. Our task is to discover what those biases are. In order to do that, we must ask: (1) what is the character of the report?; (2) to whom is it written?; (3) is it descriptive or promotional?; and (4) why is it organized in this specific order?

2. Interview:

a. Definition:

According to Henerson, et. al (1987:24), an interview is "a face-to-face meeting between two or more people in which the respondent answers questions posed by the interviewer." Stewart and Cash (1974:7) define it as "a process of dyadic, relational communication with a predetermined and serious purpose designed to interchange behavior and solving the asking and answering of questions." According to Stewart and Cash, while it is possible for more than two persons to be involved in the interviewing process, it can never be more than two parties -- "an interviewer party and an interviewee party." And the predetermined purpose is what distinguishes the interview from social conversation. The degree of success of an interview is directly related to the degree to which the predetermined purpose is achieved.

b. Choosing the Respondents:

An important aspect of any research is deciding which kind of people is more likely to suit the researcher's purpose. The selection of the respondents is, of course, influenced by the purpose of the research. Some research problems enable the investigator to define and identify the

respondents rather quickly. In other cases, that kind of identification may be a major problem. In the case of the research I am carrying out, the kind of people I should interview quickly became clear to me. I have divided them into two main categories: (1) the insiders - members (clergy or laity) from the Sixth Conference, and (2) the outsiders - members (clergy or laity) of other conferences. That division is important because I am seeking to understand the relevance (or irrelevance) of that movement from the perspective of the people in the Sixth Conference and from the perspective of other people in the Brazilian Methodist Church at large.

c. Interview vs. Self-Administered Questionnaire:

I have chosen to interview the people instead of sending them a questionnaire because the self-administered questionnaire method presents some limitations which are not characteristic of the personal interview method. Hyman (1954:16) describes some of those limitations: (1) A self-administered questionnaire excludes the possibility of collecting the insights of illiterate or semi-literate people. As we know, in the Third World, there are many people who, having important contributions to make to different kinds of study, would feel completely limited if the only way to make such contributions was through answering a questionnaire. (2) A person may read the entire questionnaire before giving any answer,

and the later questions would have an effect upon the earlier answers. Of course, in the interview situation, the later questions can be hidden and, therefore, the above problem can be avoided. (3) With the use of a questionnaire, the respondent may have difficulty understanding some questions and therefore may give an ambiguous answer or may even decide to skip over some questions. However, in the interview situation, the interviewer can help to clarify the questions, probe for clarifications of an ambiguous answer, and persuade the respondent to answer a question that s/he would have skipped in the questionnaire situation. (4) In the course of an interview, one can learn a great deal from how interviewees respond as well as from what they say; in using a questionnaire, one's information is limited to the written responses.

Summary and Projection

In this first chapter I have sought to lay the foundations for the rest of this study by doing three basic things: First, I have clarified the subject of this study, namely, the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference of the Brazilian Methodist Church. Second, I have defined the theoretical framework for my study, composed of Wallace's (1956) revitalization theory, and Barnett's (1953) theory of innovation. Finally, I have

explained the research methods used to gather the data for this study.

The remainder of the study is divided as follows: Chapters 2-4 deal with the Brazilian Methodist Church at large. I have called that section the "Period of Development and Stagnation (1876-1976)." In chapter two I will look at the history of the Methodist Church in Brazil, of which the Sixth Conference is just a small part. In chapter three I will seek to evaluate how indigenous that church really is. My main task in that chapter will be to understand the difference between autonomy and indigeneity. In chapter four I will analyze the growth of the Methodist Church in Brazil during its first 100 years of existence. In chapters 5-7 I will deal more specifically with the Sixth Conference and the renewal movement. I have called that section the "Period of Renewal and Growth in the Sixth Conference (1976-1989)." In Chapter five I will tell the detailed story of that renewal movement, and I will seek to apply Wallace's revitalization model to it. Chapter six will be an evaluation of the renewal movement and its relevance (or irrelevance) to the Methodist Church in Brazil. Finally, in chapter seven, I will attempt to "forecast the future," after evaluating both the past and the present, with the help of people whom I had the privilege of interviewing during my time of field research.

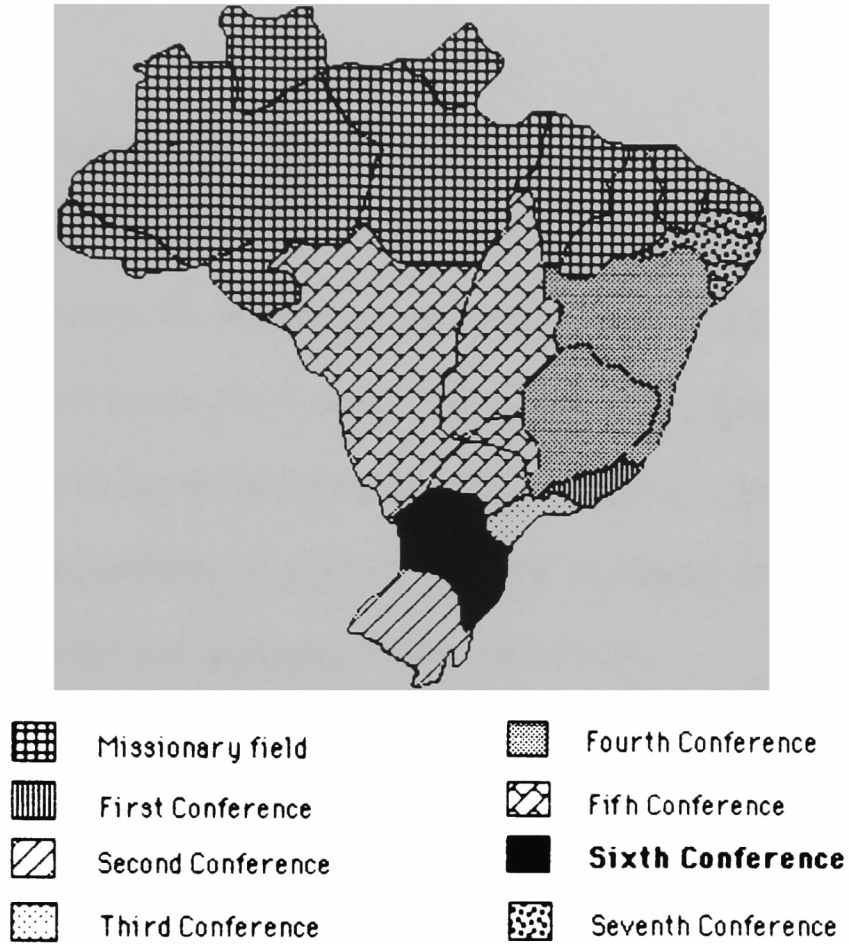
CHAPTER I NOTES

1. In chapter five of this dissertation, I will give the historical background leading to that event. Using Wallace's model of revitalization, I intend to show that a long period of dissatisfaction led the people to search for something new. Rev. Canfield's experience was, I believe, one of the results of that search.
2. See map on page 31. The Methodist Church in Brazil is divided into seven conferences, and the Sixth Conference, in the southeastern part of the country, is the second youngest one. It was formally organized in January 1966.
3. In chapter four of this dissertation, I make a detailed analysis of the growth of the Methodist Church in Brazil from its beginning to the present time.
4. Two examples of splits in the Brazilian Methodist Church will be discussed in chapters 4 and 5, and a short discussion of break away movements throughout history will be found in chapter 6.
5. In chapter six of this dissertation, I analyze the relevance or irrelevance of that movement for the whole of the Methodist Church in Brazil.
6. The term "code" is used here to represent the theological and ecclesiological assumptions under which a group operates. It refers to a group's understanding of life and ministry. In the fifth chapter of this dissertation, I will suggest that the "code" under which the Sixth Conference operates is one of "survival and hope" while a great number of the leaders of the national church see the role of the Methodist Church in Brazil as one of "liberation."
7. One example of this kind of comparison is Brian Schwarz's (1984) article "African Movements and Melanesian Movements." Schwarz believes that, despite the wide variety of forms of the new

religious movements which appear in different parts of the world, there are many similarities and basic themes recurring. Therefore, a study of the African religious movements, for instance, should help one to develop a deeper understanding of, say, the Melanesian religious movements.

8. Each individual has his own model of how his body, personality, nature, society, and culture fit together. Wallace has called this personal world view a "mazeway." Even though no two individuals share the same mazeway, people do share some common aspects. "Changing the mazeway involves changing the total *Gestalt* of his image of self, society and culture, of nature and body, and of ways of action" (Ramseyer 1970: 6).
9. I will be dealing with the concept of indigeneity in the third chapter of this dissertation.
10. Whiteman (1983: 457-461) gives a more thorough discussion of this process of recombination.
11. During a period in which churches are making little, if any, progress, disequilibrium and demoralization set the stage for innovation. In chapter five, I analyze the factors that preceded the search for revitalization in the Sixth Conference.

Figure 1 Present geographic division of the Methodist Church in Brazil.



CHAPTER 2

The Methodist Church In Brazil

A. Introduction

1. The First Missionary Attempt:

On July 28, 1835, The Rev. Fountain E. Pitts boarded the "Nelson Clark" in Baltimore. His destination was Rio de Janeiro, Brazil.¹ Rev. Pitts had been chosen by the 1832 General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the United States to sail to South America in order to investigate the possibility of starting Methodist missionary work in the countries of Brazil and Argentina (Rocha 1967:18-19).

The ship anchored in Rio de Janeiro in the evening of August 18. Two weeks later, in a letter to the Secretary of Correspondence of the Missionary Society, Rev. Pitts gave items of information such as the following: the city of Rio de Janeiro had a population of approximately 200,000 people, the Brazilian government was very open to Protestant missions,² the people were open to the gospel, and there were many North American and English people living in the city who were eager to have someone minister to them (Salvador 1982:25-26).

After a short time in Brazil and Argentina, Rev. Pitts sailed back to

the United States in the Spring of 1836.

Meanwhile, having evaluated Rev. Pitts' report, the Methodist Episcopal Church had decided to appoint the Rev. R. Justin Spaulding of the New England Annual Conference to that new mission field. Rev. and Mrs. Spaulding arrived in Rio de Janeiro on April 29, 1836. They soon began to make contact with both American and English people. In a few weeks a small English-speaking congregation of about 40 people became a reality. Two months later, in July, a Sunday school of about 30 students -- a few Brazilians among them -- was also established. The Brazilian students were taught in the Portuguese language (Kennedy 1928:14).³

Rev. Spaulding did not limit his work to the city of Rio de Janeiro. He traveled around the Rio de Janeiro province, preaching the gospel and distributing Christian pamphlets. He also worked in the distribution of Bibles as an agent of the American Bible Society.⁴

As the work developed, Rev. Spaulding requested some help, and, in November of 1837, two new missionary couples were sent to Brazil: Rev. and Mrs. Daniel P. Kidder and Mr. and Mrs. R. M. Murdy (Salvador 1982:37).

For two years Rev. Kidder traveled throughout Brazil, preaching and distributing pamphlets and Bibles. He also made contact with some

important leaders in the country. In April of 1840, his wife, Mrs. Cynthia H. Kidder, died at the age of 22, after a prolonged time of illness. Rev. Kidder, then 25, with two children under his responsibility, saw no other choice but to return to his country of origin (Salvador 1982:42-43).

Mr. and Mrs. Murdy also returned to the United States in that same year.⁵ Only the Rev. and Mrs. Spaulding stayed in Brazil, but at the end of 1841 they also returned to the United States.

Rev. James Kennedy, who later became a missionary to Brazil, writes about that short-lived missionary effort:

Though that first Methodist mission as an organized work ended in 1841, an alive and personal link was left and it tied that work to the modern Methodist movement. This link was the Walker family that belonged to that church and came to belong to the present Methodist Church in Brazil. A church which, with the help of God will never die. (1928:15)

For twenty five years after Rev. Spaulding returned to the United States, there was no Methodist work in Brazil.

2. The "Newman" Era:

Both during and after the civil war in the United States, many North Americans moved to other countries, including Brazil. By January of 1868, about 2,700 United States citizens, especially from the South, had entered Brazil, most of them settling in Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo.⁶

They were people from different social classes, professions, and religious backgrounds. The Rev. Junius Eastham Newman, a North American minister and member of the Alabama Conference -- Episcopal Methodist Church of the South⁷ -- was one of the many people who decided to move to that country (Salvador 1982:53).

Unable to go as an official missionary through the Methodist Board of Missions, Rev. Newman decided to go on his own. Leaving the family in the United States and arriving in Brazil on August 5, 1866, Rev. Newman had two goals in mind: 1) to find the largest North American settlement and find out if they were in need of pastoral assistance, and 2) to find a place suitable for his family to live.⁸

Rev. Newman did not preach to the Brazilian population, for he had great difficulty with the Portuguese language (Salvador 1982:57). Yet, he often wrote letters to the United States expressing his surprise at the lack of interest in Brazil on the part of both arms of North American Methodism. In fact, the Alabama Conference had excluded his name from its roll of active ministers due to the unofficial character of his work in Brazil (Salvador 1982:58).

B. The "Official" Missionary Period (1876 - 1930)

It seems clear that, from Rev. Spaulding to Rev. Newman, the mission took place in Brazilian lands, but the Brazilian people were but a secondary concern of the missionaries. Their real concern was the English-speaking people in that land.

1. Reaching Out to the Brazilian People:

At the end of 1875, the Methodist Episcopal Church of the South officially recognized Rev. Newman's work and appointed as his assistant the Rev. J. J. Ransom who arrived in Brazil on February 2, 1876 (Salvador 1982:59-60).⁹

Rev. Ransom was sent to the Brazilian population, and therefore his first goal was to enroll in a Portuguese language school. This he did, and, on January 27, 1878, Rev. Ransom led the first Methodist worship service in the Portuguese language in the country of Brazil (Kennedy 1928:20).

Of course, the emphasis upon working with the native population did not result in an abandonment of the work with the English and American people, but the beginning of the work among Brazilians brought strength to that missionary effort. Ten years later, in September of 1886, the Methodist work in Brazil became the Brazilian Annual Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the South. According to the report sent to

the General Conference in the United States in 1889, that new conference had 359 members, ten Sunday Schools with 283 students enrolled, nine missionaries, and five "native preachers" under appointment (Reily 1980:100).

The mission put great emphasis upon the importance of "native workers." In 1885, during the first Missionary Annual Conference, there was a general recognition that "with the help of God, the evangelization of Brazil would depend more upon the converted Brazilians than upon the missions supported by the mother-church" (Kennedy 1928:100).

Besides the "native preachers" with official appointment, there were many local leaders, called "local preachers." The informal, charismatic type of leadership characteristic of those people brought effective growth to the church (Kennedy 1928).

2. Evangelism, Education, and Social Classes:

According to Kennedy (1928:27), the Methodist missionary work in Brazil was established upon three very specific lines of action: a) preaching, b) education, and c) distribution of Christian literature.

In the beginning, the missionaries turned their attention to the lower classes, which always constituted the majority of the Brazilian population. In fact, their emphasis on informal education began with the realization

that, due to the wide-spread illiteracy among the masses in the country, if the new Christians were to be able to read the Bible at all, the mission would have to provide the means for literacy.

It did not take long, however, for the missionaries to realize that there were classes other than the poor to be reached. There were the dominant classes, those of the rich, the leaders, and the intellectuals. In trying to reach those classes, it soon became clear that the traditional methods of evangelism, such as preaching and distribution of Christian literature, would not be effective. Formal education would be the obvious point of contact. In 1881 the Methodist mission opened its first school in the city of Piracicaba, in the state of São Paulo, and at least six other Methodist schools were opened throughout Brazil before the end of the century (Kennedy 1928:319).

Talking about the Brazilian Protestant schools in general, the American historian Emilio Willems says:

Modeled after the "Anglo-Saxon" educational system, the Protestant *colegios* attracted the patronage of numerous middle- and upper-class families, even if these showed little or no interest at all in the religious foundations upon which these institutions were erected. . . . [To] attract non-Protestants and to convert or at least to expose them to the influences of the "Protestant culture" was one of the main objectives of the schools, but the question as to whether they

actually performed that function was, in the beginning at least, a highly controversial issue within the Protestant churches. (1967:235)

If nothing else, the Methodist schools contributed to making Methodism both well known and well respected by the elites in the country.

During the last ten years of the last century, the debate about the role of the Methodist schools became intense among the missionaries. Some of them, such as the Rev. J. L. Kennedy, defended the necessity of working with future leaders, hence the necessity of working with the middle- and upper-classes. Others, such as the Rev. H. C. Tucker, defended the necessity of a more diversified kind of work so as to reach people from every social level.¹⁰ Since the tuition cost was high, the schools continued to serve the richer population. However, a few poorer students, usually related to the church, were accepted on a work-study type of program (Campante 1985:98).

3. Facing the 20th. Century:

Contrary to the slow development experienced during its first 24 years, Brazilian Methodism entered the Twentieth Century with renewed strength. Wisely enough, the missionaries stressed the importance of the national element within the ministry of the church, and the number of both native ordained ministers and "local preachers" increased in a

surprising manner (see table 1), and so did the number of churches. From 31 organized churches in 1900, it went to 145 in 1930. Even the number of Annual Conferences increased during the first 30 years of the twentieth century. In 1910 the South Brazil Conference was organized and in 1919 the Central Brazil Conference came in to existence. The Brazilian Methodist historian Isnard Rocha (1967:128) says: "Comparing these numbers...we must admit that, without any doubt, there was progress. The church was in such a condition as to deserve its autonomy, as it actually happened at the end of the year of 1930."

Table 1: Comparative growth of Methodism in Brazil from 1900 to 1930 (Rocha 1967:21-28; Report 1930:5).

YEAR	Members	National Pastors	Missionaries	Schools	Annual Conf.
1900	2,779	13	12	5	1
1910	6,190	25	18	9	2
1920	9,982	63	18	20	3
1930	15,560	108	18	23	3

C. The Quest for Autonomy (1910 - 1930)

At eight o'clock on the evening of September 2, 1930, in the Central Methodist Church of São Paulo, Bishop Edwin D. Mouzon, of Charlotte, North Carolina, stood before the delegates to the First General Conference and read the proclamation of autonomy of the Methodist Church of Brazil:

We, the members of the Joint Commission, giving thanks to God for His guidance and for the Spirit of cooperation that has prevailed in all our deliberations do call to order the first General Conference of the Methodist Church of Brazil and we declare that the members and ministers of the Methodist Church, South, in Brazil, do with this act become members and ministers of the Methodist Church of Brazil; and that the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, ceases to exist in Brazil, and the national autonomous Church is hereby constituted.(Report 1930:14)¹¹

Bishop Mouzon was the chairperson of the "Joint Commission on the Autonomous Church in Brazil" composed of twenty members -- five from each of the three Brazilian Annual Conferences and five appointed by the Board of Missions in Nashville.

I. Factors Leading to the Quest for Autonomy:

The period of 1910 to 1930 included years of intense activities by both lay and pastoral leaders within the Brazilian Methodist Church in

their quest for autonomy. According to Isnard Rocha (1967:130ff.), there were many factors motivating that quest. Here I point out those I find to be most relevant to this study:

a. The Communication Factor:

Throughout the years, the communication between the national pastors and the bishops appointed to oversee the mission field had been very difficult. According to Rocha (1967), the bishops could not speak the Portuguese language. That factor created a situation very favorable to the missionaries who were able to be in a more intimate contact with the bishops while the nationals had to subject themselves to the interpreters.

As if the bishops' problems with the language were not enough, their visits to Brazil were usually far too brief. Whenever they came to Brazil, these very busy men had only enough time to preside over the conferences, make the necessary appointments, and visit the Methodist schools and some of the larger churches. In fact, in the years 1914, 1916 and 1917, no Methodist bishop visited Brazil at all.

b. The Leadership Factor:

Leadership presented an additional problem. Throughout the years, the number of national pastors had become larger than the number of missionaries. Yet, the positions of leadership continued in the hands of the

missionaries. That situation was very upsetting to the nationals who desired to play a more effective role in the leadership of the church. They were required to follow the decisions made in the United States, and usually the representatives of the Brazilian church in the General Conferences were the missionaries themselves. Therefore the decisions seldom represented responses to the needs of the Brazilian people.

c. The Economic Factor:

During the 1920's national leaders of the church organized an intense movement toward self-support in the sense that the church should take the responsibility for paying the salary of the national pastors. In 1928, during the celebration of the 50th anniversary of Methodism in Brazil, Rev.

J. A. Guerra wrote:

The missionary work must continue for many years to come and, maybe, it will never cease. The size of our country requires such help, but we find it depressing to the nationals that fifteen thousand Methodists are unable to support their own ministry. (1928:400)

Therefore, as we have noticed, communication, leadership, and economics were the main factors motivating the quest for autonomy set forth by the Brazilian Methodist leaders during the early 1900s.

2. The Degree of Autonomy Requested:

In each of these factors, one can easily notice that rising nationalism

was a major factor in the demands of autonomy. Also we must not forget that the year of 1926 marked half a century of official Methodist work in Brazil. That celebration certainly added some energy to the movement toward autonomy. It is not surprising, therefore, that in 1927, in its first meeting ever, the Central Conference of Brazil, presided over by Bishop Cannon, requested a bishop exclusively for Brazil. He should be able to speak the Portuguese language and should live in Brazil. He was to be elected by the Central Conference of Brazil and confirmed by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church of the South. In 1929, in its second and last meeting, that Central Conference explicitly requested that Dr. J. W. Tarboux, a missionary, be elected bishop of the Methodist Church in Brazil.

The request of the Brazilian Methodist Church was for a limited degree of autonomy in the form of a Central Conference with its own bishop and its own constitution while still being a part of the North American Church. In a memorandum sent to the 1930 General Conference, the leaders of the Brazilian church stated:

Our church, having naturally pondered the enormous responsibilities of all work under her direction, decided, as you will know, not to dispense entirely your wise guidance, continuing organically united with you, asking, however, sufficient autonomy to

elect her own bishops and organize her discipline in such a way as to make more efficient the government of the Church in Brazil. (Report 1930:5)

The request seemed to agree with the ideals of the General Conference itself. In 1927 Bishop Cannon, responsible for the field of Brazil, had stated: "I strongly believe that Methodism will serve more efficiently in world evangelization as a great Christian fraternity than as separate churches in each country of the world" (Rocha 1976:137). That statement was at best surprising, since the Methodist Church in the United States had already experienced a great division at the time of the civil war. At any rate, Bishop Cannon seemed to favor the kind of autonomy that would keep the Brazilian church "inside the Methodist Church as a worldwide organization" (Reily 1981: 39).

3. The Degree of Autonomy Received:

The General Conference, meeting in Dallas, Texas, in May of 1930, apparently ignoring the content of the request from the Brazilian church, rejected the idea of a Central Conference and adopted the concept of "autonomous affiliated churches," approving the organization of an autonomous church in Brazil.

There are at least two possible interpretations of that decision: (1) It gave complete freedom to the Brazilian church. The Commission on the

Methodist Church in Brazil was composed of fifteen Brazilians and only five missionaries, and therefore the Brazilian ideals should prevail.

Furthermore, the General Conference understood that the degree of organic relationship between both churches should be "as the Joint Commission may determine." (2) The decision kept the Brazilian church, now "autonomous," under the control of the North American church. The same General Conference that gave autonomy to the Brazilian Church also passed the following legislation:

In foreign fields where there is an autonomous or independent Methodist Church which is affiliated either organically or otherwise with the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, and the Board of Missions, there shall be organized a Central Council to be composed of national members of the autonomous or independent Methodist Church, and missionaries working in that field, which Central Council shall take the place of the Mission. (Report 1930:7)

The Central Council was, therefore, a requirement for those churches that wanted to become autonomous. It was supposed to link the North American and the Brazilian churches. But, interestingly enough, at a time when Brazilian national workers out-numbered the missionaries six to one, it was to be composed by an equal number of nationals and missionaries: 15 nationals and 15 missionaries.

Duncan A. Reily, missionary through the General Board of Global

Ministries and professor of history of Methodism at the Brazilian Methodist Seminary, is convinced that the autonomy was not something achieved by the nationals, but it was given to them according to the mother church's¹² criteria (Reily 1989). I tend to agree with Reily's interpretation. Even the Constitution of the new church had its basis determined by the North American members of the "Joint Commission" as they sailed for Brazil. In the Report of the Joint Commission on the Autonomous Church in Brazil we find the following statement:

The Joint Commission was informed that a suggested Constitution has been prepared on board the SOUTHERN CROSS by the five commissioners from America and this document was distributed as a suggested basis for the work of the Commission in writing the Constitution. (Report 1930:9)

D. Period of Autonomy and Dependency (1930 - 1970)

The Methodist Church of Brazil had become an autonomous church, but it had become neither fully independent nor nationalized. For about 40 more years it would be dominated by the missionary element, receiving strong influence from Nashville and, later, from New York.¹³

1. The First Elections:

The decision of the 1930 General Conference surprised the nationals.

They feared that the educational and social institutions, supported by American money, would now have to be closed down. The church in the United States, however, promised to continue supporting those institutions and did not set up a limit of time for that support.

It was now time for the Brazilian church to choose its own bishop as well as its other leaders. It is surprising, therefore, that the first General Conference, assembled in São Paulo in September of 1930, elected as the first bishop of that new autonomous church the Rev. John W. Tarboux, a retired American missionary, already living in Florida with his family. It is even more surprising that the same General Conference also elected Rev. H. C. Tucker, another American missionary, to be both the permanent Secretary of the General Conference and National Secretary for Social Action. Rev. G. D. Parker, also an American missionary, became the National Secretary of Education. The only Brazilian in the national leadership of the church was Rev. Guaracy Silveira, elected National Secretary of Missions.

Reily (1981:185) suggests that the election of Rev. Tarboux was the nationals' way of sending a two-fold message to the "mother church": first, it was a "thank you" message, and, second, it was a means of showing their intention of continuing the old links with the American church.

Furthermore Rev. Tarboux was already a retired minister and his episcopacy could not exceed four years.¹⁴ In fact, in 1934 the Second General Conference elected Rev. Cesar Dacorso Filho, a native Brazilian, as the new bishop of the Brazilian Methodist church.

2. The General Cabinet:

Ironically, a quarter of a century later, when the 1955 General Conference elected three native Brazilian bishops, missionary control of the church had in fact become stronger. The secretaries elected for the General Boards (education, mission and social action) were all missionaries. Together with the bishops, the general secretaries composed the "General Cabinet," an organ responsible for the organization of the entire program of the church at the national level. That organ had the right to make decisions with an authority equal to that of the General Conference.

Despite the equal number of Brazilian bishops and missionary secretaries, the fact is that the decisions were usually made by the missionaries. The bishops spent most of their time "on the road" visiting local churches while the general secretaries stayed in their offices elaborating programs for the church. Therefore, even though the president of the General Cabinet was always a bishop, most of the

decisions and specific programs for the church were elaborated ahead of time in the missionaries' offices. That situation was prolonged for ten more years when finally both missionaries and nationals began to realize that the church needed more national characteristics.

3. The Central Council:

Created in 1930 as one of the requirements for autonomy, the Central Council was to link the "mother-church" and the "daughter-church." Composed of 15 missionaries and 15 nationals, it controlled some important issues in the life of the church. It met annually to consider the needs of the church, to suggest policies, and to make recommendations to the church in Brazil and to the Board of Missions in the United States, with reference to workers and appropriations (Report 1930:13). According to Reily (1989), "unless the Central Council ceased to exist, the Methodist Church of Brazil would never be completely independent."

In 1970, the General Conference abolished both the Central Council and the General Cabinet and created in their stead a national organ, the General Council, in which the missionaries were welcome but where no law required their presence. Reily (1989) affirms that: "the true declaration of independence of the Methodist Church of Brazil happened in 1970."

E. Establishing an Identity (1930 - 1980s.)

1. Background: A Brazilian "Catholic Culture":

The first Portuguese explorers who came to Brazil in the early 1500's brought with them Roman Catholic priests who were to "Christianize the new world," and "conquer new lands for the church as well as the king" (Bruneau 1982:12). The environment was one of exploration and conversion. The colonists had to be Catholic, so the Indians were baptized by the Catholic missionaries, and, later, Negro slaves were baptized before landing in the colony. Roman Catholicism became the official religion of the land (Bruneau 1982:11-13).

The Church was supported and governed by the king. He was a Catholic and so should all his subjects be, even if only nominally. Adherence was imposed, and therefore the development of a personal sense of commitment or belief was practically unnecessary. Religious observance became a reality throughout the land, but it was a superficial kind of observance (Bruneau 1982:11-13).

For the Brazilian society, Catholicism acquired a symbolic meaning above and beyond its religious content. Despite much nominalism,

Brazilian Catholicism in fact became synonymous with Brazilian culture itself. During the first four centuries of Brazilian history, religious unity and cultural unity were the same thing.

2. Brazilian Protestantism as Anti-Catholicism:

Obviously, Protestantism arrived in Brazil only after the Roman Catholic Church had already determined the shape of Brazilian culture. German Lutherans were the first Protestants to arrive in that country in 1823. Later, in 1855, a Scottish Presbyterian missionary organized the first Missionary Church in Rio de Janeiro. In 1859 missionaries from the American Presbyterian Church also came to the land. The Methodists, as we have already seen, officially entered the country in 1876, the Southern Baptists in 1881 (COMIBAM 1987:191).

The missionaries saw themselves as reformers of a Roman Catholic creed which, they believed, had deviated from the truth as established by the Bible. The social anthropologist Emilio Willems (1967:63) says that "Protestantism in Latin America is indeed what it originally intended to be. A protest movement, not just in the narrow theological sense, but a movement against the religious monopoly of the Catholic Church." Conversion, therefore, meant to become different from the Catholic people. The Brazilian Methodist Bishop Paulo Aires Mattos (1987:8) says

that in traditional Brazilian Protestantism, "the appropriation of salvation happens in a direct confrontation with the official religion, and conversion is determined by a break-away from it."

The anti-Catholic emphasis of the Protestant missionaries crossed every denominational line. One would ask why denominations with completely different emphases in the United States and Europe would have such a common purpose in Brazil. The Brazilian educator Elter Maciel suggests an answer to that question: "It was not the Presbyterians, Baptists, Congregationalists and Methodists that came to Brazil, but the Pietists" (quoted in Mattos 1987:3).

The Methodist missionaries were no different. Kennedy (1928:14) shows how the Revs. Spaulding and Kidder spent much energy, not only preaching but also distributing "religious tracts explaining what they understood to be errors of the Catholic Church" (Kennedy 1928:15). Later, the first official Methodist missionary to Brazil, Rev. J. J. Ransom, had arguments with some Catholic priests. Rev. Kennedy also had difficult problems with the Catholic Church.¹⁵ Kennedy (1928:37) tells a story that illustrates the extreme tension between Roman Catholics and Protestants during his ministry. One evening, Mr. Carvalho, a Methodist preacher, was leading a house meeting when a group of about 30 boys, led

by a certain Roman Catholic priest, began to throw stones at the house. The situation forced Carvalho to stop the meeting, and the people, afraid of being hurt, left the house as soon as they could. Only Carvalho and his family remained in the house. A few minutes after the people left, the house was stoned again. This time many of the stones went into the house through the windows, but no one was hurt. After that event, the people in the town (Juiz de Fora) were so outraged that the priest was forced to leave town, and the boys were severely reprehended by the authorities.

Involved in the Protestant anti-Catholic campaign, the Methodist missionaries stressed the Pietistic message of individual conversion. Such religious concern brought growth to the denomination while making the church blind to the historical, anthropological, and socio-economic realities of the Brazilian people. Bishop Mattos suggests the following interpretation for that kind of attitude:

Brazilian Methodists understood that the changes that the Brazilian society needed would happen through a process of numerical growth of its membership, since the changes of the Brazilian society's structures would only happen by means of the individual conversion of a great number of Brazilians. (1987:8)

3. The Autonomous Church Reviews Its Identity:

Looking back at the factors that contributed to the "quest for

autonomy," one notices that the primary goal of the nationals was not to create a national church with a theology and a body of doctrines more meaningful to the Brazilian population. Their greatest goal was to have a church in which the nationals would have the control of the political administration as well as of the finances. It was a political concern more than a theological/doctrinal or socio-cultural one. The concern for a church which would be relevant in its context only became important for the Brazilian Methodist church in the early 1960's. In 1962 the "First Latin American Consultation on the Life and Mission of the Methodist Church" took place in Buenos Aires, Argentina. One of the important conclusions of that meeting was that "the interpretation of the Latin American life is in the hands of the Latin American churches and, particularly, in the hands of their leaders" (Expositor 1962: 6-8). It was also in the 1960's that the Rev. João Parayba D. Silva, at the time the General Secretary for Social Action in the Brazilian Methodist Church, challenged his fellow Methodists to a deep review of the church's social responsibility in the Brazilian society. During that time a "Social Creed" for the Methodist Church of Brazil was developed. It was approved by the General Conference of 1970 and became a permanent part of the Cânones -- the Book of Discipline of the Brazilian Methodist Church.

The "Quinquennial Plan" approved by the 1965 General Conference was another demonstration of the Methodist quest for identity in Brazil. Under the theme "Methodism: its message and mission for Brazil and for the world," it was unable to hide the tension existing within the church between those who defended a more traditional pietistic and anti-Catholic interpretation of Wesleyan thought with an emphasis on individual salvation, as the North American missionaries taught during many decades of missionary leadership, and those who defended a "new understanding of the Kingdom of God" calling the Church to become an ecumenical, prophetic voice, in service to the poor and oppressed people" (Holliday 1982:105-106).

The building up of that tension would result in the first significant schism within the Brazilian Methodist Church. On January 5, 1967, a group of five elders and one deacon, members of the First Conference, officially left the church. They stated their reason as follows:

So that we will not become a hindrance among our brothers and sisters, we leave the Methodist Church of Brazil with the intent to organize a Methodist Church according to Primitive Methodism. (Minutes, Annual Conf., First Conference 1967:40)

Later, eight hundred members and two other elders followed those pastors, organizing the Wesleyan Methodist Church of Brazil.¹⁶

4. The Present Situation:

Since its creation in 1970, the General Council has been responsible for elaborating the "Quadrennial Plan." That plan is supposed to set the guidelines for the ministry of the church from one General Conference to the next. It is an attempt to unify and bring coherence to the ministry of the Methodist Church in Brazil. Bishop Mattos says:

The Quadrennial Plan is an effort of the Church to rediscover the Wesleyan roots of Methodism today, not in the old traditional way, but with an attempt to re-interpret the Wesleyan emphasis on evangelism and social action in the Latin American situation. (Quoted in Holliday 1982:106)

But that is not the only way people interpret the Quadrennial Plan. The fact is that each group will interpret it in a different way. Today it has become common knowledge that there are at least three radically different groups within the Brazilian Methodist Church. Those groups are unofficially labelled as: "conservatives," "progressivists," and "charismatics."¹⁷ According to Dr. Rui Josgrilberg (1989), rector of the Methodist Seminary in São Paulo, the "charismatic movement" and the "progressivist movement" are different reactions to "conservatism." But beyond that, they are attempts to respond to new needs in the Brazilian

society, needs which the "conservative group" has not been able to meet.

After analyzing the various theological tendencies within the Brazilian Methodist Church, the missiologist Guillermo Cook has arrived at the following conclusion:

The lack of theological coherence and depth in theology of the *Igreja Metodista* has exposed it to the inroads of "foreign" ideologies, which it has ingested but not digested. In consequence, Brazilian Methodism is at present a congeries of liberal, fundamentalist, introverted, socially concerned, traditional, and neo-Pentecostal beliefs, all fermenting in the same pot. (1985:209)

F. Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter I have sought to present a general overview of the history of the Brazilian Methodist Church from its very beginning to the present. I have emphasized the issue of autonomy, seeking to demonstrate that autonomy, in the case of the Brazilian Methodist Church, did not represent independence from North American Methodism. Dependency has been noticeable, especially at the structural level of the church, but it is also real at the theological level. As we will see later in this study, such a situation of dependency has provoked many reactions within the church. In fact, the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference is, in a sense, a

reaction against that situation. In the next chapter, however, I will continue to critically analyze the Brazilian Methodist Church as I address the issue of indigeneity.

CHAPTER 2 NOTES

1. Rio de Janeiro was, at the time, the Capital of Brazil.
2. In 1822 Brazil became independent from Portugal (at the time a strong Catholic country). That event also affected the way the Brazilian government looked upon other denominations, especially because at the time, many Protestant people from England and the United States were moving to Brazil.
3. Rev. Spaulding had applied himself to learning the Portuguese language and in a few months was able to communicate with the Brazilian people in their native language.
4. Rev. Pitts had brought a copy of the Portuguese Catholic version of the Bible to the United States. It was later revised and reedited.
5. Mrs. Murdy was Rev. Kidder's sister. They had arrived in Brazil together. The death of Mrs. Kidder and consequent return of Rev. Kidder certainly influenced Mr. and Mrs. Murdy's decision to return to the United States.
6. Some of them chose to settle in other parts of Brazil, such as Minas Gerais, Paraná, Bahia, and Pernambuco.
7. The Episcopal Methodist Church had experienced a schism in 1845.
8. According to Salvador (1982:55), Rev. Newman had a wife and two children. After being in Brazil for eight months, he returned to the United States in order to get his family.
9. Rev. Ramson's arrival on February 2, 1876, is considered the official beginning of the Methodist Mission to the Brazilian people.
10. Rev. Tucker later became the first national secretary for social action in the Brazilian Methodist Church.
11. It refers to the "Report of the Joint Commission on the Autonomous Church in Brazil," September, 1930 (see bibliography). Hereafter this

source will be cited as the Report.

12. The terminology "mother church - daughter church" was very much in use at the time.
13. The Board of Missions was later moved from Nashville to New York in the early 1900's.
14. According to the Cânones (the Book of Discipline) of the new autonomous church, episcopacy is not a life-time condition. Bishops are either re-elected or not as is any other official in the church.
15. The tension between Roman Catholics and Protestants in Brazil continued until the early 1960's when the Vatican II Council marked the beginning of a new relationship of mutual respect between the two groups. Today this new relationship is clearly noticeable at the official level. However, at the local level, prejudice is still a strong factor. Protestant local pastors still criticize Roman Catholic priests and vice-versa. The same is true about the more conservative lay members of both groups.
16. According to COMIBAM (1987:192), the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Brazil has a total membership of about 25,000 members. That denomination has no official relationship with the Wesleyan Church in the United States.
17. In my interviews, I asked a question about the existence of any theological tension within the church. Only two out of the thirty-four people interviewed were unaware of the labels "charismatic" "progressivist" and "conservative." In the last three chapters of this study, I will deal with this subject.

CHAPTER 3

The Issue of Indigeneity in the Brazilian Methodist Church

A. Introduction

More than 100 years have passed since the Methodist Episcopal Church of the South appointed its first missionary to Brazil, officially beginning the Methodist mission to the Brazilian people. More than 50 years have also passed since the "Joint Commission on the Autonomous Church in Brazil" decided for the proclamation of the autonomy of that church. One wonders what kind of impact the Brazilian Methodist Church has had upon the Brazilian people. In other words, how relevant has that church been to the Brazilian society? This concern is related to the issue of indigeneity, i.e. to how foreign or how national that church has become throughout its existence -- how natural it has become to its context.

B. The "Indigeneity" Concept

Much has been written about the characteristics of the indigenous church. In the last part of the nineteenth century, Henry Venn, secretary of the Church Missionary Society (C.M.S.), an Anglican Board in Britain, together with Rufus Anderson, a Congregationalist, head of the American

Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions (ABCFM), elaborated a missionary philosophy which became, at least theoretically, very much accepted by the mission boards of that time.¹ Venn's and Anderson's philosophy stated, among other things, that the goal of any missionary effort was to plant churches which would become self-governing, self-propagating, and self-supporting. It became known as the "three-self" formula for missionary work.

In the mid nineteenth century, the "three-self" formula was a revolutionary idea, although it first appeared in a sermon, preached by John A. James, as early as 1823 (Shenk 1989). Anderson went so far as to talk about the ethanasia of missionary activity that should occur when the missionary, having planted well-prepared native congregations, would gradually pass the leadership of the work to native leaders, to the point that the mission would cease completely. Then the missionary, as well as the missionary agency, could be transferred to other places. In other words, it was the notion that the mission had to die in order that the church might be born. Alan Tippett (1987:85) says that "the aim of this theory was to bring a mission to such a state that it could become an indigenous church, standing on its feet... ."

Venn's and Anderson's theory, however, has undergone serious

criticism. William Smalley (1958:58) has said that "the criteria of 'self-governing, self-supporting, and self-propagating' are not necessarily diagnostic of an indigenous movement." Smalley (1958:59) affirms that "it may be very easy to have a self-governing church which is not indigenous." Native leaders may have strong foreign tendencies. On the other hand, it is possible for a movement to have a foreign leadership to some degree and still be genuinely indigenous. In specific situations, such as, for instance, economic distress, it may be possible for a church to receive support from abroad without necessarily compromising its indigenous character. In other words, it is not where the money comes from but how the money is used that tells us about the level of indigeneity of a giving church. Smalley goes on to say:

I very strongly suspect that the three "selfs" are really projections of our American value systems into the idealization of the church, that they are in their very nature Western concepts based upon Western ideas of individualism and power. By forcing them on other people we may at times have been making it impossible for a truly indigenous pattern to develop. (1958:55)

Alan Tippett (1987:86) has also criticized the "three-self" theory. He says that it "fell short of the ideal in any case. Financial independence, organizational autonomy, and missionary outreach were not in any way a total complex of the marks of a church." First, there is nothing Biblical

about it; second, it has a strategical rather than a theological motive; and, finally, being modeled after a Western reality, it can not relate to other cultures' life styles and economies.

The anthropologist Charles Kraft is another critic of the "three-self" theory. Kraft has said that this theory fails to go below the surface. He writes:

The mere fact of self-government, self-support, and self-propagation does not ensure that the church in question is "indigenous." ...a simple evaluation of the structured cultural forms of government, propagation, and support is not sufficient. One has to look also at the ways in which these cultural structures are operated and the meanings attached to them both by the church and by the surrounding community. (1979:320)

Seeking to answer the question "What should the church look like in relation to its cultural environment?" or "How should an indigenous church look?," Kraft has rejected both the "three-self" approach and the traditional (monocultural ethnocentric) approach. Instead Kraft has suggested a third approach which he calls the "dynamic equivalence approach." According to him, a truly indigenous church should look in its culture like a good Bible translation looks in its language. The meanings of the church need to be translated from the cultural forms of the sending sources into the forms of the receiving culture - forms capable of

conveying equivalent meanings. Thus, by changing the forms, we are able to preserve the meanings. An authentically indigenous church should exhibit patterns of interaction between people consistent with the culture in which the members of that church were brought up.

A dynamic equivalence translation is directed toward equivalence of response rather than equivalence of form. So, instead of trying to be "faithful to the original," it tries to be "relevant to people." The former emphasizes interpretation whereas the later emphasizes application. Therefore, a church in Africa, Asia, Latin America, or any other part of the world, that is merely a "copy" of its mother church should be rejected. Tradition must be made relevant to ones' present cultural context. The preservation of heritage should never happen at the expense of relevance.

The indigenous church concept has continued to receive vast improvement among Catholic and Protestant missiologists throughout the years. When Roman Catholic missiologists use terms, such as developed church (Todd 1984:180), inculturation (Arbuckle 1985:193-194), and adaptation (Arbuckle 1985:186), they are clearly talking about indigeneity.

Contextualization² is another term related to the indigenous church concept. It has been widely used, especially among Protestants, but also

among Roman Catholics in the Third World. The Theological Education Fund (TEF) has proposed the following definition for the term:

It means all that is implied in the familiar term "indigenization" and yet seeks to press beyond. Contextualization has to do with how we assess the peculiarities of Third World contexts. Indigenization tends to be used in the sense of responding to the Gospel in terms of a traditional culture. Contextualization, while not ignoring this, takes into account the process of secularity, technology, and the struggle for human justice, which characterize the historical moment of nations in the Third World. (Quoted in Koyama 1974:20-21)

Therefore, the term contextualization seeks to demonstrate that an authentically indigenous church must be both open to change and future-oriented (Hesselgrave 1979:6).

The Roman Catholic theologian Robert J. Schreiter (1985) has also dealt with the issue of contextualization. Seeking to answer the question of how a community should go about bringing to expression its own experience of Christ in its concrete situation, Schreiter has developed the term local theology. According to Schreiter (1985:22), local theology is "the dynamic interaction among gospel, church and culture." It is the Christian people (church) reflecting upon the gospel in light of their own circumstances (culture and/or context). Schreiter's thesis is in agreement with Andrew Walls' (1982) suggestion that a Christian community must reflect the concerns of Christians in its specific time and place. Walls

(1982:98) has observed that "no group of Christians have any right to impose, in the name of Christ, upon another group of Christians a set of assumptions about life determined by another time and place."

What, then, is an indigenous church? It is a church which, while "maintaining an essential core of values and beliefs that are clearly identified as Christian," (Whiteman 1983:414) seeks to be relevant to the existential concerns of the people of the local society. It is, therefore, need-based. But, because people's needs and concerns are constantly changing, an indigenous church is in a constant process of contextualization. It also seeks to express its faith in "forms that are culturally appropriate for the adherents of that faith" (Whiteman 1983:415). Yet, beginning with cultural concerns, it moves toward theological concerns. Therefore, more important than, for instance, whether or not drums are used in a given church, is the reason why they are (or are not) used. Above all, an indigenous church is "aware of its own theology" (Tippett 1987:86). It must be self-theologizing, i.e. it must be able to read and interpret the Word of God from the standpoint of its culture, creating its own theological identity. Anthropologist Paul G. Hiebert (1985) has called it "The Fourth Self." Hiebert says:

Three or four generations after a church is planted in a new

culture, local theologians arise and struggle with the question of how the gospel relates to their cultural traditions. How can they express the Good News in terms the people understand, and yet retain its prophetic message? In answer to these questions they develop new theologies. (1985:196)

It must also have self-understanding, i.e. it must be able to assess its own strengths as well as its own weaknesses. Only then will its message be relevant to and meaningful in the context where it belongs. Then, resources and personnel may come from outside and will only enrich the church.

In sum, the "three-self" theory does not need to be completely dismissed. However, it must be both used with and subject to other criteria such as the "self-theologizing" and the "self-understanding" criteria. The "three-self" theory can be helpful for analyzing the church at the more superficial, quickly observable level, before moving toward the deeper concerns of meaning and worldview.

C. Methodism And Cultural Adaptation

I. Methodism in the United States

The mission of the Methodist movement was defined in 1744 when John Wesley said that it was the will of God for the Methodist preachers "to reform the nation [England], more particularly the Church; to spread

scriptural holiness over the Land." (Minutes of the Methodist Conferences 1812:19). In England, Methodism was a movement within the Anglican Church. When John Wesley died, he was still a member of that church. His desire was not to begin a new denomination but rather to awaken the Anglican people and to reform the British nation.

Coming to the American Colonies, the Methodist movement continued its same mission, but the forms and practices were radically changed. First, North American Methodism became a denomination. Second, it assumed an episcopal form as the best way to give direction to a church which was expanding throughout the new continent. Third, camp meetings took the place of preaching at the street corners and factory gates (Reily 1981:16). Thus, North American Methodism was adapted to its context without necessarily losing its essential characteristics or its authenticity. The strong commitment to saving as many "souls" as possible and to spreading Biblical holiness in a nation still in the process of being built made Methodism a religious movement that fit the great need of the rapidly expanding North American nation: building a society in which individual freedom and mutual respect would become the basis of democracy. It is not surprising, therefore, that Methodism became popular to the point of becoming the largest denomination in the United States by

the end of the last century (Mattos 1987:5).

Talking about the growth of American Methodism by the late 1800s, church growth specialist George G. Hunter III (1987:19) says: "The Methodist Church was starting more than one new congregation a day. Some months they averaged *two* new churches a day." Contextualization and adaptation to the new reality were the basis of the success of nineteenth century American Methodism.

2. Methodism in Brazil:

In order for our point about Methodism in Brazil to be understood, it would be helpful to remember that Anglicanism came into existence in England not as a religious movement but rather as a political movement. The schism brought about by King Henry VIII had little or nothing to do with doctrines. In fact, Henry VIII was a strong defender of the Catholic faith. His breaking up with Rome had no other reason than the pope's unwillingness to agree with his divorce and remarriage. When Henry VIII became the head of the Church of England, few, if any, liturgical and/or doctrinal changes were made. Later, when John Wesley sought to awaken the Anglican Church, his movement had little to do with doctrines or liturgy (Keefer 1981:180-182). In fact, Wesley was still an Anglican when he died. According to Brazilian Methodist theologian Rui S. Josgrilberg

(n.d.:86), the tension between Wesley and the Anglican church as an institution had a missiological rather than a liturgical/doctrinal basis.³ Therefore we must recognize that, for historical reasons, Methodism has some similarities with Roman Catholicism. This is especially true in the area of liturgy: infant baptism, baptism by sprinkling, the cross as a symbol of faith, episcopacy, etc. It is also true that, historically, Methodism emphasized ecumenism.

Coming to a Roman Catholic country,⁴ Methodism faced an identity crisis. Because of its superficial similarities with the Catholic Church, the Methodist Church in Brazil was looked upon by other Protestant churches as a church filled with "pagan" practices. On the other hand, being considered a Protestant church and emphasizing individual salvation, it was expected to make proselytes out of the "Catholic culture." In that context, the Catholic church had become the number one enemy of the Protestant faith.

That situation can be better understood if one realizes that, during the nineteenth century, North American missionary expansion went together with political, economic, and military expansion. Whiteman has said that:

An evaluation of missionaries must not only consider the historical context, but also the cultural milieu in which they serve. The modern missionary movement has been part and

parcel of Western expansionism both politically and economically. Missionaries must therefore be evaluated in terms of the roles they played *vis-à-vis* Western intrusion into indigenous societies. (1983:430)

North American missionaries were confident that North American progress was the fruit of Protestantism, and therefore it was clear for most missionaries that the "Protestant culture" was superior to the "Roman Catholic culture." Consequently, since the Brazilian culture was almost synonymous with "Roman Catholic culture," it seemed only logical that to become a Methodist (Protestant) meant a break with values and practices related to the Brazilian reality and an acceptance of the values and practices related to the North American reality. Feasts, games, competitions and dancing became "things that only the Roman Catholics do," not the Protestants. By becoming a Protestant in Brazil, the individual ceased being an active part of the Brazilian society and fully participating in his/her nationality. Protestantism became a subculture alien to the national reality (Mattos 1987).

3. Methodism and Other Aspects of the Brazilian Culture:

The Bolivian Methodist Bishop Mortimer Arias (1974:85) has said that, whenever missionaries come to other cultures, many of them are tempted to take with them not only the seed of the gospel, but the entire plant, as well as the vase. Consequently, in Latin America, for instance, we will

find Protestant congregations, such as most Anglican congregations as well as many Presbyterian, Methodist and Baptist congregations, that are completely Anglo-Saxon in their liturgy, structure and doctrines. The Brazilian Methodist Church's structure, consisting of scores of commissions, a general council, bishops, district superintendents, and general and annual conferences, is a clear illustration of an imported church structure. The Baptists' overemphasis on eternal salvation in heaven in a context in which people are struggling to earn their daily bread illustrates the fact that a doctrine may become foreign if emphasized in the wrong context. According to Arias (1974:85), what must really be done is to break the vase, take the seed, and plant it in the different cultural soil.

Trying to export a British or North American Methodist liturgy and structure to the Brazilian reality is to court failure (Chaves 1984:85). The very name Methodist has a British flavor to it. The British people are popularly known as a systematic and methodical people. The London clock is the symbol of punctuality and organization. By comparison, North Americans also like to think of themselves as punctual. Comparing Brazilians and North Americans concerning their perception of time, the sociologist Phyllis Harrison (1983:x) has said: "While the American

considers the appointment a valid reason for delaying a visit, the Brazilian considers a visit with a friend far more important than the punctual keeping of an appointment."

Brazilians are also known by the practice of samba, a dance which requires the movement of the entire body and is done to the sound of drums and other percussion instruments. It requires relaxation and looseness. Therefore, trying to establish a rigid liturgy in the Brazilian culture is to violate that culture. It is to take the Brazilian people out of their own reality.

But that was exactly what Methodism (and other Protestant denominations) did. Brazilian Methodism, trying to distinguish itself from the cultural practices which were interpreted as having Roman Catholic influence, had no other alternative but to accept a foreign liturgy common to the missionaries. Altars, crosses, drums, dances, etc., were replaced by rational speech, unemotional prayers, and the singing of translated hymns to the sound of the organ, an instrument very uncommon elsewhere in the Brazilian context. Another foreign element is the choirs which are present in many Methodist churches, as well as in other Protestant churches, but nonexistent elsewhere in the Brazilian society.

D. Autonomy = Indigeneity?

One could ask whether or not the movement for autonomy in the 1920s⁵ was an effort toward indigenization. To answer that question, we must evaluate the changes brought about by the autonomy.

I believe that, despite its weaknesses, the "three-self" theory can provide some structure for such an evaluation. Obviously, I will use that theory together with both the "self-theologizing" and the "self-understanding" criteria. However, as we will notice, even judging by the "three-self" criterion, the Brazilian Methodist Church was/is lacking in indigeneity.

We should start by evaluating the post-autonomy leadership of the Brazilian Methodist Church. We are dealing here with the "self-governing" issue. As we have already seen in the second chapter (pp. 47-50), after the autonomy, the missionaries continued to run the affairs of the church. By occupying key positions of leadership at the national level, they were able to influence all the major decisions concerning the life and ministry of the church. According to Helerson Rodrigues, present Secretary of the College of Bishops of the Brazilian Methodist Church, the period between the autonomy (1930) and the late 1960's was marked by the strong

presence of missionaries in the leadership of the church. He explains:

We must notice that, in 1960, the VIII General Conference reelected, as general secretaries, the lay missionary Robert Stewart Davis, for Social Action, the Rev. Charles Wesley Clay, for Christian Education, and the Rev. Duncan Alexander Reily, for Missions and Evangelism. As members of the General Cabinet, these secretaries had strong influence upon the plans for the Brazilian Methodist Church as a whole. (1986:44)

As I have stated before, the mere presence of missionaries in positions of leadership of a given church cannot be taken as a statement against its being self-governing. However, in the case of the autonomous Brazilian Methodist Church, the situation went to extremes. For at least thirty-five years after its autonomy, the missionaries occupied all the key positions of leadership at the operational level, despite the fact that there were elected Brazilian bishops during that period.

The issue of leadership in the Brazilian Methodist Church is closely related to economic factors. Here we encounter the second point of the "three-self" theory as we seek to evaluate how self-supporting that church has been after its autonomy.

According to the former Bishop Wilbur K. Smith (1989), the Brazilian Methodist Church "has never become economically independent." Without an exception, the people interviewed in my field research in Brazil agreed with Smith's statement. It is necessary, however, to take a closer look at

the kind of economic dependency that the church has experienced.

First, it is not economic dependency at the local, grassroots level. The local churches have long assumed the responsibility of providing for the living expenses of their full-time ministers as well as for their annual budget. Even before autonomy, the effort toward creating that kind of grassroots awareness was already a reality. As early as 1928, J. A. Guerra, a Brazilian Methodist minister, wrote:

I believe that the situation of the Methodist Church, after fifty years of existence, receiving help from foreign missions for the support of its national ministry is simply unacceptable. The money that the mother church is sending to help to support the national preachers who are working in already established churches could be used in new missions in our own country, even if national preachers are appointed for the new areas of work. (1928:402)

Second, it is an economic dependency at the general level. The expenses from general work area meetings and other general meetings, as well as the salaries of people working at the church headquarters, are usually paid with money coming from outside of the country. The United Methodist Church in the United States, the United Church of Canada, and the Methodist Church in West Germany have offered constant support in that area. Those churches are called "cooperating churches." The 1965 Cânones⁶ of the Brazilian Methodist Church explicitly defines the

"cooperating church" concept:

Cooperating churches are those which, working with the Methodist Church of Brazil, under its direction, send personnel and financial resources for the work in the country. (Cânones 1965:17)

It is noteworthy that the definition emphasizes that the cooperation is "under its direction," i. e. under the Brazilian Church's direction. In other words, the money and personnel coming from other countries are to be used according to the national leaders' discretion. At least that aspect seems to be a positive one from the perspective of the indigeneity concept.

The other level of dependency takes us to the third point of the "three-self" theory: the self-propagating issue.

As we have seen in the "Geographic Division of the Brazilian Methodist Church,"⁷ the church is divided into seven conferences and one "General Missionary Field." The "General Missionary Field" is that area of the country in which there are no established churches, and new missionary work is being developed. The seven conferences are also further divided into "local churches and their congregations" and "regional missionary fields," which are cities in each specific conference where church planting is taking place and where the church planters need to receive support from outside. Each conference also has its "special projects" or "advance

specials," which are usually social projects.

Even though official data is unavailable, the people interviewed in my field research agreed that somewhere between sixty and seventy-five percent of the money spent in the special projects and in the missionary fields at both the general and conference levels comes from the cooperating churches.⁸ This is a clear witness against the self-supporting ability of the Brazilian Methodist Church.

Finally, we must deal with the issues of self-theologizing and self-understanding. A church both theologizes and understands itself when, with the help of both its tradition and the Scriptures, it analyzes the situation and the conditions of the context in which it exists and works. The process of theologizing seeks to make the preaching of the gospel appropriate to different situations. Furthermore, one's theological thinking is influenced and somewhat limited by one's context and worldview. The self-understanding process seeks to make the church's structure as well as its ministry appropriate to different situations. These two issues -- self-theologizing and self-understanding -- are closely related. In fact, as a church theologizes, it begins to have a clearer understanding of itself. The question before us is whether or not the Brazilian Methodist Church has been historically self-theologizing and

self-understanding, and, if so, to what extent. I now seek to answer that question.

The arrival of the missionary J. M. Lander, in 1889, marked the beginning of theological training in the Methodist mission in Brazil. Lander's responsibility was to prepare members of the Methodist Church for the ministry. This he did, in the beginning, in his own home (Kennedy 1928:367). A few decades later, the "O Grambery College," founded in 1889, became the "Faculdade de Teologia d'O Grambery" (Kennedy 1928:372). In 1919 the "Porto Alegre College" was created in Southern Brazil, and, under the presidency of John Saunders, became another Methodist center for theological education (Kennedy 1928:379). In the late 1920's, the "Moore Institute," another center for theological education, was founded in central Brazil. This, however, was not successful. In 1940 the union of two institutions ("Faculdade de Teologia d'O Grambery" and "Seminario do Sul") resulted in the present "School of Theology of the Methodist Church," functioning since 1942 in Rudge Ramos, São Paulo (Kennedy 1928, Rocha 1967).

The first two rectors of the School of Theology were Rev. Paul Buyers and Rev. Walter Moore, both American missionaries. The movement of autonomy, which had failed to provide indigenous leadership at the

administrative level, had also failed to provide indigenous leadership at the level of theological thinking. The first Brazilian Rector, Rev. Affonso Romano Santanna, was not elected until 1950.

According to Rui Josgrilberg (1986:16), present rector of that School of Theology, the theological thinking in that school during the 1940's and 1950's was usually a reflection of the theological concerns of the missionaries responding to whatever was going on in the United States. Meanwhile, the church at the grassroots sought to spread the "Protestant gospel" against "Roman Catholic paganism." That was the theology at the grassroots level and had been the real emphasis since the first Methodist missionaries had arrived in Brazil. For example, in his annual report to the Board of Missions in 1876, J.J.Ransom had written:

The grand empire is open to the gospel. The present emperor is a man of enlightenment, and bent on the elevation of his people. A conflict between the Masonic order and the Romish clergy has resulted in a conflict between the clergy and the government. The empire is thrown open to education, and the doors are wide open to Protestantism. The educated men of the empire are, to a large extent, in opposition to Rome; and the question, in their immediate future, is the widespread infidelity or Protestant Christianity. We have just entered the field, and are the only Methodism in the empire. It is almost beyond the power of the imagination to frame a stronger call to Christian effort than that presented at this moment by this magnificent empire. The second largest nation on our continent, a stable government, an open door, the intellect

of the nation, inviting us to the field (1876:126).⁹

That kind of Protestant cultural progressivism made much sense from the late 1800's to the mid 1950's. The Protestant message was one of liberal education and individual freedom for religious identity. Such a message seemed to be a real option against a feudal kind of Catholicism, already heavily criticized by the Brazilian republican democracy of the times.

In the 1960's, the European theology of Bultmann, Barth, and others began to occupy the minds of Methodist theologians and students in Brazil. At the same time, the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America began its process of popularization and openness to other branches of Christianity. That process, which began with the Vatican II Council, was further developed in the Medellin Conference in 1968. For the Methodist people, the Roman Catholic Church could no longer be considered an enemy. At the same time, the foreign liberalism of the European theology was not offering any satisfactory options for ministry in the Brazilian Methodist Church. Josgrilberg (1986) suggests that, although the emphasis on European theology was strong at the academic (school of theology) level, it was not effective in helping a church that was going through a period of transition. Josgrilberg (1986:16) goes on to say that "the church was not

receptive [to the European theology] and the [new] pastors were not prepared for a style of pastorate that could help the church to move forward in that transitional period." The church's crisis of identity became, then, more serious. Recognizing that the Methodist Church had not been able to make any significant contribution to the Brazilian Society, Methodist theologians and students began to question the role and the mission of the church, especially in relating to the poverty and oppression in Brazil and Latin America at large (Holliday 1982:105-106). A special concern for the Wesleyan tradition began to be developed. The task was to rediscover the roots of God's calling to the Methodist people and to understand its relevance in the Brazilian context (Holliday 1982:107). The result of that questioning was the approving, in the 1974 General Conference, of the Social Creed and the Quadrennial Plan for the period 1975 to 1978. That plan was a four-year emphasis of the Methodist Church of Brazil, calling the Church, in a prophetic voice, to actively participate in the mission of God, in service to the poor and oppressed people of Brazil.

In sum, today the Brazilian Methodist Church is seeking to develop its self-theologizing ability. From having a theology which was a mere reflection of North American concerns, that church is now seeking to

understand its call from a Third World, Latin American perspective. Yet, the kind of theologizing that is taking place is still far from engaging the participation of the people at the grassroots level (Mattos 1987, da Silva 1989). It is an academic, "armchair" kind of reflection, in which only theologians and students participate. People at the local churches still do not understand the meaning of being a Methodist within the Brazilian reality (Rodrigues 1989). Most people still see themselves in opposition to the Catholic Church.

E. Organizational Structure of the Brazilian Methodist Church

Methodism's lack of ability to adapt its organizational structure to the Brazilian context can be noticed in decisions made during the early years of missionary work in that country. In 1886, seeking to solve a legal problem of registration of property¹⁰, the mother church transformed the mission in Brazil into the "Brazilian Annual Conference." Therefore, only ten years after its official beginning in Brazil, the Methodist mission had already become an Annual Conference.

This could be considered a positive event if it were not for the fact that the Brazilian Annual Conference had only three members (Rev. Kennedy, Rev. Tarboux, and Rev. Tucker) and none of them were Brazilian.

According to the Brazilian Bishop Paulo Aires Mattos (1987:13), such a decision meant that even before being reasonably organized and consolidated, Brazilian Methodism had already adopted the structures of government of the North American church, a developed church with millions of members. Therefore, instead of acquiring Brazilian characteristics, Methodism in Brazil preserved North American structures from its very beginning. Little by little, organizations such as the "Epworth League" and the "Young Men's Christian Association" (Y.M.C.A.) were also introduced in Brazil with the total support of the Methodist leaders.

One of the leaders of the movement toward autonomy during the 1920's, Rev. Guaracy Silveira defended the idea that the evangelization of Brazil required a more Brazilian kind of organization. He wrote:

When [the leaders of the American Church] understand that the political situation of the new world requires a national church in each country, and that the Catholic form of government is already outdated and requiring reforms even for the Roman Catholics themselves, then the love for the kingdom of Christ will lead them to let go of that legislation and give us the desired autonomy. (1923:3)

But the autonomy in 1930, which supposedly gave the church a great deal of administrative freedom, failed to adopt an organizational structure congruent with the Brazilian reality. As I have already mentioned in

chapter two (p.47), the basis of the "Constitution of the Autonomous Methodist Church in Brazil" was developed by the North American members of the "Joint Commission."

By researching Silveira's articles written for the Expositor Cristão, we can see the failure of the movement toward autonomy to bring about a legislative structure compatible with the national reality. In April of 1936, six years after autonomy, Silveira (1936:4) wrote: "Our legislation will give us a lot of trouble... ." In April 1940, he was more specific:

Our church feels limited by laws, organizations and multiple meetings... The way I see it, we are making the same mistakes that the Roman Catholics made, requiring the Reformation, and the error that the Anglicans made, requiring the Methodist movement. (1940:3-4)

For most people in the local congregations, the organization of the Brazilian Methodist Church is vague and very confusing. A great deal of new terminology must be learned as one enters the administrative world of the church. When it comes to statistics, very few people in the local congregations have the necessary skills to fill out all the information required. Furthermore, because of the foreignness of the organizational structure, a great deal of time is spent in every General Conference¹¹ dealing with adaptations and small changes in the legislation. Before one can master the changes made by a General Conference, it is already time

for another General Conference and other changes. Yet, up until 1987¹², there had not been any attempt to significantly change the legislative structure in order to make it fit the Brazilian reality.

It takes large amounts of money to keep the Brazilian Methodist Church's organization functioning. But, because people at the grassroots level do not understand that structure, a very small percentage of the money required to operate the administrative "machinery" comes from the contribution of the local churches, perpetuating, thereby, the dependency upon the cooperating churches. The money coming from the churches in Canada, United States, and West Germany today is not less than the money coming from outside in the days of the missionary control.

The foreignness of its organization has other effects upon the Brazilian Methodist Church. It affects, for instance, its growth.¹³ The social anthropologist Emilio Willems (1967), in his study of Protestantism in Latin America, has suggested that the church structure plays a considerable role in establishing its attractiveness in terms of membership. The different Protestant creeds and their ecclesiastical organizations would not have the same appeal to different classes of the population. Willems says:

Protestantism in Latin America is indeed what it originally

intended to be - a protest movement, not just in the narrow theological sense, but a movement against the religious monopoly of the Catholic Church and its traditional ally, the ruling class. Protestantism is, in one word, a symbolic protest against the traditional social structure whose shortcomings are perceived in the mirror of recent revolutionary social changes. (1967:154)

Based upon that observation, Willems (1967:154) concludes that "the farther removed the ideology and structure of a particular Protestant denomination is from those of the traditional society, the greater the appeal it holds for the common people." That is obviously one of the reasons why people from the lower classes of Brazilian society find Pentecostalism so attractive. It represents a challenge to the old elitist system favored, until recently, by the Catholic Church and also by most historical Protestant churches.

Methodism in Brazil, however, has retained some ideological and structural principles that are contradictory to most Brazilian people's aspirations. Its clergy-centered, hierarchical structure is obviously less attractive to people than a simpler structure that stresses egalitarianism, such as that of many Pentecostal denominations.

The lack of egalitarianism can be easily noticed by looking at the appointment system of the Brazilian Methodist Church, which was completely borrowed from American Methodism. In 1945, Guaracy

Silveira wrote:

The Methodist system of appointment is not meeting the needs of our ministers... They are required to lay themselves in the hands of the bishop and the cabinet, allowing that decisions about them and their families be made without any consultation. (1945:5)

Emile Léonard (1963) has done extensive research on Brazilian Protestantism, analyzing both the administrative structure and the appointment system of the Methodist church. Based on research done in the early 1950's he wrote:

If one reads the reports of the activities of [the Brazilian Methodist Church] in the *Expositor Cristão*, one feels the presence of a great administration in which the regulations and the hierarchy occupy an important place... Incidentally, the pastor of a large community clearly expresses how little the individual, be he pastor or layman, counts vis-a-vis the hierarchy representing the Church, when he rejoices in the supplementary powers bestowed upon the bishops by the last *Concílio Geral* with regard to the utilization of "their" ministers: 'The *senhores bispos* will have much more liberty to move their men... We are beginning to see and to understand that man is a mere accident in the general economy of the Church; it is the cause of Christ that is permanent.' 'To move their men': This becomes a game of chess. (1963:145-146)

To be sure, much improvement has taken place in the area of appointments in the Brazilian Methodist Church, especially in the last decade. Even though the bishop is still the one to make the final decision, both the local churches and the ministers are consulted beforehand, and

their opinions tend to have an important bearing upon the bishop's decision. But the problem of the lack of equality between clergy and laity is still a reality. What Duncan A. Reily, professor of History at the Methodist Seminary in São Paulo, Brazil, wrote about the past is also valid for the present:

[Methodists] have a curious mixture of clericalism and laicism in their paunch, which they inherited from Wesley and North American Methodism. The *Ecclesiolae in ecclesia* at the local level were directed by the laity, and their preaching was permitted. But if there was lay leadership at the local level... the Conferences, where policy, doctrine, and the great administrative questions were determined, were totally in the hands of bishops and itinerant preachers. (1980:113)

The Brazilian Methodist Bishop Scilla Franco (1987:9) has said that most Methodist clergy have a grassroots, progressivist talk: "people, people," but they want the people far away from them. And, when individuals from among the people begin to "climb the ecclesiastical ladder," the tendency is to try to stop them.

The missiologist Guillermo Cook adds some insight to this subject when he says:

With the gradual demise of social classes in Methodism, the laity became less and less an important factor in the Methodist Church. Despite its "believers' church" roots, Methodism was in fact moving toward what the Catholic Church would at a later date begin to move *away from*:

a church that, for all practical purposes was concentrated in the clergy. (1985:207)

Summary and Conclusion

This chapter has pursued the question of whether or not the autonomous Methodist Church in Brazil is an indigenous church. We have seen that the most important characteristics of a truly indigenous church are its self-theologizing and its self-understanding abilities:

Self-theologizing as the ability to interpret its socio/cultural/economic context with the help of its tradition, the Scriptures and the Holy Spirit, and self-understanding as the ability for self-criticism as well as the ability to assess its own strengths.

Whiteman (1984b:3) has said that cultural elements come into existence through the following process: It all begins with the process of reflection (ideas) about the specific context and its needs. The reflection leads to specific behaviors, which bring about material or non-material results. This process is the very reason for my belief that self-theologizing and self-understanding are fundamental aspects in the indigenization process. Self-theologizing and self-understanding are the **reflection** aspect of that process which the church must follow if it is to become an integrated part of the culture in which it exists and, therefore, to become

an indigenous church. A church will not become, for instance, self-governing, self-supporting, self-propagating, or anything else, just because someone comes from outside and tells the church to do so.

Whatever a church becomes should be the result of its own reflection under the light of Christian tradition, the Scriptures, the Holy Spirit, and the particular context in which the church exists.

The identity crisis which the Brazilian Methodist Church has experienced lately tells us that, in its more than a century of existence, it has not been able to become really relevant to the Brazilian reality. On the other hand, however, that same identity crisis shows us that the church is aware of its irrelevance and is seeking solutions for that problem. It is now exercising its self-understanding ability. Reily (1981), Josgrilberg (n.d.), and Mattos (1987) demonstrate that a special interest in both the Wesleyan tradition and the Brazilian reality is being developed by the leaders of the church. Hopefully, it will become an interest of the entire church so that it will be able to correct its wrongs and build upon its strengths.

CHAPTER 3 NOTES

1. Allan Tippett (1987:85) has said that even though Venn's and Anderson's theory was widely accepted by mission boards and field missions, it was very seldom tried. Missionary paternalism and their lack of faith in the ability of their converts to take control prevented their letting go.
2. For a more thorough discussion of the term contextualization, see Ukpong 1987.
3. According to Josgrilberg (n.d.:86), Wesley did not waste time in theological controversy with the Anglican Church. Their difference was in the "world as parish" concept, in the service to the people, in the action of the laity.
4. In the second chapter of this dissertation (pp. 51-52), we have given more details about the Brazilian "Catholic culture."
5. In the second chapter of this dissertation (pp.41-47), we dealt extensively with the movement for autonomy.
6. It refers to the Cânones da Igreja Metodista do Brasil (Book of Discipline of the Brazilian Methodist Church). Hereafter this source will be cited as Cânones.
7. See map at the end of the first chapter of this dissertation, p.31.
8. A few interviewees said that only about 40% of the money spent in those projects came from outside. A few others believe that as much as 90% of that money came from outside. But the great majority stated between 60% and 75% is from outside Brazil.
9. Ransom was incorrect. Brazil is the largest nation of the continent, and, in 1876, was the largest in the Western Hemisphere.

10. At the time, an American organization could not buy properties in the country of Brazil. Therefore J.J. Ransom kept all the Mission's properties in his own name. By transforming the Mission into an Annual Conference and making it official before the Brazilian government, that problem was solved.
11. Presently the General Conference meets every five years.
12. In the last chapter of this dissertation, we will see how the 1987 General Conference took a bold step toward making significant changes in the legislation and structure of that church.
13. In the next chapter, I will deal extensively with the subject of growth in the Brazilian Methodist Church.

CHAPTER 4

A Profile of Stagnation in the Brazilian Methodist Church

A. Introduction

Much has been written about the tremendous quantitative growth of the Pentecostal denominations in Brazil in the last few decades. Wagner (1973), Willems (1967), Read (1965), and others have done careful research on the Pentecostal phenomenon in Brazil, in particular, and in Latin America at large.

The Roman Catholic Comunidades Eclesiais de Base (Base Communities movement) has also experienced very good growth in Brazil. Cook defines the CEBs:

They are small groups of about ten to thirty persons from the same area and same class who come together to discuss concrete problems in light of the Bible, and to discuss lines of action in response to their situation. The overwhelming majority of the *comunidades* are poor and come from the margins of society. (1985:2)

In 1979, more than half of the estimated 150,000 Latin American CEBs were in Brazil (Time Magazine, May 7, 1979, p.8). Boff (1977, 1985), Cook (1985), Gallo (1988), and others give us well researched information on that growing movement.

Another religious phenomenon in Brazil is Spiritism and other Spiritism related cults such as Umbanda, Kimbanda, and Candomblé. According to Cook (1985:53), "a staggering 25 percent of the population of Brazil (including almost one-third of all professing Catholics) practice some form of spiritism." Cook goes on to explain the characteristics of that phenomenon in the Brazilian context:

The term "spiritism" alone does not adequately describe the Brazilian phenomenon. It is, in fact, a mix, in varying proportions - and with many local variations - of Portuguese-Catholic popular religiosity, Amerindian animism, well-developed West African tribal religions (the preponderant element), and animistic Bantu beliefs and practices. More recently it has taken on accretions of French Kardecism, which was fashionable among the Brazilian elite in the nineteenth century. Each of these streams is contributing to a loosely-structured "new religion" -- Umbanda -- which claims millions of adherents from the middle and upper levels of Brazilian society, reaching even into the presidential palace. Umbanda aspires to be the "national religion" of Brazil. (1985:54)

Bastide (1971), Bezerra (1985), Castro (1983), and McGregor (1967), have done in-depth studies of Brazilian Spiritism from different perspectives.

The growth of these three religious movements in Brazil -- Pentecostalism, CEBs, and Spiritism -- tells us something about the spiritual hunger and religious receptivity of the Brazilian people. It tells

us about the ripeness of that field in this twentieth century.¹

Why are the Brazilian people so responsive to religious movements such as those mentioned above? Church growth specialist George G. Hunter III (1987) has suggested thirteen "indicators" that help us identify receptive people. According to Hunter (1987:77), "indicators" are "the observable conditions or phenomena that frequently precede or accompany the increased responsiveness of people and the growth of the church." Among other things, Hunter claims that, in a given population, any growing religion serves as an indicator of increased responsiveness. Based on that "indicator" and realizing that the three religious groups which are experiencing growth in Brazil are stressing different messages, we must conclude that the Brazilian people have needs that have not been met by traditional Roman Catholicism, the country's traditional religion, and that they are "searching for something new." They are, in fact, searching for anything that will meet their perceived needs. And it seems obvious that religions -- Christian or non-Christian -- grow because they are addressing people's felt needs.

How about the Brazilian Methodist Church? Has it grown numerically in response to obvious spiritual hunger? This chapter addresses this question. My emphasis is on quantitative growth, as I seek to understand

how responsive the Brazilian people have been to the ministry of the Methodist Church in that country.

Donald McGavran (1970:86) has said that: "In North America, and around the world, the excuse 'I am interested in quality not quantity' must be listed chiefly as a defense mechanism used by those not getting growth." During my field research in Brazil, I talked with various leaders who said that the Methodist Church in that country has not been particularly interested in quantitative growth. But, as we will notice, my study of its documents shows otherwise.

B. Growth Before Autonomy (1870's - 1930)

During its first two decades in Brazil (1867-1887), Methodism reached out mainly to the North American colony in that country. The first three organized churches (Santa Barbara, Piracicaba, and Catete) were composed mainly of North American people. At the end of that twenty year period only 295 people were enrolled in the church:

Year	Membership	Year	Membership
1871	9	1882	113
1876	38	1886	219
1881	60	1887	295

Beginning in 1890, however, Methodism began to move toward the interior of the country, planting churches and growing. By 1901 there were 3,335 Methodists in Brazil -- an increase of 1,130% in 14 years from the 1887 figure. From 1901 to 1920 the growth of the church was 299% in 19 years:

Year	Membership	Year	Membership
1901	3,335	1906	5,162
1902	3,895	1910	6,190
1904	4,589	1920	9,982

We notice that the process of growth begins to slow down a little in the beginning of the twentieth century. In 1908, the South Brazilian Conference wrote the following report concerning the general situation of the church in its area: "Most congregations reported little increase of membership and there is one that reported receiving no new members at all during the year. Such a situation is very saddening" (Minutes 1908:52).

Some of the Brazilian Methodist leaders at that time were concerned about the slow growth of the church. Silveira (1923), for instance, recognized that the church was not reaching out as it should, and affirmed that the excessive emphasis upon an organizational structure which was alien to the Brazilian reality had become a hindrance for growth. In 1923 he affirmed that "the evangelization of Brazil requires another type of

structural organization" (1923:3). But other leaders did not appear to interpret the reality in the same way. In 1929, the Brazilian Methodist leaders wrote a letter to be read during the Twenty-First General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, held in Dallas, Texas, in May 1930. The letter included extensive statistical data about the Brazilian church: three Annual Conferences, fourteen districts, 148 pastoral charges, 15,088 members and 298 Sunday Schools with 16,634 pupils. For the Brazilian leaders, those numbers seemed to represent "rapid development" for, following the statistical data, the letter said:

Yet, what exists and is of the greatest importance in the church that is making such a rapid development is a zeal, an enthusiasm, a spirituality characteristically Methodist. These conditions make us believe and hope that the same glorious history of Methodism in the United States is to be repeated in our country. (Report 1930:6)

C. Growth After Autonomy (1930's - 1950's)

In 1930 the church had an opportunity to choose Brazilian leaders and make the changes in its structure necessary for becoming more relevant to the Brazilian context. Instead, it chose Americans for its bishop and two general secretaries, and accepted the basic church structure suggested by the church in the United States.²

In 1934 the church finally elected a native Brazilian bishop, but, having the chance to choose between a man who had a special concern for both the national reality and evangelism (Rev. Guaracy Silveira) and a man well known by his concern for the administrative and structural aspect of the church (Rev. Cesar Dacorso Filho), the church chose the later. Consequently, it became more bureaucratic and more centralized in its administrative aspect. Writing about the Brazilian Methodist Church in the early 1960's, the French historian Émile Léonard (1963:268) said: "We find *cabinets* everywhere. The smallest church parishes are led by a *pastoral cabinet*."

Some people were optimistic about the future of the church. In 1934, Rev. J. A. Guerra, editor of the Expositor Cristão, wrote: "Now, let us get to work. Let us not argue about the laws. Let us put them into practice. The Motto of Methodism now is: *Evangelizing*" (1934:2). Yet, despite the optimism of people such as Guerra, the growth of the church was far from being a cause for enthusiasm. The following chart shows the pattern for the years 1930-1960:

Year*	Membership	Year	Membership
1930	15,088	1946	29,578
1934	18,492	1950	34,888
1938	22,478	1955	40,635
1942	26,690	1960	48,387

*Membership in the Brazilian Methodist Church is officially computed at each General Conference, every four or five years.

According to Émile Léonard (1963:269), the 1946 General Conference set up many goals for the church, very few of which were achieved.

Among their goals was doubling the number of church members by 1950.

Despite the evangelistic "crusades" organized during the years 1946-1950, that goal was not achieved. From 29,578 in 1946, the membership increased to only 34,888 in 1950.

The 1950 General Conference also set its goals for 1955. Under the motto "Stand Up For Christ," it did achieve some positive results but fell far short of its goals:

Sunday School Students		Members	
Goal -	58,200	Goal -	45,000
Result (1955) -	48,800	Result (1955) -	40,635

Again, in the 1955 General Conference, the church set a goal of 100,000 members for 1960. It reached only 48,387 members. The same would happen in 1960. In the "Minutes and Documents" of that General Conference, we find the following statement: "We understand that the

Methodist Church in Brazil should make a great effort to have 100,000 members in 1967, the year of our centennial..." (Minutes, 1960:221).³ The Goal was obviously not reached, for, in 1970 (ten years after that decision), the membership of the church was 60,608.

D. Ecumenical Emphasis, Liberalism, and Growth (1960's-1980's)

Since its beginning, the Brazilian Methodist Church has emphasized dialogue among Christians from different denominations. In fact, that church has participated in the World Council of Churches (WCC) since 1942, when the WCC was still in the process of organizing. But, until the early 1960's, the openness for dialogue was directed basically toward other Protestant denominations. As mentioned before, the Roman Catholic Church was considered a pagan church, teaching dangerous theological errors from which people should be saved. Methodism, as in any other Protestant denomination in Brazil, depended for its growth on the conversion of Roman Catholics to Protestantism. The Protestant growth in Brazil was, therefore, growth by proselytism.

In the mid-1960's, however, especially after the Roman Catholic Vatican II Council, Methodism in Brazil began an ecumenical dialogue with Catholicism. In fact, the 1965 General Conference created a "General

Commission for Ecumenism," the main task of which was to work on the relationship with the Catholic Church.

According to the Brazilian Methodist minister Rev. Helerson Bastos Rodrigues (1986:92-93), the contact between Methodists and Catholics was made in five different ways: (1) Fraternal approximation through pulpit exchange between priests and pastors, choir exchange, etc; (2) Joint celebrations of special events such as Independence Day; (3) Meetings for historical-theological studies in order to clarify positions and destroy old prejudices; (4) Meetings for elaboration of documents establishing the limits of the relationship; (5) Joint establishment of social service entities. For instance, in the city of Porto Alegre in the extreme south of Brazil, a counseling service was organized in which Catholics, Methodists, Lutherans, and Episcopalians worked together, serving the community.

One of the clear demonstrations of the search for a new kind of relationship between Methodists and Roman Catholics in Brazil was the selecting of Dom Elder Camara, Brazil's best known Roman Catholic clergyman at the time, to be the keynote speaker at the 1967 graduation ceremonies of the Brazilian Methodist Seminary in São Paulo.

Most congregations at the grassroots level did not accept that shift in the Methodist relationship with the Roman Catholics. Many of the people

now in the Methodist Church had come from the Roman Catholic Church. Many of them had suffered persecution and alienation from their Roman Catholic families. In their view, the Methodist Church was taking a step backward. They could not understand why the same church that had taught them to see the Roman Catholic faith as wrong was now preaching an opposite message. A feeling of frustration and loss of direction began to take over the church. Some of the leaders proposed that evangelism be done in a non-aggressive way, trying to recognize the Brazilian debt to Roman Catholic culture. They proposed an evangelism more in touch with the reality of poverty and oppression in Latin America -- an emphasis that the Roman Catholics had also embraced after Vatican II. Some other leaders continued to defend an emphasis upon individual salvation and an evangelization that included making proselytes out of the Roman Catholic Church (Chaves 1985:184-190).

The 1965 General Conference attempted to balance the tension within the church by proposing that, during 1966, three messages be emphasized: evangelism, education, and social action. The Quinquennial Plan for the period 1966-1970 stated: "The program of the Methodist Church is a wholistic one. It seeks to meet every aspect of human needs: spiritual, social, and educational" (Quinquennial Plan 1966-1970:257). But, at the

same time, in the area of numerical growth, the plan would state: "The salvation of souls will be our special goal during the next five years" (Quinquennial Plan 1966-1970:156). In other words, while trying to satisfy the different positions in the church, the 1965 General Conference actually failed to establish any official position for the church on mission and evangelism.

The 1960's were also a time of great tension in the country of Brazil. In 1964 the military took over the leadership of the country.⁴ The people were divided in two radical groups: those in favor of the military government, and those against it. That tension was felt also among the church leaders. They were now divided in terms of their position vis-à-vis the Brazilian government and the Brazilian society. Obviously, that situation would affect the church's understanding of its mission. While some suggested that the mission of the church was to join the fight against an oppressive government, others continued to defend a mission more related to individuals and the salvation of their souls.

The 1960's and early 1970's were also times when a great number of important new theological works became available to theologians and seminary students in Brazil. Works with non-conservative tendencies, such as the A Theology of Liberation of Gustavo Gutierrez (1973) , the A

Black Theology of Liberation of James Cone (1970), Jurgen Moltmann's (1975) The Experiment Hope , and Harvey Cox's (1965) The Secular City, would have a strong influence upon many leaders of the Brazilian Methodist Church (Chaves 1985). In terms of numerical church growth, those emphases proved negative. From 1965 on, the church grew less than ever and, at times, even lost members. In 1967, for instance, a group of five ordained elders and about 1,500 members, convinced that the Methodist Church had become extremely liberal, left the First Conference of that church and organized the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Rio de Janeiro (See chapter two, pp. 56 and 60 n.16).

In a letter to the Expositor Cristão , at the end of the decade, Bishop Wilbur Smith (1970a:3) expressed the feelings of many people in the church: "We decry our deficiencies, our lack of numerical growth, our immobility, our limitation to what represents routine, our slowness." And the 1970 General Conference recognized the crisis of evangelism and growth in the church:

In the last quarter of the twentieth century the Methodist Church in Brazil still did not discover new methods of evangelism to reach the Brazilian people in their concrete situation. That is the reason why our evangelistic campaigns have always less and less results, and the people who decide for Christ within the Methodist movement are very few. The numerical growth of the

church is insignificant when compared to the demographic explosion in our country. (Minutes 1970-1971:119)

Indeed, since the 1965 General Conference, the church had grown very little: from 57,756 (1965) to 60,596 (1970). Rev. Wilbur Smith (1970:14) wrote: "Our numerical growth during 1965/1970 has been really insignificant. And, when compared to the period of 1960/1965, it seems like non-growth."

The situation did not change during the period 1970/1974. During that time the church grew a little more than 4,000 members: from 60,596 to 64,686. An example of that crisis was the First Conference, covering the Rio de Janeiro area. According to the Minutes and Documents of that conference, its growth from 1965 to 1974 was as follows:

Year	Membership	%	Year	Membership	%
1965	14,097		1971	15,890	+6.97
1966	15,979	+13.3	1972	16,131	+1.52
1967	14,132*	-11.6	1973	15,606	-3.26
1970	14,855	+5.1	1974	15,679	+0.47
			1975	15,254	-2.71

*In 1967 about 1500 members broke away from that conference, starting the Wesleyan Methodist Church in Rio de Janeiro.

In 1975 that Conference had 74 churches and 59 congregations.

Therefore, receiving 1157 members (8.21%) in ten years, it was in fact receiving an average of less than one member per church congregation per year. And, even if the split had not happened, the average growth of

that Conference in ten years would still be about two members per church congregation every year.

Many people continued to blame ecumenism⁵ for the stagnation of the church, forcing the leaders to clarify the meaning. This was done, for instance, by the Secretary of Missions and Evangelism for the Second Conference, Rev. Isac Aço (1970:8),⁶ who wrote: "Ecumenism does not mean the emptying of the church and the end of missionary zeal. Ecumenism expresses, instead, the true concern of the missionary work." Aço's point was that proselytism was no longer acceptable as a means of evangelization. The church needed to find new ways.

That search for new ways of doing evangelization was manifested in the intense participation of representatives of the Brazilian Methodist Church in events such as the Latin American Congress on Evangelization in Huampani, Peru (June, 1974), the Lausanne Congress (July, 1974), the Billy Graham Crusade in Brazil (1974) and the Evangelism-in-Depth Institute, organized by Guillermo Cook, in São Paulo, also in 1974.

As a result of this search, little by little the church began to develop a definition of evangelization and ministry centered upon the concept of the kingdom of God. The "Plan For Life and Mission of the Church" makes the following statement about mission and evangelization:

God's mission in the world is to establish his Kingdom. The evangelizing task of the church consists in participating in the construction of the Kingdom of God in the world, by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Minutes 1982:20)

The emphasis on the liberating Christ is also present in the new definition of evangelization. Evangelization, according to the new definition, is the act of "incarnating divine love in the different situations of people's reality so that Jesus Christ can be confessed as Lord, Savior, Liberator and Reconciler" (Minutes, 1982:20).

This new concept was strongly influenced by the new Roman Catholic stance in Latin America in the aftermath of the 1968 Conference in Medellin, Colombia. According to Holliday (1982:106), "Because of the tremendous size of the Catholic Church, it has influenced the Methodist Church in a significant way, especially after the Second Vatican Council of 1962 and the Medellin Conference of 1968."

Despite the new official progressivist definition of evangelization and ministry articulated by the church's leaders and theologians, it has not yet reached the grassroots level. The official position of the church about evangelization and ministry has moved from an emphasis upon the salvation of the soul, to a wholistic concept of salvation, with special emphasis on liberation. But the majority of the people in the local

churches continue to think of evangelization as saving the lost by inviting them to abandon the ways of the sinful world and to inherit eternal life.

It is not my intention, in this chapter, to judge the value of different theological understandings of the meaning of evangelization and ministry. However, it has become clear to me that the approach to evangelization and ministry the Brazilian Methodist Church has taken so far has resulted in very little numerical growth for that church in a rather ripe field. Yet, as we have noticed, there has been great concern for, and much talk about numerical growth throughout the history of that church.

I shall now compare the growth of the Brazilian Methodist Church and that of other Protestant churches in Brazil during the same period.

E. A Comparative Analysis

McGavran has observed that people and societies vary in responsiveness to the gospel. He says:

Whole segments of mankind resist the gospel for periods -- often very long periods -- and then ripen to the Good News. In resistant populations, single congregations only, and those small, can be created and kept alive, whereas in responsive ones many congregations which freely reproduce others can be established. (1970:246)

McGavran (1970:260) has used an imaginary "receptivity axis" in order

to estimate people's receptivity:

DISTRIBUTION OF RECEPTIVITY

A B C J S X Z

People who "solidly resist Christianity" would be at point A in the axis, while those who "break down all barriers in order to become Christians" would be located at point Z (McGavran 1970:260).

By looking at the growth rate of the Brazilian Methodist Church, one might think that the Brazilian population fits the description of a relatively resistant population, somewhere between points C and J in McGavran's "receptivity axis." Yet, by looking at some other denominations, one would have a different perception. People in Brazil, at least in the last three decades, have been very receptive to the Christian message.

According to the COMIBAM⁷ atlas, the evangelical church in Brazil grew 77% between 1960 and 1970, and 155% between 1970 and 1980, reaching 16% of the population (COMIBAM 1987:101). Most of this growth is, of course, the result of the phenomenal Pentecostal movement that Brazil, in particular and Latin America, in general, has experienced in the last few decades. But there are also traditional churches that are experiencing good growth (see Figure II).

Figure II: Date of origin and membership of five Protestant denominations in Brazil.⁸

Denomination and date of origin	1960	1970	1985
Assemblies of God (1910)	376,800	746,400	5,003,000
Christian Congregation (1910)	178,250	357,800	1,253,600
Baptist (1881)	186,900	330,500	602,000
Lutheran (1823)	366,150	433,000	580,000
Presbyterians (1859)	98,000	110,050	155,000
Methodist (1876)	48,387	60,596	82,000

Two questions must be asked at this point: (1) Why has the Brazilian population been so receptive to the Gospel?, and (2) Why hasn't the Methodist Church experienced an adequate growth throughout its history in that country?

1. Indicators of receptivity:

Some of Hunter's (1987:76-86) thirteen "indicators" for identifying receptive people can help us to answer these questions. I have chosen to comment on only three of those "indicators" because they have been the most noticeable ones in the Brazilian context in this last half of the

twentieth century.

The first "indicator" is that **people experiencing major culture change tend to be very receptive**. In the last four decades, Brazil has experienced rapid changes. Events, such as the extraordinary European immigration in the early 1950's, the internal migrations related to the coffee boom, the military coup in 1964 that led to more than twenty years of military rule, the option for the capitalist form of development and modernization with the consequent acceptance of the United States' hegemony, the uncontrollable inflation (more than 1100% in 1988), and the high unemployment rate have all shaken the Brazilian society, making the people open to changes.

The second "indicator" is that **various forms of population mobility induce receptivity**. From a predominantly rural country (60% in 1945), Brazil has become predominantly urban (60% in 1976). Of the 141.5 million people living in Brazil in 1987, 18% lived in Brazil's two largest city, São Paulo (15 million) and Rio de Janeiro (10 million). Besides those two giant cities, Brazil has over 92 other cities with a population of more than 100,000 (COMIBAM 1987:95).

According to the COMIBAM atlas (1987:95), the Brazilian annual rate of population increase is 4.8% (the highest in Latin America). The population

of Brazil is expected to reach 202 million by the last year of the 20th century (COMIBAM 1987:95). This growth has been twice as fast in the urban centers as in the rural areas. Until about 25 years ago, migration in Brazil was mainly related to people leaving the rural areas and small towns to go to the five or six larger cities in that country. Today, however, hundreds of regional centers scattered throughout the country are receiving thousands of migrants every year. Here it is important to remember the church growth specialist Peter Wagner's (1971:112) statement that "areas of rapid urbanization almost invariably contain large segments of population receptive to the Gospel."

The third "indicator" that I want to emphasize states that **"the masses are more responsive than the classes."** According to the COMIBAM atlas (1987:96), there are six million unemployed and 13 million under-employed people in the Brazilian cities. The distribution of wealth is very unequal, and a Brazilian who is counted among the upper class (10% of the population) earns almost twenty times more than the people in the lower class (70% of the population).

2.The Proper Response to the Indicators of Receptivity:

The mere realization of the existence of "indicators" of receptivity, such as those pointed out above, is not enough. Such "indicators" should

become challenges for the church to make adaptations in both its structure and strategies so that it may become more relevant to the context in which it exists.

(a) The "Major Culture Change" Indicator:

The most noticeable consequence of the major cultural changes taking place in Brazil in the last few decades is a sense of insecurity present in the everyday life of most Brazilian people, especially among the great majority who belong to the lower classes. Inflation and unemployment, for instance, together with the individualism characteristic of the capitalist system, has led people to a situation of uncertainty and anomie.

It has become obvious for most Christian leaders in Brazil that one of the reasons for the growth of such religious groups as Spiritism (especially the Umbanda cult), Pentecostalism, and the Roman Catholic Basic Christian Communities is their ability to address people's needs, especially their need for security. The whole structure of the cults related to spiritism in Brazil works toward building a sense of security for their members. Through the relationship with the "spirit guide," the individual's confidence is built up. By the same token, the Pentecostal groups build a sense of confidence in their people by stimulating the free expression of feelings as well as fostering intense participation in the life

of the church. And the Base Communities movement brings security to their members by both discussing and seeking solutions for the problems of the people in the concrete situations.

The Methodist Church, as well as other traditional Protestant churches, when compared to these other religious groups, will have little appeal to people, unless the Methodists decide to review their traditional approach to ministry, which consists mainly of Sunday Schools, formal Sunday night worship services and poorly attended mid-week prayer meetings. Christian community building so that the gospel may address every aspect of people's lives seems to be the obvious solution for people's situations of insecurity and anomie in Brazil today.

Furthermore, it is a fact that the Christian or non-Christian groups which have experienced growth in Brazil today are those which have a clearly defined theory and practice of ministry. People who are experiencing confusion need to know that the group they are joining can help them to overcome confusion. When people leave the traditional churches to join one of these rapidly growing groups, the leaders of the traditional churches tend to criticize both the group and the individual who joined it. Yet, what must be understood is that, no matter what opinion the traditional churches have about those groups, the fact is that

they have been presenting themselves as having both a very firm and clear understanding of their ministry and have made equally clear responses to people's needs and problems.

(b) The "Population Mobility" Indicator:

The fact that the great majority of the Brazilian population is moving toward the urban centers requires that the mission of the church be also predominantly urban. The Pentecostal movement in Brazil is an example of this. The pattern of growth of most Pentecostal churches is predominantly urban. The largest churches are in the largest cities, located in the coastal population belt. They have multiplied themselves in the centers of trade, transportation, manufacture, communication and politics throughout the country. In fact, the Pentecostals did not begin their pattern of church growth in Brazil until after the 1950's when urbanization began to accelerate. Pentecostal growth and urbanization in Brazil seem to have gone together since the 1950's.

Changes in strategy may involve changes in the church's structure. The forms and structures of a church must express the cultural and social reality in which that specific church exists. In the case of an urban society, for instance, the multiplication of "house churches" has proved to be an effective method to reach people. The need for a building may very

well be a culturally conditioned aspect of the church. What is good for the church in a rural area may be irrelevant to the urban church. Most growing Pentecostal groups have used the "house church" approach in Brazil with much success. The missiologist Calvin Guy (1986) advocates the "house church" approach in the context of the large urban centers. He says:

The poverty of the urban masses, their inability to erect and support large structures, and the psychology of the urban poor that prevents them from identification with large numbers of people, point to the small group and the house church as the most feasible approach. In the small, caring communities, where Christians listen to the Word, share the sacraments, uphold one another in prayer, and witness verbally and visibly to their neighbors, it may be that the faith will flow as in the first century to the great urban population. (1986:127)

One of the major difficulties keeping most mainline denominations (Methodists included) from accepting changes seems to be related to the fear of "losing our identity." "Will we be recognized as *Methodists* if we change that much?" That seems to be the greatest fear. Therefore, in trying to keep its trans-cultural identity, the church becomes irrelevant to its context and, consequently, stagnates.

The Basic Christian Communities movement has been an amazing example of courage to challenge old and irrelevant structures for the sake of the revitalization of the church. Emphasizing small groups in the large

urban centers, and using people's houses as their meeting places, that movement has experienced tremendous growth and has become a call to the Roman Catholic Church as well as other Christian churches to return to the simplicity of its New Testament origins.

In order to grow in urban centers a church must also be laity centered. Early Methodism, according to Cook (1985), placed a great emphasis on lay leadership. Yet, in Brazil, it has become "a church that, for all practical purposes, is centered in the clergy" (Cook 1985:207). As in most traditional churches in Brazil, the Methodist Church emphasizes the need of a "highly trained ministry," meaning "ministers with more degrees," but very often the result is ministers who are no longer able to relate to the reality of the common people. The fact is that overdependency upon professional ministers has been destructive to the Methodist Church as well as to other mainline Protestant churches in Brazil.

Growing groups, such as the Basic Communities and the Pentecostals, have understood the importance of lay leaders in facilitating their ministry in the city. Cook (1985) has affirmed that the Basic Community movement has become a "Protestant" phenomenon in the sense that it criticizes the very Protestant churches at the level of their own institutionalization and clericalization. While grassroots Catholics have

rediscovered the doctrine of the "priesthood of all believers," Protestant churches are moving away from it.

The fact is that, since the Second Vatican Council, the Roman Catholic Church in Latin America has both recognized and tried to put to work the Evangelism-in-Depth thesis that "the expansion of any movement is in direct proportion to its success in mobilizing its total membership in continuous propagation of its beliefs" (Strachan 1968:108). In the Basic Community program, each lay Catholic is an evangelist, and the very leaders of the movement come from the laity.

It seems rather surprising that such movement would be taking place within a rather highly clergy-centered denomination such as the Roman Catholic Church. Yet, while the Second Vatican Council did not rediscover lay ministry for the Roman Catholic Church, it was sensitive enough to recognize officially a lay movement that was rapidly emerging among the rank and file of that church in the Third World.

The Pentecostals also have recognized the importance of the laity for the growth of the church. William Read talks about lay leadership in the Brazilian Pentecostal churches:

All have opportunity to be leaders... Ordained pastors are alert to discover those who manifest qualities of leadership... Special assignments are given them for work in

wards, villages, and small towns. Periods of basic training are provided. (1965:134)

The emphasis on lay leadership makes up for the Pentecostals' lack of ordained ministers, and the emphasis upon talents and gifts (charisma) makes up for their lack of highly formal academic training.

Slow in recognizing both the value of small groups meeting in the houses of believers and the importance of lay leaders, the Methodist Church has depended basically on buildings and ordained ministers for its outreach programs in the urban centers. Most ordained ministers must take care of several congregations, traveling every weekend from one church to another. It has become a frustrating experience for many of those ministers who, at best, are able to keep their churches alive but seldom see any growth. That is a minor indication that the church has failed to analyze its context and to realize that, for instance, the "circuit rider" concept, which was so efficient for British Methodism in the 18th century as well as for American Methodism in the 19th century, may not be relevant to Brazilian Methodism if it is to respond to the challenge of urbanization in the present.

(c) The "Masses" vs. "Classes" Indicator:

Hunter's affirmation that "the masses" are more responsive than "the classes" is an important insight as far as the Christian ministry in Brazil is

concerned. As we have noticed in chapter 2, the first Methodist missionaries to Brazil did turn their attention to the lower classes. But soon the emphasis on education, which began with the intent of helping people to learn how to read in order to study the Bible, became a means to serve primarily the upper classes in the Brazilian society. The work with the children of the upper and upper-middle class families became a clear option for the Methodist schools in Brazil. It was rare to find students from the masses attending those schools. Furthermore, the "trickle down" theory was very much accepted by the missionaries at the time. The theory assumes that "if you first win the people with education, wealth, culture, and influence, then Christianity will "trickle down" to the masses" (Hunter 1987:81). Today, scores of prestigious secondary schools and universities in Brazil bear the Methodist label. The 1986 "Methodist Agenda" listed the addresses of more than 30 Methodist educational institutions in Brazil.

In his analysis of the ministry of the Methodist church in Brazil, William Read lists the eighteen most outstanding educational Methodist institutions in that country and makes the following comment:

One is impressed with the large investment of resources both financial and personnel represented by this long yet incomplete list of Methodist institutions in Brazil, but one

wonders whether such heavy institutional stress left enough time for church planting in a most responsive land. (1965:83)

While the Methodists were moving away from the masses, the Pentecostals were moving toward them. The type of organization of the two largest Brazilian Pentecostal churches -- Assemblies of God and Christian Congregation⁹ -- fits the humble people of the masses, and they are attracted by it. Those churches are filled mainly with people from the masses, many of whom are illiterate. Yet, interestingly enough, those churches receive little, if any, financial help from outside.¹⁰ Read (1965:141) says that, when the Brazilian Assemblies receive criticism for being a church for the lower class, "they take it as a compliment rather than a criticism." Read goes on to explain:

The majority of the people [in Brazil] are close to the bottom of the social structure. That majority provides a tremendous field in which to work. That majority is where the Pentecostals are multiplying. They have a rather favorable position at the present time. (1965:141)

So far the Pentecostal churches in Brazil have been of and for "the masses," and, as long as they continue to minister to the felt needs of these people, it appears that they will continue to grow.

The same is the case with the Basic Communities movement. According to Cook (1985:2), "the overwhelming majority of the communities are poor and come from the margins of society." But Cook

(1985:76) goes on to say that, "despite their grinding poverty, *comunidade* members can be both generous and creative with the little they have."

The Brazilian writer Alvaro Barreiro (1982) has done careful research on the Basic Communities (CEBs) movement, and he agrees with Cook.

Barreiro notes that:

The creation of the CEBs has taken place among the lower socio-economic classes. And, in the poor areas, it has been noted that *the most underprivileged have been the ones most receptive to this ecclesial notion*. The difficulties among the other classes are considerable, and when ecclesial groups come into existence, they often become closed and introspective. (1982:13, emphasis mine)

F. Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen that the Brazilian Methodist Church has been historically a relatively stagnant church in a rather "ripe field." We have also noticed that, according to official documents, growth has been a constant concern for the leaders of that church throughout the years. Yet, there have been some hindrances to the growth of that denomination in Brazil.

First, trying to be faithful to "universal Methodism," Brazilian Methodism has maintained an organizational structure that has long since

become ineffective for the Brazilian reality. While more rigid denominations, such as the Roman Catholic Church, have made radical changes in response to the changes that are taking place in Brazil (and Latin America), the Methodist Church has been slow in recognizing -- or, at least, in acting upon the recognition -- that if a church is to be relevant and to grow, it must respond effectively to the changes that are taking place in the context in which it exists.

Second, the lack of well-defined goals as well as the lack of a clear and easy-to-understand philosophy of ministry have been other major obstacles for growth. In fact, a poll taken among the members of the Brazilian Methodist Church prior to the 1982 General Conference showed that the majority of the people interviewed believe that the greatest testimony the church could give to non-Christians today would be "authentic love and unity, well defined objectives, a prophetic voice, and a discourse confirmed by practice" (Chaves 1984:39). We notice that the members of the church themselves see the need for the church to have clearly defined goals as well as concrete action, as opposed to mere discourse.

Third, the overemphasis on higher education for the privileged and the overdependency on the work of the clergy has been and may continue to

be another hindrance for growth, unless the professional ministers begin to use their knowledge and skills to prepare the lay people for an effective participation in the mission of the church.

Of course, numerical growth must not be taken as the only index of ecclesial vitality. Yet, constant lack of adequate growth needs to be taken as a warning that things are going wrong and must be changed. This will be the subject of our next chapter: change through revitalization in the Sixth Conference of the Brazilian Methodist Church.

CHAPTER 4 NOTES

1. These three movements originated in Brazil in this century. The Pentecostals arrived in 1910, the Umbanda -- the largest and most popular spiritism related movement -- was initiated in the early 1950's, becoming more popular in the late 1960's, and the Base Communities movement, which was born in the early 1960's gained strength after the Medellin Conference in 1968.
2. In the second chapter of this dissertation (pp.45-47), I have given more detailed information on this subject.
3. Here the year of 1867, date of the arrival of Rev. Junius Eastham Newman in Brazil, is understood as the beginning of the Methodist work in that country, instead of 1876, as commonly understood by most historians.
4. That military take-over lasted for 21 years, until 1985.
5. Ecumenism here is understood as a friendly relationship with the Roman Catholic Church. That is how the term is used by most people at the grassroots level in the Brazilian Protestant churches.
6. Rev. Isac Aço presently serves as a bishop for the Second Conference of the Methodist Church in the extreme south of Brazil.
7. COMIBAM stands for Comissão Missionaria Ibero Americana (Ibero-American Missionary Commission). Under the theme "Light for the Nations," that commission promoted a great congress on Mission in 1987 in the city of São Paulo, Brazil. The COMIBAM atlas is an attempt to bring to light some facts about the Iberoamerican countries that "will heighten the awareness of the Church with regard to the nature of the global and the Iberian challenge" (COMIBAM atlas, 1987:3).
8. The statistical data in figure II come from the COMIBAM atlas, (1987)

and Brazil 1980: The Protestant Handbook (Read and Ineson 1973). No single work has brought together information about the Protestant movement in Brazil from its beginning to the 1980's.

9. See Nelson (1989) for an analysis of the growth of this church. It must be said that the relationship between the Congregação Cristã no Brasil C.C.B. (Christian Congregation in Brazil) and the other Protestant denominations is not a friendly one because, according to Nelson (1989:49), "Members of the C.C.B. believe that theirs is the only true church and avoid contact with other Protestants."
10. Most traditional denominations in Brazil (Methodist, Episcopal, Presbyterian, Baptist, and others), despite the fact that their members are usually found in the middle and upper classes of the Brazilian social structure, are heavily subsidized by foreign money.

CHAPTER 5

The Program of Renewal

A. Introduction

In chapters 2-4, I have sought to present a broad overview of the Brazilian Methodist Church as a whole. I have called that section the "Period of Development and Stagnation (1876-1976)." I begin now a new section, composed of chapters 5-7, which I call the "Period of Renewal and Growth in the Sixth Conference (1976-1989)." Here I focus on a specific geographical area of Brazil as I seek to describe and critically analyze the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference of the Brazilian Methodist Church, located in southern Brazil.¹

B. Historical Background

1. The Formation of the Sixth Conference:

Created by the 1965 General Conference of the Brazilian Methodist Church, the Sixth Conference is a result of the subdivision of the Second and Fifth Conferences and includes the states of Paraná and Santa Catarina.² In the Minutes and Documents of the 1965 General Conference we find the following statement:

The General Board of Missions and Evangelism presented its report #1 about the number and limits of the Ecclesiastical Conferences. Singing the hymn "Glory, Glory, Alleluia!" the delegates expressed their joy for the creation of the Sixth Conference. (Minutes 1965:60)

Rev. Wilbur K. Smith, a Brazilian minister and child of American missionaries, was elected the first bishop of the new conference. In January of 1966, delegates from the local churches gathered together in the city of Londrina, state of Paraná, for the First Annual Conference under the presidency of the new Bishop. At that time, according to reports from the local churches, the statistics of the Sixth Conference were as follows: 5 districts, 34 churches, 17 ordained ministers, and 3,784 members.³ Most of those 34 churches were concentrated in the northern part of the conference in the state of Paraná. Between the northern and southern parts of the conference, there was a large area (approximately 200 square miles) without any Methodist work, and only three of the 34 churches were located in the state of Santa Catarina, in the extreme south of the conference. The Bishop decided to establish residence in the city of Curitiba, in the south, believing that his presence might help in the development of the Methodist work in that area.

Most churches in the conference were pioneer churches, functioning in temporary wooden buildings. The two largest cities, Londrina and

Curitiba, were the only ones to have adequate church buildings, but they still lacked equivalent accommodations for their Christian education programs.

Both states (Paraná and Santa Catarina) were mainly agricultural, but the rapid progress of industrialization during that time helped to accelerate the process of migration to the urban centers. According to Bishop Smith, "churches are planted (in the rural areas) but quickly disappear" because of the migration process (Minutes, General Conference, 1970:104). In some large and important cities, such as Umuarama, Ponta Grossa, and Guarapuava, in the state of Paraná, and Blumenau, Joinville, Chapecó and Florianópolis (the capital), in the state of Santa Catarina, no Methodist work had been planted.⁴ Obviously, from the time of its birth, the Sixth Conference represented a great missionary challenge to the Methodist people.

2. The First Ten Years (1966-1975):

In the late 1960's the major concern of the leaders was the organization of the conference. In order to do so, it was necessary to understand the reality (the potential and the needs) of the local churches. Bishop Smith spent much time "on the road" visiting the churches. In his report to the 1970 General Conference, he wrote: "During these five years

I have traveled extensively, seeking to be in touch, as much as possible, with both the churches in the city and the churches and chapels in the rural areas" (Minutes Annual Conference, Sixth Conference 1970:63).

As we have seen in the fourth chapter, that period (1966-1975) had been one of stagnation for the Brazilian Methodist Church as a whole, and the Sixth Conference was no exception. In 1968, for instance, only two years after its creation, that Annual Conference was already showing some concern over signs of stagnation. Among the issues discussed during that Third Annual Conference were "the lack of evangelistic fervor" and "the lack of participation of both the youth and the young adults in the church programs" (Minutes Annual Conference 1968:34). Despite the enthusiasm created by its recent organization as well as the appointment of a bishop just for that area, the conference grew very little (8.1% in five years):*

1965	1970
3,784 members	4,090 member
17 ordained elders	20 ordained elders

*Sources: Minutes and Documents Annual Conference 1970:164
Expositor Cristão, August, 1965:27

In the next two years (1971-1972), the Sixth Conference still experienced

some growth, going from 4,090 members in December 1970, to 4,321 members in December 1972, but the crisis of the national church was already the focal point of the 1971 Annual Conference. Evaluating the life of the church, that Annual Conference concluded that "the church is dying" (Minutes Annual Conference 1971:23). During 1973-1975 the Sixth Conference actually lost members, going back to 4,236 in December 1974, and to 4,108 in December of 1975 (Minutes Annual Conference 1970, 1972, 1973, 1974, 1975, and 1978). In his report to the 1973 Annual Conference, Bishop Smith said: "I feel that our conference urgently needs a revival, beginning with us, the ministers" (Minutes Annual Conference 1973:21).

Numerical growth was obviously an important issue for a conference facing such a great missionary challenge. In a geographic area with about 500 cities and towns, the Methodist Church was present in only 30 cities at the time. According to Bishop Smith (1989), the conference's initial vision was "to cover the entire area, spreading the gospel, planting churches, and from there, going into social work." But the people in the church seemed slow in responding to those challenges. Bishop Smith goes on to say:

The church was losing as many members as it was taking

in. Sermons were not geared to challenging people to make changes in their life. There was no discipleship. There was no incentive for young people to become ministers. The church was at a stand still. (1989)

In his report to the Annual Conference, in January 1974, under the topic "Missions and Evangelism," Bishop Smith wrote: "The lack of missionary vision in our churches is very saddening. A church that thinks only of itself is walking the path of death" (Minutes Annual Conference 1974:27). And later, under the topic "Numerical Growth," he stated:

We continue to be concerned about our low numerical growth . The mission of the Church includes more than 'making disciples.' Yet, the 'making of disciples' is the most important commission of our Lord, followed, then, by the ministry of teaching -- 'teaching them to keep everything. . . ' -- We must not accept this situation. Either we become strongly involved in evangelization or we will deserve to be spit out as lukewarm and non-productive. Evangelization is not a work only for the pastors but for every believer. (Minutes Annual Conference 1974:30)

Six months later, in July, Bishop Smith wrote another report , this time to the 1974 General Conference. Among other things he said:

We have two major concerns about our conference's membership: (1) we still haven't been able to impress an evangelistic zeal upon our people, both clergy and laity. Some ministers are so busy with the church's maintenance . . . that they do not have time left for the work of evangelism... (2) a second concern, as important as the first one, is related to the loss of so many members. . . . We are carefully studying the situation in order to find out what is causing so great an

exodus. (Minutes General Conference 1974:104)

3. The Search for Renewal:

There is a radical difference between Bishop Smith's reports in 1974 and his report in January 1977. While in 1974 he was greatly concerned about the situation of stagnation of the church, in 1977 he could not hide his excitement about a new situation in the conference. He wrote:

I thank God because in the majority of the churches there is an awakening. Some churches are experiencing new life, joy in the worship services, prayer groups, interest for evangelism, and victories in many people's spiritual life. . . . We are looking forward to the official statistics so that we may know if these blessings have also produced fruit in terms of new lives led to Christ and integrated into his body. (Minutes Annual Conference 1977:25)

The reason for that radical change was the renewal movement which the Sixth Conference had been experiencing since May 1976.⁵ But, as I have said in the first chapter, the process that brought about the movement of renewal began long before 1976.

Bishop Smith's 1974 report to the General Conference, for instance, says that, at that time, the leaders of the Sixth Conference were already "carefully studying the situation. . ." (Minutes General Conference 1974:104). When the conference began to actually lose members, the leaders began to search for the causes of the problem and for ways to reverse the situation. Rev. Acidy Martins de Castro (1989)⁶ says that the

renewal movement was a response to many crises, such as the spiritual lethargy of both clergy and laity, non-growth, lack of ministers, and financial problems both at the local and conference levels. De Castro participated in many unofficial (informal), as well as official, meetings in which the crises of the church and the need of "something new" were discussed. Most leaders agreed that "if we do not change we will disappear" (A. de Castro 1989). Dr. Norival Trindade (1989), present missions coordinator for the Sixth Conference, agrees with Castro. He says that "both the leaders and the people in the Sixth Conference were seeking for something new, but they did not really know what it was."⁷

According to Lawrence Anthony Brown (1989),⁸ professor of pastoral theology in the Sixth Conference's theological seminary, the sense of lethargy and inadequacy of the traditional church was obvious in every church document in the early seventies. Dissatisfaction had become very visible in the church.

Brown says that in 1975, during one of those attempts to find the "right medicine" for the problem of the church, some of the pastors suggested that the Conference invite two Methodist ministers from the Second Conference, Rev. Moises Cavalheiro de Moraes and Rev. Erasmo Ungaretti, who had been preaching revivals in the Second Conference area for some

time. Those two men were being criticized by people from both their own conference and the national church,⁹ yet their ministry had brought new life to their own local churches as well as to other churches in their conference. Their message centered upon some specific subjects, such as the power of the Holy Spirit, the reality of the gifts of the Spirit (especially tongues, prophecy, and healing), freedom and joy as characteristics of the Christian life, and Christian witness to the world (evangelism). They also called the church back to the teachings of the Bible as against the teaching of "liberal (European) theology," such as the German theologian Rudolf Bultmann's suggestion for "Demythologizing" the New Testament. According to Bultmann (1961:3), the idea that activities on earth transcend natural and ordinary events and that the activities of God, the angels, and Satan and his demons take place on earth as well are "the language of mythology." The accounts of miracles, as well as the resurrection of Jesus, are also part of that "language of mythology" whose origin could be "easily traced in the contemporary mythology of Jewish Apocalyptic and in the redemption myth of Gnosticism." (Bultmann 1961:3). It seems obvious that ideas such as Bultmann's would be considered extremely liberal and unsound to those involved in a ministry that stressed tongues, prophecy, and healing through the power of the

Holy Spirit.

Both Moraes and Ungaretti were well prepared men. Moraes was a professor at a Methodist seminary in the extreme south of Brazil. He had been to Canada for graduate studies and, while in that country, had come into contact with a movement of renewal. That contact resulted in the beginning of radical changes in Moraes' ministry. Ungaretti, also a seminary professor and a friend of Moraes, had also done graduate studies in Europe. In the beginning he criticized Moraes' new ideas, but later he accepted them and became completely committed to Moraes' new ministry.

According to Brown (1989), the idea of inviting Moraes and Ungaretti was followed by the suggestion that "we could be like the Bereans, in the book of Acts, we could hear those men and judge by the Scriptures to see if they are right or wrong." The vast majority of the leaders of the conference accepted that challenge. The conference's council, gathered together in January 1976, decided to officially invite those two men.¹⁰ The initial plan was to have three strategic churches where Moraes and Ungaretti would begin to minister: Londrina, Maringá, and Curitiba. But, being the largest church in the conference and being located in a more strategic area within the conference, Londrina became the primary focal

point of Moraes' and Ungaretti's ministry. The two men became intensely involved with the Sixth Conference. For about three months¹¹ they ministered to a few local churches in that area. They were always accompanied by a team made up mainly of young people who sang and gave testimonies of a new Christian life style. Their songs were contemporary and their rhythm exciting. Instead of the organ -- used for worship services at that time -- they used guitars, drums, and other Latin American instruments, which attracted scores of young people to their meetings.

C. A Renewed Conference (1976 - Present)

According to Rev. Waldir Marins (1989),¹² church members in Curitiba, Maringá, and Londrina began to "receive the Holy Spirit and his gifts." Those churches became exciting places to be, for people began to experience a new freedom of expression making the worship services very much alive. People wanted to share their experiences with other people in their own, as well as in other, congregations. In the beginning, many people tended to resist those changes. Everything sounded and looked unusual and strange. But little by little, witnessing the transformation that was occurring in the lives of their friends and relatives, people who

resisted the movement began to accept it. Mrs. Ramos' experience¹³ (R. Canfield 1989) illustrates what happened with many people in the Sixth Conference. When changes began to take place in the Londrina Central Church in May 1976, Mrs. Ramos' first reaction was one of rejection. In her late 50's, she found the noise of the drums, guitars and hand clapping very annoying. She actually became a strong critic of the movement. However, a few months after the movement started, Clara, Mrs. Ramos' granddaughter, had a deep experience of renewal during one of the services. After that experience, Clara, a teenager at the time, became increasingly more involved in the church, and her relationship to her family improved visibly. As a result of Clara's experience, Mrs. Ramos began to see the movement of renewal differently and, later, she completely accepted it.

1. A Short Period of Troubles:

In August 16, 1976, Bishop Smith surprised most pastors with a "Letter to the Pastors of the Sixth Conference" in which he talked about Rev. Moraes and his team.¹⁴ Among other things, the bishop wrote:

I write this letter with much sorrow in the Lord. It has been our desire that our churches receive the renewal that we need and we hoped that it would come from God by the instrumentality of Rev. Moisés Cavalheiro de Moraes and his team. In fact his [Moraes'] ministry to some of our churches

resulted in religious awakening and holy joy to many people. . . . The Conference Council invited him, by my own suggestion, based upon his promise of loyalty to the Methodist Church and respect for our doctrines. . . . Without denying that God has worked through the ministry of that brother, I must declare that, unfortunately, with the "wheat" he is also sowing the "weed" of doctrines contrary to those of our church.¹⁵

Moraes and his team were gradually becoming radical in their thinking concerning things such as infant baptism, to which they became completely opposed, and the form of baptism (They supported only baptism by immersion). They were, at the time, in the process of breaking away from the Methodist Church in the Second Conference and organizing a new group that later became known as "The Latin Harvest."

In his letter, Bishop Smith requested that the pastors of the Sixth Conference restrain from inviting any person who taught "publicly or particularly, doctrines that are different from our doctrines" to preach in their churches. That letter created some animosity among the pastors. At least two pastors wrote a formal response to the bishop. Rev. Waldir Marins who, at the time, served as a pastor in Maringá, suggested, among other things, that the request that the pastors stop inviting preachers who did not agree with the Methodist doctrines was against the ecumenical spirit of Methodism. Rev. Elias Passeri, who, at the time, was attending seminary after having worked as a pastor for a few years, suggested that,

instead of rejecting Moraes' work, the bishop should invite him for a meeting with all the pastors of the Sixth Conference, so that any misunderstanding could be clarified. It was too late. Bishop Smith had already written a letter to Moraes who agreed not to return to the Sixth Conference while he held his position against some of the doctrines of the Brazilian Methodist Church.¹⁶ One of the greatest differences between Moraes' position and that of the Brazilian Methodist Church was related to baptism. First, Moraes refused to baptize infants, while the Brazilian Methodist Church requires that its ministers perform that ceremony whenever required by parents who are active in the church. Second, rejecting the validity of infant baptism, Moraes went on to affirm that those adults who had been baptized in their childhood should be rebaptized (A. de Castro 1989). Of course, the Brazilian Methodist Church rejects that idea.

While being against the presence of Moraes and his team in the conference, Bishop Smith continued to give strong support to the renewal movement. A. de Castro (1989) says that, "if Bishop Smith had been against the movement, the situation would have been completely different. The movement would have died in the beginning." Trindade (1989) agrees with de Castro. He says that, even though Bishop Smith feared

that the problem with Moraes might cause a split at the conference level, "he was wise enough to allow things to continue to happen."

2. An Inside Leader Emerges:

It was during one of the services led by Moraes in Londrina that Rev. Richard Canfield had the experience described in the introduction of chapter 1 of this dissertation. Before 1976, Canfield had served as a pastor for more than twenty years in various local churches. According to his own words, he was not a "complete failure" as a minister. He always sought to do "a good job," but personally he knew that "there was something missing in my ministry, especially in the area of evangelism and church growth." His greatest frustration was not to be able to "look back" and see people being converted through his ministry. The churches he had served had not experienced growth (Canfield 1989).

In 1969 Canfield was appointed to the church in the city of Maringá. Facing problems with the leaders of that church, he decided to accept a teaching position at one of the city's high schools, dividing his time between the church and that new occupation. According to A. de Castro (1989), who in the early 1970's served as the district superintendent for the Maringá area, the church in Maringá asked that Canfield be transferred. That situation actually provoked a personal crisis that led

Canfield to leave the pastorate in 1973, opting for working full time at the high school. This he did for two years (1973-1974), even though he did help in some small congregations on the weekends.

The conference council, trying to bring Canfield back to the pastoral ministry, invited him to be the pastor of the Londrina Central Church. He accepted the invitation, but, according to his own testimony, he continued to live in a great spiritual and vocational crisis. Moving to Londrina in 1975, Canfield found an anxious congregation. People were unhappy with the stagnation of the church. According to Canfield, it was "an anxious and unhappy church with an anxious and unhappy minister." He goes on to say that not only his church but also his family was in a situation of near disintegration in the sense that his wife and two children were questioning the value of being a part of the church's life. His family's lack of interest in the ministry was growing stronger every day. Something new needed to happen. Inviting Moraes and his team was, as we have seen before, an attempt to change that situation of lethargy.

Canfield says that his experience of renewal came after great struggle. The night before the actual event, he was unable to sleep. The next morning, talking to Moraes, he shared his struggle. Among other things, Moraes told him to "stop fighting and let the Spirit take control" of his life.

That conversation set the stage for Canfield's experience in that Sunday morning service.¹⁷ Shortly after his experience, his wife, his daughter, and, later, his son, had the same experience of renewal, which brought the family back together in support of his ministry.¹⁸

Canfield's experience had a great impact upon the Londrina Central Church. Mrs. Aliete de Oliveira (1989), who witnessed his experience, says: "We saw the man changing right before our eyes. We had never seen anything like that happening with a pastor before."

Other pastors in the conference had experienced renewal during that period, but Canfield's experience caused a greater impact upon the people than that of others, not only in his own local church but in other churches in the conference as well, probably because most people were aware of the vocational crisis he was going through. Little by little, Canfield began to be considered the key person in that renewal movement which stressed a fivefold emphasis: (1) The availability of the power of the Holy Spirit for renewal and mission; (2) the rediscovery of the "priesthood of all believers"; (3) spontaneity (body expression) and creativity (new songs, personal testimonies, etc.) in the worship services; (4) the youth and young adults as the greatest asset of the church; (5) small groups for discipleship (worship is celebration, but actual learning takes place in

small groups led by lay leaders).

With the approval of Bishop Smith and the leadership of Canfield, a group of youth and young adults from the Londrina Central Church began to travel throughout the Sixth Conference, spreading the message of renewal. Lawrence Brown remembers the beginning of that movement:

There was order in the movement. The meetings were powerful but always in order. Canfield was the main person responsible for that. He always reminded the people that God is not a God of confusion. So there was order, but within order, a tremendous spontaneity, which fits right in with the Brazilian culture and the nature of the Brazilian people. (1989)

Later, other local churches also formed witnessing groups which traveled throughout the conference. Therefore, the movement spread from congregation to congregation. Canfield was not the official formal leader of the movement, for, being a local pastor, he had no power over the other congregations. But, undoubtedly, he was the person to whom the greatest majority of the people involved in the movement turned when they had any doubt or needed advice.¹⁹ Aware of his responsibility, Canfield began to read extensively on renewal movements in the history of the Church, such as the Wesleyan movement in England in the eighteenth century. He also read much about the Roman Catholic charismatic renewal movement in Latin America (Canfield 1989).

More and more people were introduced to the renewal experience, and, with that new sense of freedom and enthusiasm, especially in worship, the movement began to grow and develop within the Sixth Conference.

3. Tension and Growth:

The news about the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference did not sound like good news to most leaders of the Brazilian Methodist Church at the general level. It reminded them of the split in the Rio de Janeiro area in the late 1960's.²⁰ Furthermore, Moraes, the initiator of the movement, and his followers had also broken away from the church in the Second Conference. The question those leaders were asking was whether or not the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference was just one more radical movement intent upon dividing the church further. For many people, both clergy and laity, outside the Sixth Conference, that movement was a "charismatic/pentecostal" one, alien to the Methodist historical identity.²¹ The term "charismatic" became the permanent label used in the Brazilian Methodist Church to refer to the movement in the Sixth Conference. After a while the people involved in the movement also began to call themselves "charismatic." Norival Trindade (1989), lay representative of the Sixth Conference at the national level, remembers the way people played with words in order to criticize the renewal movement: "They used to make a

joke saying that we were not the Sexta Região (Sixth Region) but the sexta religião (sixth religion).” Despite the criticism, the movement of renewal brought new life to the Sixth Conference. Evangelism became a natural characteristic of most churches in the conference. Furthermore, a new emphasis which was not a strong aspect of Moraes’ ministry, became part of the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference -- the emphasis on deliverance.

For the Brazilian people, the world of spirits is very real. The growth of religious groups such as Spiritism, Umbanda, and Candomblé (Bastide 1971, Bezerra 1985, Castro 1983, McGregor 1967), which provide people with contacts with the spirits of the dead, is a clear demonstration of the influence of the spirits in the life of those people. One of the consequences of this openness to the world of the spirits is the spiritual oppression and/or possession experienced by so many people in Brazil. Protestant churches constantly face situations where they need to deal with this kind of problem. Yet, while the Pentecostal churches actually deal with the problems, most mainline Protestant churches, not knowing how to handle them, intentionally send the people to the Spiritism centers, choosing not to deal with them (Passeri 1989).

Mrs. Ferreira’s case²² illustrates this situation. Mrs. Ferreira’s husband

had been acting very strangely for about two months. Once or twice a week, he behaved "as if he were not himself." His eyes and his voice looked and sounded different, and he became very violent without using any kind of drugs or alcohol. Mrs. Ferreira sought help at a mainline Protestant church. After talking to her for about 45 minutes, the pastor suggested that she take her husband to a spiritism center four blocks away from that church. "They deal with this kind of problem over there," said the pastor. After attending the spiritism center twice, Mr. Ferreira's situation became even worse. It was then that their neighbor, a member of the Presbiteriana Renovada church, a Pentecostal denomination, invited Mrs. Ferreira to come to her church and "bring Mr. Ferreira along." The pastor took a special interest in Mr. Ferreira and, after a few weeks of prayer and counseling, Mr. Ferreira was "completely changed." He also became a member of that church and is intensely involved in the evangelism program of that church.

After the renewal movement, most Methodist churches in the Sixth Conference began to deal more effectively with the issues of spiritual oppression and/or possession, and a great number of people who came to the churches to have their spiritual problems solved later were baptized and became members of the church. After a long time of stagnation, the

conference was once again experiencing growth, as indicated by the following chart:

Year	Membership	Percentage of Growth
1975 (December)	4,108	
1976 (December)	4,327	5.3%
1977 (December)	4,571	5.6%

4. A New Bishop:

In 1978 Bishop Smith decided to retire. In the Minutes and Documents of the XII General Conference, gathered in July of 1978, we find the following statement: "Bishop Wilbur Kirkwood Smith, of the Sixth Conference, declares that he does not intend to continue in the episcopacy for the next period. He expects to retire and thanks the church for its confidence in him" (1978:57).

The new bishop elected to take Smith's place was Rev. Richard Canfield. The Brazilian Methodist minister and writer Odilon Chaves (1985:218) gives the following interpretation of Canfield's election:

"Richard Canfield was elected bishop for the Sixth Conference. With that act the church recognized the charismatic movement within Brazilian Methodism." As the bishop of the Conference, Canfield had now an even

greater influence upon the local churches and was freer to share his beliefs at the conference level.

The greatest instrument for spreading the message of renewal in the 1980's has been an annual gathering called Encontrão Regional (Large Conference Gathering) that already in the early 1970's had become a tradition in the Sixth Conference. Hundreds of people from most local churches come together every year for two or three days of fellowship either in a specific city or at a camp ground. After Canfield's election, the message of renewal became the main emphasis of those meetings. The teaching on the Holy Spirit in connection with the baptism of the Holy Spirit became a regular topic at those meetings. Lately, the name of that gathering has been changed to Encontrão Regional de Reavivamento (Large Conference Gathering for Renewal). The idea is that, after participating in those meetings, people will go back to their local churches and share their experience of renewal with other people in their congregation. The result has been positive, and many local congregations have adopted the emphases of the renewal movement.

Since 1978 there have been no annual statistics available. But on a five year basis, the numerical growth of the Sixth Conference has been the following:

Year	Membership	Percentage of Growth
1977 (December)	4,571	
1982 (December)	5,524	21.0%
1987 (December)	6,700	21.5%

However, according to Bishop Canfield (1989), there are more people being received by the church in the Sixth Conference than the official numbers indicate. Canfield seems to be correct. In the mid-1970's people began to move from the state of Paraná to other areas of the country. While some are migrating to larger cities, such as São Paulo, others are moving to newly developed towns in central, northern, and northwestern Brazil. Therefore, many people who are received into the Sixth Conference end up moving to other places. A. de Castro (1989) says that "there are Methodist congregations in Mato Grosso (central Brazil) in which most of the members came from the Sixth Conference." Trindade (1989) observes that "it is almost ironic that during the 1960's when people were coming into the Sixth Conference area, the church was stagnant. Today people are moving away from this area, and the church is still experiencing growth."

According to Rev. Estevão Canfield (1989), there are important

elements in the renewal movement that, though they have great influence in the growth of the church, can not be translated into numbers: (1) people have more interest in the study of the Bible, intercessory prayer, and evangelization; (2) while the pre-renewal church service was better defined as a "minister's monologue" in which, during 60 minutes, the pastor spoke, prayed, made announcements and allowed the congregation to sing just a few hymns, now people give testimonies, dance, express their feelings, and sometimes the worship service goes on for more than two hours; (3) the church has become a place where people with spiritual, material, and psychological problems are welcome, and their problems are dealt with in the community of believers. Brown (1989) affirms that "new growth took place under the charismatic movement because that movement fits in with the natural Brazilian emotional tendency." Many people are seeking a meaningful Christian fellowship where they can find love -- a kind of love that cares for and nourishes them in Christ. That is quite evident in the renewal movement.

Summarizing, the history of the Sixth Conference shows us a church that, having struggled for about ten years with a situation of relative stagnation, has found new life and growth through a movement of renewal that affected both clergy and laity and created new leadership as

well as a new vision of ministry for the church.

Now I will apply Wallace's (1956) revitalization theory as I seek to analyze the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference.

D. The Revitalization Theory Applied to the Sixth Conference

As I have suggested in the first chapter, Wallace's (1956) revitalization theory, together with Barnett's (1953) theory of innovation, can be helpful for examining and understanding the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference. My task in this section is to analyze that movement so that, in the next chapter, I may draw some conclusions as to its relevance or irrelevance to the Brazilian Methodist Church as a whole.

With the help of Wallace's and Barnett's theories, I will seek to analyze (1) the previous "steady state" in the Sixth Conference, (2) the nature of the crisis, (3) the dynamics of the changing situation (here Barnett's theory will be most helpful for understanding how the message of renewal was communicated), and (4) the eventual emergence of a new steady state.

Alan Tippett has said that churches run into periods of fatigue and decline. When it happens,

there is need for reformation, revival, renewal or revitalization, that a church which has become static and is about to die may begin to grow again. At this point

Wallace's revitalization theory has been useful in helping us to describe and understand the process involved. (1987:179)

Tippett goes on to suggest that the concept of revitalization can be found throughout the Old Testament where God is continually seeking to renew his people, and the prophets are God's instruments in His work of revitalization. In the Christian context, revitalization movements are "group responses of renewal when the church has 'run down' somewhat" (Tippett 1987:179).

The reader will recall that, in the first chapter (pp.8-16), I have described Wallace's theory of revitalization, in which he describes the main features of a major culture system's pattern of innovation by means of which a social group confronting stress returns to normal. In summary, Wallace's model is as follows: The pattern begins with a steady state, a period of dynamic equilibrium. As time goes by, the equilibrium is disturbed by increased individual stress that soon leads to a period of real cultural distortion -- a state of disequilibrium affecting the whole group. In such a condition, the social group is about to die, unless a revitalization process -- *formulation of a code, communication, organization, adaptation, cultural transformation and routinization* -- takes place to save the social group from disintegrating or being absorbed by some other group.

As I have already stated, I believe that, by using Wallace's model as a theoretical framework, we can further our understanding of the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference.

1. The Steady State Period:

It seems accurate to affirm that for a few years (1966-1970) the Sixth Conference experienced what Wallace calls a "steady state." Of course, the Brazilian Methodist Church as a whole was, at that time, already experiencing a crisis of identity²³, and the Sixth Conference was no exception. But the excitement created by the organization of the conference in 1965, the new bishop, the missionary challenge, and the little growth experienced by the local churches kept whatever crises that had occurred in the conference within the limits of toleration. According to Wallace, during a steady state, people do have needs which are created by the natural flow of culture change, but those needs can be met without any disturbance. Though the Sixth Conference was not really growing during that period (1966-1970), it seems that at least it was providing for whatever needs its members had. As we have seen before, the Methodist people in the Sixth Conference in the 1960's were mostly rural people, and the tension created by the rapid changes in Brazilian society was not as noticeable to the rural dwellers as it was to the people living in the cities.

2. The Periods of Increased Individual Stress and Cultural Distortion (The Nature of the Crisis):

The 1971 Annual Conference's conclusion that "the church is dying" and the loss of members during the 1973-1975 period point to the fact that the church had, at that time, begun to experience great stress. It is important to notice at this point that while the Methodist church in the Sixth Conference was stagnant and/or losing members, the Pentecostal denominations in that same geographic area were experiencing effective growth. According to William Read and Ineson (1973:97), the Assembly of God Church in the state of Paraná, for instance, grew from 38,450 members in 1965 to 57,000 members in 1970, a growth rate of 48.2% in five years. Other Pentecostal groups, such as the Christian Congregation of Brazil (Nelson 1989) and Brazil for Christ Church (Read and Ineson 1973), were also booming in that area. One should ask what needs the Pentecostals were addressing that the Methodists were not so that people were attracted to the one and not the other. Rev. Estevão Canfield (1989) suggests that these groups have at least two emphases very much related to the Brazilian culture. First, they emphasize supernatural experiences (Cf. Read 1965:208-212). According to Canfield, the Brazilian culture is a mixture of Portuguese, African and Latin American Indian cultures, which

are all extremely sensitive to unseen realities and open to spiritual experiences (Cf. Willems 1967:20; Cook 1985:54). The traditional churches, tending to both reject and repress most supernatural manifestations, offer little attraction to people, especially when people are presented with other alternatives. Second, Brazilian people are very emotional and need freedom to express their feelings. The formal liturgy of the more conservative churches, including the Methodist Church, seems and sounds dull when compared to the liturgy of the Pentecostal churches, where hand clapping, expressions of praise, spontaneous intercessory prayers, and the use of more Latin American instruments are natural elements of the services. The 1965-1975 period was a time of increasing migration to the urban centers where individuals had a choice about which church to attend. In such a context, a church that emphasizes the spiritual realm and stimulates spontaneous emotional expressions will certainly be attractive to people. The crisis of the Sixth Conference, which it shared with the Methodist Church as a whole in the 1965-1975 period, was, therefore, the crisis of a church which had become unattractive and irrelevant to the context in which it existed.

In the first chapter of this study, I pointed out Tippett's (1987:222) suggestion that "great social, political, and religious changes are more the

result of developing situations than single events." According to Tippett, often, when we look at the condition of a given institution, people tell us that such a condition is due to a particular event or happening. Tippett tends to resist that approach unless a more critical examination proves it to be true. He says: "I believe that far more often the condition of an institution at some given time of examination is the result of an *evolutionary* rather than a *revolutionary* process" (1987:222). In the first chapter, I have also pointed out Smalley's (1957:233) suggestion that "people do not change their behavior unless they feel a need to do so." Unless there are urgent needs, people will prefer to avoid change. In the absence of unmet needs, the familiar is always more comfortable.

It seems obvious that the situation of stress that has been experienced by the Methodist Church in the Sixth Conference, brought on by its unattractiveness and irrelevance to its context, was a primary factor making religious changes possible in that conference. Therefore, the renewal movement did not come unexpectedly. Neither was it unexplainable. Looking back, one could see the situation in its process of development. The two possible consequences of that developing situation of stress were either the disappearance of the Methodist church in the Sixth Conference or, as it actually happened, complete transformation

through revitalization. Statements already quoted from leaders of the Sixth Conference, such as "the church is dying," "our conference urgently needs a revival," "we must not accept this situation," "we are carefully studying the situation," and "if we do not change we will disappear," demonstrate people's awareness of the urgent need for change.

Allan Tippet, studying the subject of openness to change, has developed the concept of the "reservoir of tension." According to Tippet, a group going through an experience of stress due to unmet needs is not automatically open to change. It takes time because, in fact, people tend to fear changes. Tippet says that, during the period of stress, the following process takes place:

[the group] interacts within itself and in relationship with its environment... it encounters conflicting and sympathetic forces, it may even be confronted by direct advocates of change, but it goes on its own sweet way oblivious of all these forces around it. Yet it is not unaffected. [It] is testing, watching, being impressed or unimpressed, as the case may be. (1987:287)

Tippet goes on to say that, even when the group apparently rejects new ideas, usually because of people's natural tendency to fear changes, the group is, even if unconsciously, "building up an attitude, . . . fixing its reference points," while its needs, and, consequently, its inner tension, develop. Tippet (1987:288) calls it the "reservoir of tension" and defines

it as "a built-up communal experience which only requires a spark to explode it. [It] may be a feeling of expectancy or an intense passion for emancipation." That tension is only released when a new factor is injected into the group. Tippett (1987:288) says that "it may be a person - a mad prophet, an idealist poet, a political agitator - ...From this new factor flow a whole flood of new innovations." It seems obvious, therefore, that if the Sixth Conference had been experiencing a steady state period and people's needs were being met, Moraes and his team would not have made such a great impact upon the churches which they visited. The increasing situation of stress and, consequently, the people's desire for change were like open doors welcoming Moraes' message of renewal.

3. The Period of Revitalization (The Dynamics of the Changing Situation):

As we have seen in the first chapter, Wallace lists six vital functions in the process of revitalization. The first function is the formulation of a new code by an individual or a group of individuals. This "new code" will enable the group to establish a new self-image. In the case of the Sixth Conference, Bishop Smith, together with the Conference Council, "carefully studying the situation," decided to invite Moraes and his team. Therefore, in a sense, the leaders of the Sixth Conference borrowed the "new code" from outside.

At first glance, it seems to contradict Kietzman's (1954:74) suggestion that "change is almost always initiated by someone within the cultural community. Even though the idea may have been sparked by contact with another culture, it still must be introduced from within to be accepted."

If we think in terms of the Brazilian Methodist Church as a whole, Moraes and his team would be considered "inside" elements, but, if we think in terms of the Sixth Conference in particular, then Moraes and his team would be considered "outsiders," since they belonged to the Second Conference, located in another area of Brazil. I believe that, because Moraes was a Methodist minister, it was easier for the Sixth Conference leaders to accept his new approach to ministry and, consequently, invite him to minister to the churches in the Sixth Conference, which he did for a few months. Yet, theoretically, Moraes and his team could not have spread their message of renewal throughout the entire Sixth Conference. Most people in the conference did not know them. Therefore, they would have considered Moraes and his team to be strangers and "outsiders," and they would have looked at them with mistrust. Unfortunately, we will never know how far Moraes and his team, being a group of "outsiders" in the Sixth Conference, would have been able to go in communicating their

message to the people in that area. As we have already seen, Moraes' "new code" became so radical that he was asked to end his relationship with the conference.

As Canfield and other ministers had their experience of renewal, the "new code" also experienced changes, such as the special emphasis on deliverance, which was not strong in Moraes' preaching, and the absolute setting aside of the issue of baptism, which was an important aspect of Moraes' message. To use Barnett's (1953) insight, we can affirm that, in the process of accepting the innovation (the "new code"), the Sixth Conference leaders adapted it to their own needs, in their own way, and gave it emphases quite different from those of Moraes. While Moraes' message strongly opposed some of the Methodist doctrines, the "new code," as developed by the leaders of the Sixth Conference, was a recombination of elements of the traditional church and new insights coming from their personal experience of renewal. By being able to make that kind of recombination, the Sixth Conference leaders became the real innovators. That fact confirms Whiteman's (1983:26) suggestion that "innovation is a recombination, not something emerging from nothing."

The second function listed by Wallace in the process of innovation is the communication of the new code. It is essential for the growth of the

movement, and its tone is usually evangelistic. "The code is offered as the means of spiritual salvation for the individual and of cultural salvation for the society" (1966:60).

The way the message of renewal was communicated in the Sixth Conference followed some important principles of communication of innovation. First, lay people received the message from other lay people like themselves. The teams of youth and young adults, used by the Londrina church (and later by other churches) to carry on the message to other congregations, made it possible for the common people to believe that the experience of renewal as well as the gifts of the Spirit were not available only to the clergy. Everett Rogers' (1983:18) thesis is that "the transfer of ideas occurs most frequently between two individuals who are alike, similar or homophilous." Second, ministers received the message from other ministers. The Encontro Regional as well as the annual ministers' meetings were opportunities in which experiences of renewal were shared. Rev. Canfield's experience and consequent change in his life and ministry represented a powerful witness supporting that message of renewal. We have already said that Canfield's experience caused a tremendous impact, first upon his local church and, later, upon the entire conference, making him a key person in the movement of renewal. The

missiologist Hans Kasdorf (1980:130) has said that the "prophet-leader" is the innovator who "communicates his experience to others who become his disciples and in turn tell still others." Though very few ministers would publicly state that they were Canfield's "disciples," the fact is that, when I asked the interviewees who was the person that the people and the pastors looked up to as the leader of that movement, all of them agreed that Canfield was that person. I finally asked Canfield that same question. A little embarrassed, but without hesitation, he answered: "They looked up to me" (Canfield 1989).

The fact is, however, that no matter how strong Canfield's experience had been, the communication of the message of renewal would not have had the same positive results had not the people been ready for change. Communicators of innovation must not forget that "great religious change tends to come when people are ready for it" (Tippett 1987:255). The conference's situation of stagnation and the stress people were experiencing as a consequence of unmet needs were obviously the reasons why they saw the "new code" as a means of renewal for both the individuals in particular and the conference at large.

The third function in the process of revitalization is organization. In the Sixth Conference the movement of renewal did not develop its own

organization. Its structure was that of the conference itself. Yet, little by little, the renewal movement began to affect the conference's organizational structure. For instance, the emphasis on lay leadership (already noted in this chapter, p.144) became one of the strongest aspects of the movement. Special courses for lay evangelists were developed, and charismatic leadership²⁴ came to be recognized as an important asset for the local churches. In the city of Londrina, for instance, there are three churches and three congregations.²⁵ Only one of those six communities is led by an ordained minister with a B.A. degree in theology. The other five are led by lay people who, being recognized as having the "gift of leadership," have received special permission to perform the sacramental acts. Another factor that has contributed to the renewal of the conference's structural organization is that, after 1976, many young men and women decided to go into the pastoral ministry. This represented a new situation in the Sixth Conference because, for a period of twelve years (1966-1978), not a single person had graduated from the Methodist Seminary. The few young men who had entered the seminary during that time had quit along the way. According to A. de Castro (1989), during that period there was "a great lack of ministers." Bishop Smith (1989) agrees with Castro, and explains: "There was no incentive for young

people to become ministers because the church was stagnant."

Bishop Canfield's appointment list for 1986 is a good example of the positive effect that the renewal movement has had upon the leadership of the conference. The number of ministers appointed to the 50 churches and congregations in that conference in 1986 was as follows: 16 lay evangelists, 31 ordained elders, and 3 American missionaries (Expositor, "Nomeações Episcopais", 1986:22-24). The important factor to be noticed here is that 30% of the appointed people were lay evangelists, and 17 of the ordained elders (55%) were young ministers who had entered the conference after 1978.

The fourth function in the process of revitalization is the adaptation, that comes as a response to opposition, resistance, and criticism. The renewal movement in the Sixth Conference faced much criticism, becoming a very controversial topic within the Brazilian Methodist Church. During the late 1970's, the Expositor Cristão published many articles on the subject. Under titles, such as "Renewing or Dividing?" (Siqueira 1976), "Acts Chapter 29" (Ungaretti 1976), "Renewal" (J. Rocha 1977), "A Warning Against the Charismatic Movement" (Cortez 1978), and "The Charismatic Movement" (D. Barros 1978), people expressed their feelings and ideas about that which had become known as "The

Charismatic Movement" or "The Movement of Renewal Through the Power of the Holy Spirit." Some were definitely against the movement. The editor of the Expositor Cristão at the time, Rev. Tercio Machado Siqueira (1976:3), wrote: "A charismatic tendency is invading our more traditional communities, creating a climate of division and dissatisfaction." Dr. Lucy Cortez (1978:7), a Methodist lay leader, in "A Warning Against the Charismatic Movement," concluded, "I hope the Methodist leaders will become conscious of the danger of having this charismatic movement within our church. . . ." Others, such as Rev. Gessé Cardoso (1977), were clearly in favor of the movement. Cardoso wrote:

We hear that the charismatic gifts brought problems for the church in Corinth and therefore they must be rejected. The Holy Communion also brought problems, people sometimes got drunk and ate too much. Yet the church did not reject the practice of Holy Communion. What we need is a clear orientation about the charismatic gifts. (1977:2)

The "clear orientation" did come. The College of Bishops, gathering together in April 1980 in the city of São Paulo, wrote the "Pastoral sobre a Doutrina do Espírito Santo e o Movimento Carismático" (Pastoral on the Doctrine of the Holy Spirit and the Charismatic Movement). In a 47 page document, after a brief introduction emphasizing the importance of the unity within the Body of Christ, the bishops (1) carefully explained the

emphasis of the charismatic movement, (2) reflected on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit, quoting extensively from both the Bible and the works of John Wesley, and (3) gave pastoral directions for ministers and lay people about how they should relate to the movement. The third part of the document was the most practical one. Further divided into five parts, it contained: (a) directions for everyone, (b) directions for charismatic ministers, (c) directions for non-charismatic ministers, (d) directions for charismatic lay people, and (e) directions for non-charismatic lay people. The document concluded with the following words:

"United by the Spirit, Methodists Evangelize"-- If we allow the Holy Spirit to be present in our lives and in the life of the Church, creating love, and if we maintain ourselves united, despite our different opinions and despite our individual experiences, then we will have the power to evangelize the world. (Pastoral do Colégio Episcopal 1980:47)

In sum, the college of bishops (1) recognized the existence of the tension between charismatics and non-charismatics, (2) affirmed the fundamental importance of the Holy Spirit's action in the life of the church, (3) clarified the fact that the Holy Spirit acts in different ways in different groups, and (4) called the church to unity amid diversity, based on the common mission of the various tendencies: "to evangelize the world."

After a few years, cultural transformation -- the fifth function of the revitalization process -- became obvious in the Sixth Conference. The movement was able to capture the allegiance of a substantial proportion of a local population (conference members) and, with the new enthusiasm for worship and evangelism, the sense of lethargy and stagnation disappeared from most Methodist churches in that area. As early as 1977, Bishop Wilbur had already said: "I thank God because in the majority of the churches there is an awakening. . ." (Minutes Annual Conference 1977:25).

Many factors contributed to the movement's arrival at the sixth and last stage of the revitalization process, routinization, at which, according to Wallace, the movement begins to lose its revolutionary characteristics, and people become concerned with maintenance. Among those factors, two seem most important. (1) Rev. Canfield's election as bishop of the conference in 1978. Of course, Canfield's election did not force people to accept the movement, but his election demonstrated that the movement's tendencies had already become widely accepted within the conference, and that the national church had already accepted the possibility of a "charismatic" bishop for a "charismatic" conference. At least, that was the interpretation of the Methodist minister and writer Odilon Chaves (1985:218), noted above (pp.152-153). In fact, as we will see in chapter

six, Canfield's election was an important factor in avoiding a break away situation. Most revitalization movements tend to break away from their parent body during the period of adaptation in which the leadership deals with criticism, resistance and opposition (Wallace 1956:170). (2) The College of Bishop's document on the charismatic movement was an obvious demonstration of the national church's awareness that the renewal movement "had come to stay," and, though many people at the national level did not (and still do not) accept it, the bishops' document was, to say the least, a demonstration of respect for the movement.

E. Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter I have sought to describe and analyze the causes, the process, and the effects of the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference. Wallace's (1956) "revitalization" theory and Barnett's (1953) "innovation" theory proved helpful in making the analysis. The use of these two theoretical orientations demonstrates that religious movements can and ought to be analyzed from the perspective of the social sciences, such as, in this study, cultural anthropology. Many people would resist that kind of suggestion by affirming that we can not rationally understand religious phenomena such as a renewal movement because we can not rationally

understand the Spirit of God's action. Yet, I agree with Whiteman's (1984a) suggestion that, when one analyzes the cultural dynamics of a religious movement, one does not necessarily have to dismiss the work of the Holy Spirit. Whiteman says:

We may be able to provide a cultural explanation of the revival movement, but this explanation cannot be a substitute for the real cause of it. In other words, it is the movement of God among his people that is the cause of a revival, but the patterns the revival follows will often conform to familiar, cultural patterns within that society. (1984a:52)

In my analysis of the Sixth Conference's renewal movement, I have purposefully left out the last stage of Wallace's model -- the new steady state -- because I believe that, although that movement has achieved a situation of stability within the Sixth Conference, its effect is far from over. As we will see in the next chapters of this study, that movement is now reaching beyond the limits of the Sixth Conference into other conferences of the Brazilian Methodist Church. In that larger picture, communication, resistance, and adaptation are still taking place.

In chapter six (pp.213ff.), we will notice that, though the movement has lost some of its revolutionary characteristics, the leaders are seeking to preserve the movement's strength. Missionary outreach as well as regional encounters of renewal are some of the elements that have served

as antidotes to entropy.

Chapter 5 Notes

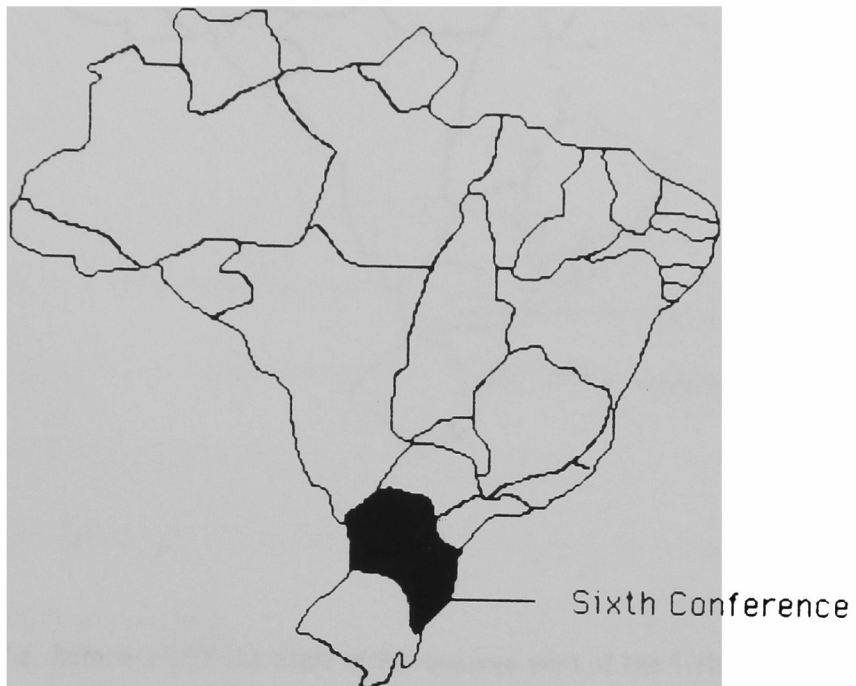
1. See map #2 on page 179.
2. See maps #3 and #4 on page 180.
3. These statistical data were presented by Bishop Smith, in his first Episcopal Report, to the 1970 General Conference.
4. Later in this chapter, we will notice that, after the beginning of the renewal movement in 1976, churches were planted and are now growing in most of those large cities.
5. See the introduction to chapter one, pp.2-3.
6. Castro has served as a pastor in the Sixth Conference since its organization. He served the Londrina Central Church for eight years in the late 1970's and early 1980's. Castro was appointed to that church to take the place of Rev. Canfield in 1978, when the latter was elected bishop of the Sixth Conference.
7. Trindade is a lay member of the Londrina Central Church. He is also the Sixth Conference's mission coordinator. Since 1988 Trindade has become the president of the Comunidade Evangélica Metodista del Paraguai (Evangelical Methodist Community of Paraguay), a joint missionary effort between the Sixth Conference and the Mission Society for United Methodists in the United States.
8. Brown is an American missionary to Brazil through the General Board of Global Ministries. He has served as church planter, local pastor and is lately serving as theological consultant for the CEMETRE Methodist Center of Teaching and Training in Londrina.
9. Moraes and Ungaretti had become critical of some Methodist customs and practices. Later in this chapter, we shall talk more specifically about this subject and see how their growing radicalism resulted in a split away from the Brazilian Methodist Church.

10. Though the minutes of that meeting were not available to me during my field research, I was able to find an original letter written on August 16, 1976, by Bishop Smith to the pastors of the conference, in which, among other things he says: "In the beginning of this year, the Conference Council, by my own suggestions, decided to invite brother Moises (Moraes) and his team, to come to our conference. . . ."
11. As we will see later in this chapter, in August 1976 Bishop Smith requested that the pastors stop inviting those two men and their evangelistic team to come to the Sixth Conference.
12. Marins was, at the time, the pastor of the church in Maringá, one of the three churches that, according to the Conference's council, would receive Moraes' and Ungaretti's ministry. Marins is now a retired minister and works as a volunteer in the conference's evangelism program.
13. The names in this story have been changed for the purpose of privacy of the people involved in it.
14. Though Moraes and Ungaretti were both leaders of the group, most people saw Moraes as *the* leader, obviously because of his more charismatic personality. Hence the expression "Moraes and his team."
15. In his two page letter written in August 16, 1976, to the pastors of the Sixth Conference, Bishop Smith also reminds the pastors of their vows to be faithful to the Methodist beliefs and doctrines.
16. Copy of the letters written by Bishop Smith, Marins and Passeri were made available to me by Passeri, who presently serves as a pastor at the church in Maringá. Moraes' letter to the bishop was not available, but, in his second letter to Moraes in September 1, 1976, Bishop Smith thanks him for "the way you responded to my request that you do not return to the Sixth Conference, while you are in disagreement with our doctrines."
17. See chapter one, pp.1-2.
18. Later Canfield's daughter married a Methodist minister, and the couple

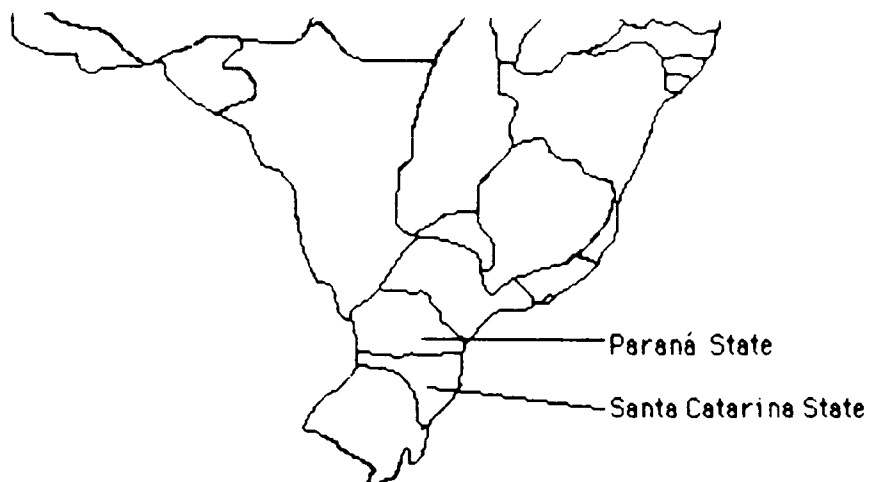
is presently serving the church in the city of Cascavel, Paraná. Canfield's son also became a minister and is presently one of the secretaries of the Sixth Conference. He also serves as a pastor in the church of Mandaguari, Paraná.

19. Most ministers interviewed during my field research, such as Passeri, Castro, Marins, Leão, Souza, and others, agreed that Canfield had great discernment concerning the direction the movement should take in order to avoid divisions in the church.
20. In chapter four, pp.108-109, I talked about that split.
21. Of course, the "Methodist historical identity" has been interpreted differently by various tendencies within the Methodist movement not only in Brazil but in other parts of the world as well. In Brazil, as we have noticed in chapter three, the Methodist Church has faced an identity crisis for not being able to arrive at a final conclusion about what it means to be a "Methodist community" in Brazil today. For a better understanding of charismatic renewal movements from a Wesleyan perspective, see Snyder and Runyon (1986).
22. The names in this story have been changed, and the name of the mainline Protestant denomination withheld for the purpose of privacy of the people involved in it.
23. See chapter four, pp.104-112.
24. The "gift of leadership" and people's acceptance of the leader becomes more important than theological education which may or may not be related to the individual as a leader (dos Santos 1989).
25. Congregations are younger communities of believers which, for a period of time, depend upon the larger churches both financially and administratively.

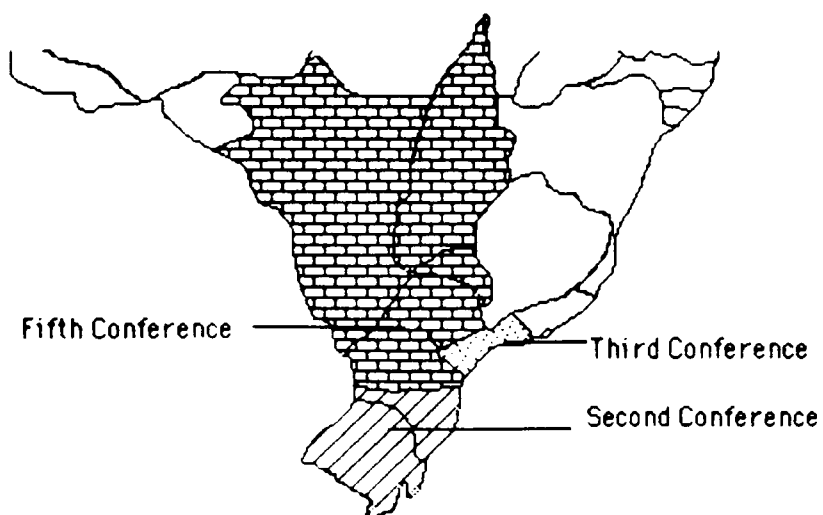
Map #2: The Sixth Conference of the Brazilian Methodist Church, located in southern Brazil.



Map #3: The States of Paraná and Santa Catarina which, after 1965, became the Sixth Conference of the Brazilian Methodist Church



Map #4: Before 1965 the State of Paraná was part of the Fifth Conference, while the State of Santa Catarina was part of the Second Conference.



CHAPTER 6

The Renewal Movement *Vis-à-Vis* the Brazilian Methodist Church at Large

A. Introduction

In chapter five I sought to demonstrate that the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference has been the result of a people's search for a way out of the situation of ineffectiveness, irrelevance, and almost complete stagnation of the Brazilian Methodist Church. I also demonstrated that Wallace's (1956) revitalization theory is a very helpful theoretical framework for a critical analysis and understanding of that movement. Now, in this chapter, I seek to understand the relevance of the movement for both the Sixth Conference and for the Brazilian Methodist Church at large. Tippet (1987:167) has said that when a revitalization process is completed, "the new steady state may be either satisfactory or unsatisfactory." In other words, the process of revitalization does not guarantee that people's needs will be completely met. When compared to the former state, the new steady state will always seem better. Yet, it does not necessarily mean that a situation of perfection or completeness has been achieved. It is important, therefore, to analyze the relevance

and impact of a revitalization movement. In the case of the Sixth Conference, I intend to look at the movement from two perspectives: (1) that of the people in the Sixth Conference; the people more directly related to the movement, and (2) that of the Brazilian Methodist Church as a whole, for it seems obvious that if there is a renewal movement in one part of a church, it should have some kind of effect upon the total church. As I analyze the relevance of that movement, I will also seek to answer the two basic questions of this study, as stated in the first chapter: (1) why do people have such different perceptions of that renewal movement, and (2) why hasn't the movement broken away from the national church?

B. The "Insiders" Perspective

In my description of the renewal movement in the fourth chapter, I noted some of its positive aspects, such as numerical growth and a new and more indigenous worship style. Now I seek to review the positive aspects of the movement as seen by the people involved in it.

1. The Renewal of Worship:

For the majority of the people whom I interviewed in the Sixth Conference, the renewal of the worship forms is indubitably both the most visible and the most important aspect of the movement (Parreira 1989,

de Camargo 1989). The worship in itself has clearly met a variety of needs. Of prime importance is the active involvement on the part of the whole congregation in the enthusiastic and frequent hymn singing which is often accompanied by bodily movements, and in individual prayers followed by congregational acclamation. It creates a real sense of communal celebration (de Camargo 1989, S. de Oliveira 1989). Therefore, intense congregational participation, together with the leadership of young people, testimonies, new hymnology, and the use of indigenous instruments, are some of the aspects that make the new worship forms attractive and fulfilling (de Souza 1989). H. da Silva (1989), explains: "formality has given way to sponteneity." A chorus may be repeated several times and people are free to clap and/or raise their hands. Because most people enjoy clapping and raising their hands, hymn books are seldom used by the congregation. Instead, overhead projectors flashing songs on the wall are now coming into the churches. Tunes and songs originating from the people themselves are an important feature (S. de Oliveira 1989, Parreira 1989). They are widely used in worship service as well as in other kinds of gatherings both at the local level and at the conference level (E. Canfield 1989).

Also related to worship is the act of preaching. According to the lay

people interviewed, the ministers' preaching became more "biblical, challenging, and powerful." According to Parreira (1989) "lately the Bible seems to have become more important to the people than before the renewal movement. People are eager to learn and the sermons are more biblically based." Bishop Smith (1989), says that before the renewal movement "there was a lack of pastoral shepherding. The pastors spent little time in Bible reading and prayer. Sermons were not geared to challenging people to make changes in life." Interestingly enough, according to David Barret (1968:189), throughout the history of the church, "all genuine movements of renewal have been begun and sustained by the rediscovery of the biblical witness. The scriptures have played a vital role in effecting the radical transformation of nominal or stagnate churches in past eras..." That theory certainly finds confirmation in the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference.

Still another aspect related to worship is the zeal for the place of worship. After 1976, fifteen of the conference's already existing churches built new sanctuaries, and at least ten others have been through some kind of major renovation (Trindade 1989). People apparently feel that the church belongs to them and they are willing to do anything possible to make it more attractive (dos Santos 1989).

2. A New Missionary Zeal:

According to Yone Silva (1989), the renewal movement brought a "missionary awakening" to the Sixth Conference. A. de Castro (1989) says that the movement caused the people to "do more evangelism." With the new sense of renewal, people began to grow eager with new zeal for evangelism. After 1976 not only did the existing churches begin to grow but at least twelve new churches were planted in the Sixth Conference. Some of them were planted in large urban centers such as Londrina (two new churches), Ponta Grossa, Guarapuava, Foz do Iguaçu, Joinville and Florianópolis -- the capital of Santa Catarina State. Other churches were planted in small towns where no Methodist work had ever existed before, such as Telêmaco Borba and Laranjeiras do Sul. Furthermore, many local churches are extending their efforts beyond their immediate neighborhood to include preaching points and chapels in the environs of their cities.

A new missionary zeal has taken the Sixth Conference beyond its geographical limits. Since 1984, ministers and lay leaders of that conference, in partnership with an American missionary agency -- the Mission Society for United Methodists -- have been involved in planting a Methodist work in the country of Paraguay.¹ In 1988 the Comunidad Evangelica Metodista del Paraguay was officially organized and presently

there are about 200 Paraguayan people involved in the four recently planted congregations in the greater Assuncion area. The present president of that church is Dr. Norival Trindade, lay member of the Londrina Central Methodist Church. The first Methodist missionary to move into that new missionary field was Rev. Pablo Bogado, a Paraguayan minister who, having served in Brazil for many years, is now back in his country ministering to his own people. Lately, five new missionaries -- a Brazilian couple, an American couple, and an American young man -- have joined Bogado in that missionary effort.

The "First Missionary Emphasis Meeting" which took place in the city of Telêmaco Borba, in January 1989, is another demonstration of the Sixth Conference's new missionary zeal. Scores of pastors and lay leaders from several local churches in that conference, gathered together during three days to share their ideas about the missionary responsibility of the church, and set guidelines for the conference's missionary activities. From that meeting, a document was sent to every church and congregation in the conference. Under the title "Desafio Missionário aos Membros da VI Região" ("Missionary Challenge to the Members of the Sixth Conference"), the document proposed, among other things, (1) that mission be the motivating factor of every program in the conference, (2) that a "Mission

Department" be organized in the conference's theological seminary, (3) that each local church should make a special effort to organize one or more preaching points in 1989, (4) that the conference should give an even stronger support to the new Methodist Church in the country of Paraguay. Following that meeting, the Londrina Central Church began to organize its "First Missionary Conference," which took place in July 1989. That missionary conference was not only the first one in the history of that local church, but also the first one in the history of both the Sixth Conference and the Brazilian Methodist Church. At the closing of that missionary conference, a young woman, Carla Prado Pierri, member of the Londrina Central Church, was sent forth as a missionary to Paraguay, fully supported by that local church. That act represented a direct response to the challenge the churches received in the January 1989 document (de Souza 1989).

3. Lay Leadership:

The lay leaders in the Sixth Conference come from the most diverse professional backgrounds possible. They are mechanics, lawyers, professional truck drivers, housewives, small business owners, carpenters, plumbers, etc. They have had an experience of renewal and they want to participate more effectively in the life of the church. Many of them have

found opportunity for leadership roles whether in prayer meetings or in other church activities. Some of them have even become involved in the ministry of preaching. Their preaching style is usually charismatic and emotional, and most church members accept their "unofficial" authority and gladly welcome their leadership style. The lay leaders usually show great devotion to God and have a high sense of responsibility and love for the people to whom they commit themselves. Consequently, people tend to treat them with dignity and respect. According to A. de Oliveira (1989) "lay people can preach the gospel effectively because they are just like other people. They aren't separated from the others by the formality of clericalism."

With the increase in the number of lay leaders, the conference leaders have been concerned about their basic preparation. In 1986 the Centro Metodista de Ensino e Treinamento (Methodist Center for Teaching and Training) CEMETRE, developed a "Course for Evangelists" which offers training in eight basic areas: doctrine, preaching, liturgy, history of Methodism, evangelism, introduction to the Bible, discipline, and church documents. The course has been designed to "prepare and train the lay people for the edification and growth of the church" (CEMETRE 1987:1). Though the people are trained to work mainly in their local

churches, in case of need the bishop may appoint them to work as evangelists in charge of a congregation related to their own local churches, or even as full time evangelists in charge of another local church. Many of the new fast growing churches in the conference, such as the Londrina Southland Methodist Church, the Londrina Northland Methodist Church, and the Methodist Church in Guarapuava have been planted by lay evangelists.

In sum, according to the people in the Sixth Conference, the renewal movement has had at least the following positive results in the life of the church: (1) a more alive and spontaneous worship instead of the formal, lifeless traditional order of service, (2) a more intense use of, and reverence for the Scriptures, (3) a renewed evangelistic and missionary vision, and (4) a revival of the lay ministry and awakening of gifts within the church.

We have noticed that the people in the Sixth Conference see many positive aspects in the renewal movement. Yet, as I have suggested in the first chapter, a large number of people (especially leaders) at the general level of the Brazilian Methodist Church have criticized the movement. This diversity of reaction to the movement in the Sixth Conference has created a situation of tension in the church as a whole. That tension is the

reason for the first basic questions of this study, i. e., "Why do people have such different perceptions of the movement?"² Now I seek to answer that question.

C. Survival and Hope vs. Liberation (the Conflict of Codes)

1. Two Different Reactions to Conservatism:

In the first chapter I used Anthony F.C. Wallace's (1956) terminology to suggest that the different perceptions are related to a "conflict of code." In other words, the "code" (theology of life and ministry) developed by the renewal movement³ is apparently in conflict with that of the "official" church. In order to understand that conflict we must review some of what has already been said in previous chapters. In the third chapter I demonstrated that throughout its history, the Brazilian Methodist Church has maintained an organizational structure that has become ineffective within the Brazilian reality. Not only its organizational structure, but also its perspective of ministry -- with a heavy emphasis on both middle-class secular education and proselitism as a means of evangelism -- has long become inadequate to the Brazilian reality. In the fifth chapter I showed that the movement in the Sixth Conference has been the result of the people's search for a way out of that situation of ineffectiveness and

inadequacy. However, the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference has not been the only reaction within the church to that situation. In the fourth chapter I noted that, after the church began a new ecumenical relationship with the Roman Catholic Church, a search for new ways of doing evangelism and ministry began to take place. We noticed that that search resulted in a new definition of evangelization and ministry for the Brazilian Methodist Church, elaborated by the leaders at the general level, and centralized in two basic concepts: (1) the Kingdom of God, and (2) the liberating Christ. According to the Brazilian Bishop Paulo Aires Mattos, "God's liberation means freedom from every kind of slavery that is known in society and for the individual" (quoted in Holliday 1982:106, Cf. Appendix II, pp.241-242). Therefore, the church must proclaim Jesus as the one who sets people free not only from individual sins but also from the sins of society from which poverty and oppression result.

Having elaborated that new theological concept of evangelization and ministry, the church leaders are presently seeking to communicate it to the annual conferences and local churches. One of the channels used to spread the new concept is the Plano para Vida e Missão da Igreja (Plan for Life and Mission of the Church) PVMI, a document intended to be "a fundamental instrument for the renewal of the missionary practice of the

Methodist people in our country." The PVMI affirms that God's mission is to establish his kingdom in the world, creating individuals and communities, giving them conditions for working and building their lives, helping them to overcome their conflicts and sins. The mission of the church is to participate in God's mission through an evangelizing action (Cânones 1988:59-92).

Another important channel used for communicating the new concept of ministry is the Conselho Geral de Instituições Metodistas de Ensino (General Council of Methodist Educational Institutions) COGEIME, especially through the production of the document "Fundamentals, Directions, Policies and Objectives for the Methodist Educational System" (see Appendix II).⁴ According to Holliday (1982:112) "the COGEIME document is a radical departure from the traditional and is revolutionary in its adherence to liberation theology."

Aware of the obstacles that the new philosophy would encounter in the local churches, the creators of the document established a set of fifteen firm and specific directions to be taken in their communication process. The first and the last directives seem to be the most radical ones. The first states: "everyone -- church, teachers, staff, students, and community -- are to be informed of our commitment to the poor and engagement in

their liberation (Appendix II, p.247)." And the last says:

Institutions which eventually do not square with or correspond to the demands of the present directions will be helped to redesign their objectives. If after careful and deep evaluation it is determined that a change in direction is not possible, they will be closed. (Appendix II, p.249)

The fact, however, is that having been elaborated by the leaders of the church at the general level, that new theological concept of evangelism and ministry has encountered serious obstacles in becoming a part of the reality of the churches at the grassroots level. Bishop Mattos suggests that though the "liberal-progressivist" model is genuinely interested in constant theological renewal, it has not been able to help the church at the local level (Minutes, First Conference 1981: 60-84). Commenting on the creation of the PVMI document within the context of the irrelevance of the church, Bishop Mattos says:

It is, of course, within this context of frustration that we must understand the birth of the PVMI which, using a historical basis, intends to be committed to the historical process which our country is going through right now. However, since the PMVI has not been conceived by the grassroots of the church, it has suffered, since its beginning, of an almost fatal contradiction: it is not applicable in concrete pastoral situations in the everyday life of the Methodist Church... The theological referential of the kingdom of God suffers, as many other proposals within the church, from upper-middle class distortions by our ecclesiastical elites. (1987:15)

Though agreeing with that model, Josgrilberg (n.d.:81) recognizes its weaknesses, and elaborates on Aires' suggestion. He says:

[The model] has been related to the elites of the church. It has been unable to understand and learn from the humble people and vice-versa. Both its radicalism and commitment to the grassroots are usually limited to the rhetorical level.

Gomes (1989), a local pastor in the Third Conference, demonstrates that the view point of the ministers in the local churches is the same as Aires' and Josgrilberg's. She says:

Theoretically and theologically the church is progressivist and liberationist. But in practice it is completely separate from the poor and oppressed. At its general level it is a middle-class church. It actually thinks as a middle-class church.

Obviously the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference, and the "liberal-progressivist" movement at the general level, are two different reactions to the same situation of stagnation and irrelevance prevailing in the Brazilian Methodist Church. The former has been strongly supported by the grassroots in the Sixth Conference, and the latter has received great support from many leaders at the general conference level and the theological elites, and therefore has been more present in the official documents of the church.

2. The Source of Tension:

Throughout its brief history, the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference has been constantly criticized by many of the people involved in the progressivist movement. In order to describe and analyze the kind of criticism that the movement has received, I will borrow the terminology used by Orlando Costas (1988) in his article "Survival, Hope and Liberation." In that article Costas points out the limits of an ecclesiology of survival and hope, and advocates the need for the development of a liberating ecclesiology. Analyzing the minority churches with charismatic/pentecostal tendencies in the United States, Costas says that most of those churches function as a place of survival and hope. They help the poor and oppressed people at three very specific levels of survival: (1) **At the psychological level**, by giving people the feeling of "being somebody," (2) **At the cultural level**, by developing indigenous forms of worship, where people feel "more at home," and (3) **At the social level**, by being a place where people can experience solidarity. But, according to Costas, the problem with those churches is that they interiorize their experience of liberation. They lack a historical perspective and, therefore, focus on the "not yet" -- the "new heaven and new earth" when God will take away hunger, tears and sadness -- they do

not fully address the "here and now." Costas suggests that those churches need to realize their potential for becoming instruments of liberating hope.

That is basically the kind of criticism the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference has received. Hilda Hildebrande da Silva (1989) says that the renewal movement brought changes to the local churches. "The churches became warmer, and that is very good, for the traditional/conservative churches are the coldest place one can ever find. The renewal movement made human relationships within the church much warmer." But da Silva criticizes the missionary vision of the movement. She says: "[the movement's] missionary vision is still a colonialist one. Evangelism is still bringing people to think like us. It is nothing more than a theological colonization of the new believer." She goes on to say that in the social area, the involvement of the Sixth Conference is "limited to the aspect of social assistance. It deals with the consequences of the problems but not with the real causes. There is no social action." H. da Silva's interpretation finds resonance in Josgrilberg's critique of what he calls "the new-traditional model." He says:

[The movement] seeks renewal through a greater dynamism and sophistication in the communication of [the Christian] message... The worship becomes more enthusiastic and informal. It has charismatic tendencies and presents new methods of proselytism, e.g., the "discipleship method." Yet,

despite the innovations, this model of ministry alters neither the essence nor the theological basis of the traditional church. (n.d.:81)

In February 1989 (personal interview) Josgrilberg elaborated on his critique. According to him the charismatic movement is very effective in the area of communication. It has a great impulse in the area of worship because of its dynamism. It seeks to involve every individual in both the act of worship and the mission of the church, not only at the rational level but also and especially at the emotional level. In fact the charismatic movement has been especially effective in dealing with the emotional aspect of the faith -- an area in which both the traditionals and the progressists have not been successful. According to Josgrilberg (1989), "The emotional aspect is an important one because faith passes through the emotional basis of both the individual and the group." "Yet," says Josgrilberg, "while other groups have failed to take that aspect seriously, the charismatic movement has dealt with it a little too casually, i.e., non-critically, going to extremes. It needs a stronger doctrinal basis."

Rosa (1989) agrees with Josgrilberg. He says that the Sixth Conference's movement "stresses the affective dimension of faith, the personal dimension of prayer and devotional life. But that emphasis by itself takes the church nowhere." Rosa, an expert in pastoral theology,

suggests that the charismatics' concern with people at the affective level should lead them to care about other aspects of people's needs. He says: "the problem is to get them to agree with the social sciences' analysis of the reasons, circumstances and meaning of poverty. That is one strong reason for disagreement between the liberal/progressivists and charismatics." According to Rosa (1989), the liberal/progressivist tendency helps the church to understand that the major problem in the Brazilian (and Latin American) context is a structural one. People are poor because of both national and international economic and political structures that force them into poverty. "The liberal/progressivist tendency stresses the structural aspect of sin which in the context [of Latin America or Brazil] is of major importance" (1989, Cf. Appendix II, pp.241-242).

The greatest tension between the theology of life and ministry of the Sixth Conference and that of the liberal/progressivists (present in some important documents of the church), seems to be one of **charity vs. rights**. Nathan Glazer (1975:413-415) has suggested that charity as an end in itself is dangerous. Charity is necessary but it should always be a means of immediate relief while one seeks justice and equity. Charity alone will serve only to affirm the *status quo*. It is contrary to the Gospel

of Jesus which requires changes in people's heart and life style (Cf. Appendix II, p.243). Glazer (1975:415) says: "[the church's] task is to translate demeaning charity in to rights." The tension in the Brazilian Methodist Church is related to the fact that, on one hand, the Sixth Conference has had the tendency to approach the ministry among the poor (70% of the Brazilian population) from a perspective of charity, helping families to survive situations of necessity and despair, building homes for the elderly, orphanages and day-care centers for the poor, helping drug addicts, emphasizing pastoral counseling, and other types of assistance. On the other hand, the liberal-progressivists suggest that the way to address the issue of poverty is from the perspective of the rights of the poor. The ideal is to empower people in order for them to change their own condition of poverty, creating an awareness that in community even the poor will be able to turn their situation around (Rosa 1989, Cf. Appendix II, p.246). Therefore, that tendency makes a serious attempt to respond to the reality of the poor and oppressed people among whom the church exists. The liberal/progressivists see the charismatics' approach as a paternalistic one. Ironically, as we have already noticed, the liberal/progressivists' concern for the rights of the poor and oppressed has been accepted with difficulty among the people because their

representatives do not come from among the people. They are usually church executives and seminary professors and students. While their perspective may be correct, their communication process needs to be reviewed. According to H. da Silva (1989), "it is not with reforms from the top to the bottom that the church will be changed. The leaders at the general level usually represent the elite of the church, but real and effective changes must take place at the grassroots level."

Summarizing, in this section I have sought to answer the first major question of this study: "why do people have such different perceptions of the movement?" I have demonstrated that the different perceptions are related to a "conflict of code." Most leaders at the general level of the church find the Sixth Conference's ministry inadequate. The mere emphasis on a theology of "survival and hope" that stresses the renewal of the worship, laity participation, counseling, and social assistance is not enough. As we have noticed, according to those leaders the church's main emphasis in the Brazilian context must be on liberation. Through effective social action the church must deal with the roots of the problem of poverty and oppression in Brazil. Therefore, while advocating an emphasis upon the rights of the poor, the progressivist leaders of the church criticize what they see as an emphasis on "charity" represented by

the Sixth Conference's ministry.

I now seek to answer the second major question of this study: "why hasn't the movement broken away from the national Church?"

D. Leadership and Unity

I firmly believe that one of the aspects that makes this study missiologically important is the fact that it focuses upon a movement which has resisted the break-away tendency that seems to follow most movements of renewal. Most studies of renewal movements focus on those movements that have broken away from a parent body in schism.⁵ They are more visible and therefore easier to observe, study, and measure. They are also more common. According to Barrett (1968:183), when revival and renewal movements come into the church, they never merely reproduce old patterns. "They always bring new attitudes, new idioms, and new ventures of faith. For this reason they are highly disturbing to the rest of the church." Resistance and criticism is a natural reaction for those people who, being more conservative, believe that it is better to maintain the *status quo*. Consequently, according to Barrett (1968:183), "movements that originally had no intention of seceding are sometimes forced out of the churches." R.A. Knox (1950) gives us a good

historical perspective on this subject as he deals with the issue of "enthusiasm" in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Knox (1950:206) says that, during that time, many religious movements sought to effect changes from within their church organizations. A few of them managed to stay within the established churches. Such was the case of German Pietism, founded by Philip Spener who "conceived the idea of setting up *ecclesioe*, as he called them, little churches which would not split themselves off from Lutheranism but would live a deeper spiritual life of their own within that body." Yet, a different, and more common instance, is that of John Wesley who also formed "little churches within the church," but the Anglican's revulsion against the "Methodist" enthusiasm resulted in the emergence of Methodism as a separate body. According to Barrett (1968), most clerical and lay founders of break away movements at first have no desire to leave their original groups. Chadwick (1964:336-337) seems to agree with Barrett. Commenting on the great Protestant reformers Chadwick suggests that "neither Luther nor Melancthon thought that they were founding a new church. They believed themselves members of the Catholic Church of all centuries, engaged upon purifying it from certain abuses recently introduced."

The "Wesleyan" movement in the First Conference of the Brazilian

Methodist Church⁶ as well as the "Latin Harvest" movement in the Second Conference⁷ are examples of the tendency of secession that has historically accompanied most attempts at renewal. Both movements were attempts at renewal from within. Yet, both ended in division. However, inconsistent with the prevailing model, the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference has successfully resisted separation from the Brazilian Methodist Church. In this sense Wallace's model helps us to see that the Renewal Movement in the Sixth Conference is an anomaly. Division has become a very common result of attempts at revitalization of religious groups throughout history. What has enabled the Sixth Conference to resist separation successfully in face of the clear tensions we have outlined above?

My thesis, based upon the role of leadership in that movement, is that the movement has not broken away because its leader - Rev. Richard Canfield - has also become the bishop of the conference and consequently, while Canfield's experience links him with the movement, his position links him to the national church.

I am aware of the danger of overemphasizing the role of leadership in any movement. While some people tend to say that great events in history are due to heroes or great personalities, others affirm that the situation

produces the person. R. A. Knox offers the Quaker founder, George Fox, as an example of this tension. Knox (1950:144) says: "how much he was an original genius, how much the product of his own milieu, is a question which presents no common difficulty." Whiteman (1984a:74) has suggested that an event or a prophet "may be the catalyst that activates or stimulates a movement and make it manifest, but seldom, if ever, do they cause it." In Canfield's case it seems safe to affirm that while he has indubitably led the people in the Sixth Conference, at the same time he has responded to a growing consensus that he has found among the people, becoming therefore a catalyst of people's thoughts and aspirations. As if in a movement of synergism, Canfield has both influenced and received influence from the renewal movement. I see that happening in five distinct phases: (1) the fact that in 1975 the leaders of the Sixth Conference made an effort to bring Canfield back to full time ministry⁸ seems to be a statement of recognition of Canfield's potential value as a minister. Yet, (2) it was only after his experience in May 1976 -- when the movement was already in process -- that Canfield began to be recognized as a real and legitimate "charismatic" leader within the conference. (3) Canfield's experience influenced the movement in the sense that he became a key person in the process of communication of the

movement's code. He also helped to adapt the new code to the reality of the conference. (4) His strong involvement in the movement, and recognized leadership in the conference influenced his election to the position of bishop. (5) As a bishop he is now in an even better position to communicate the movement's vision of life and ministry. His election has also helped the tendency he represents -- that of the renewal movement -- to be recognized as one of the "official" theological tendencies within the Brazilian Methodist Church.

Most people interviewed in my field research agree with the suggestion above. Parreira (1989), for instance, says that the renewal movement affected Canfield positively "because he found himself in terms of his ministry." Y. da Silva (1989) affirms that "the complete shift that took place in his career was a direct result of the movement." De Almeida (1989) suggests that "Canfield's renewal experience changed his ministry radically." And Domingues (1989) makes a unique remark: "even his voice changed." And he goes on to say: "Before his renewal experience Canfield wanted to quit being a minister, but his involvement in the movement made him the bishop of the conference."

However, if the influence of the movement upon Canfield's life was emphasized by the interviewees, so was Canfield's influence upon the

movement. For most of the interviewees, Canfield has been the "key person" in bringing unity not only among the people within the movement itself but also, and especially, between the Sixth Conference and the national church. He has demonstrated great restraint and patience in dealing with both radicalism within the movement and criticism from without. A. de Castro (1989) suggests that the basic reason for Canfield's success both as the leader of that movement and as a symbol of unity between the movement and the Brazilian Methodist Church at large, is that instead of stressing the doctrinal aspects of the movement he stresses its missionary importance. Canfield (1989) himself has stated that "without the empowerment and gifts of the Holy Spirit there is no mission." In his report to the 1988 Annual Conference he affirmed:

If we want to be a missionary church we need the power of the Spirit. There are no spiritual gifts without a Spirit filled life. The spiritual gifts belong to the Holy Spirit. They are the tools that allow the ministry of the church to become a transforming power in the world. If we want to be a missionary community we need to be "filled with the Holy Spirit" like the first Christians who "turned the world up side down." (Canfield 1988:4)

Though Canfield was elected bishop for the Sixth Conference in 1978, it was only in the early 1980's that he received church-wide recognition as a "charismatic" leader. In the 1984 Methodist Ministers Conference,

Canfield was one of the guest speakers invited to address the more than 300 pastors from throughout Brazil, gathered together in the city of São Paulo. Canfield was firm in his address. He emphasized the importance of an experience of renewal for the entire church. During his speech he was interrupted at least four times as the pastors gave him standing ovations. Since then Canfield has been invited to speak on the subject of renewal in conference-wide meetings in the First, Second, Fourth, and Seventh Conferences, as well as in scores of local churches throughout Brazil. According to A. de Castro (1989), "Bishop Canfield is indubitably the greatest authority in spiritual renewal as far as Brazilian Methodism is concerned. He has actually been unable to handle all the invitations he has received to speak on the subject." A. de Castro (1989) goes on to suggest that Moraes⁹ would have been that "key person" in terms of renewal in Brazilian Methodism but "because of his overemphasis on doctrines he created division. Canfield however, choosing to emphasize the missionary aspect of the movement, brought balance to it and was able to become a 'bridge' between the movement and the rest of the church." Brown (1989) agrees with de Castro. According to him, "Canfield is an intelligent and educated man. He applied himself to reading many 'charismatic' books. He also searched intensely in the Scriptures in an

effort to judge what was happening in the conference."

Despite all the positive aspects of the Renewal Movement in the Sixth Conference, there are problems in the movement. There have been some exaggerations at the local level such as, for instance, an overemphasis on the gifts of prophecy and tongues. But these problems have always been handled with discernment and patience. Brown (1989) affirms that "much exaggeration was avoided because of Canfield's personality and leadership. And the church's appreciation of his leadership is clearly demonstrated in the fact that he was elected bishop." Brown (1989) goes on to suggest that "there has been no split in the Sixth Conference because of Canfield's balance. In the Second Conference, a split took place because of exaggerations and lack of balance in the leadership."

But what does Canfield think of his ministry of leadership within the movement as well as his position of bishop within the Brazilian Methodist Church? In my January 1989 interview with him he stated:

I have experienced much tension. Always being questioned, on one side by the people in the conference, and on the other side, by the general church as represented by the other members of the College of Bishops and the General Council. I have sought to be the "man in the gap." Seeking to harmonize the different tendencies. Actually, being a member of the College of Bishops I have been able to clarify issues.

According to Canfield the greatest problem is one of communication.

He says that "usually people do not really know what is actually happening. Reports are distorted. Sometimes they are just the fruit of people's imagination." As a bishop, Canfield has been able to speak out for the Sixth Conference and, obviously, the other members of the College of Bishops trust him.¹⁰ He says:

They know I am not interested in breaking away from the church. My interest has been to demonstrate that a renewal experience can bring transformation without division. In twelve years as a bishop, the unity of the church has always been my major concern. I do not want to be the cause of any division. (1989)

Canfield goes on to suggest that divisions are always the result of radicalism. He says that "radical leaders bring division. People do not break away. The leaders do, and they take the people with them - - people who actually trust them." According to Canfield, it is obvious that sometimes members will leave a certain church but they will seldom break away in large groups unless a leader decides to do so. If the charismatic leader is an open person, is flexible, the leader will allow for the movement to mature in order to reach others within the church. It requires patience. But "the Spirit of God is not interested in dividing the church." Canfield (1989) goes on to note that "we have a heritage that teaches us about unity. John Wesley did all he could to stay within the

Anglican Church. But the church in England was unable to understand the movement and interpreted it as a challenge to its power structure."

According to Canfield, the two elements that are the most commonly responsible for a split within a church are: (1) spiritual pride, which is the tendency to think that "because I had a different experience, I am right and all others are wrong. My experience (or our experience) is the only legitimate one. My worldview is the only correct one," and (2) power structures. According to Canfield power structures must be secondary in a movement of renewal. He says:

Renewal is not for power related to positions in the church. Leaders must understand that renewal is for mission - for servanthood. A truly renewed person becomes a servant of Christ's church. The renewal movement in the Sixth Conference emphasizes the gifts and the ministries of the Spirit. And it is obvious that neither the gifts nor the ministries of the Spirit make any sense apart from service. (1989)

E. Summary and Conclusion

In this chapter I have done three basic things: First, I have sought to demonstrate the relevance of the renewal movement for the people in the Sixth Conference by outlining and analyzing the positive changes it brought to the local churches in that conference. Second, I have sought to

understand the reason for some of the criticism articulated against that movement by people in the leadership of the national church. And third, I have sought to demonstrate the importance of the role of leadership in maintaining unity not only within the movement but also and especially between the Sixth Conference and the national church. By doing so I have attempted to answer the two basic questions of this study as stated initially in the first chapter and again in the beginning of this chapter, namely (1) why do people have such different perceptions of that renewal movement? and (2) why hasn't the movement broken away from the national church?

In the next chapter I will seek to "forecast the future" of that renewal movement within the Brazilian Methodist Church at large. Personal interviews and recent events taking place in that church will serve as the basic sources for that chapter.

CHAPTER 6 NOTES

1. The Sixth Conference's missionary effort to Paraguay has not been authorized by the Brazilian Methodist College of Bishops. It involves tension between the leaders of that work and the College of Bishops who believe that "no work should be initiated in any country without an official invitation from an autonomous church in that country." (R. Canfield 1989). It also involves tension between the General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) and the Mission Society for United Methodists (Cf. Larum 1989).
2. See chapter one of this study, "Statement of the Problem," p.4.
3. See chapter five of this study - "A Renewed Conference," p.147.
4. The COGEIME document was approved by the 1982 General Conference and added to the Cânones (the book of discipline of Brazilian Methodism.)
5. See, for instance, David B. Barrett (1968), Wendy Flannery (1983, 1984), Victor Hayward (1963), Timothy N. Murere (1976) and Vittorio Lanternary (1963).
6. For more information on the "Wesleyan" movement in the First Conference of the Brazilian Methodist Church, see chapter four of this dissertation, pp.108-109
7. As we have said in chapter five, the "Latin Harvest" movement was the result of the split in the Second Conference, which involved Moraes and his team. For more details see chapter five, p.143.
8. See chapter five of this dissertation: "An Inside Leader Comes on the Scene," pp.145-149
9. He refers to Moisés Cavalheiros de Moraes from the "Latin Harvest" movement. See discussion above, pp.143
10. The bishops' appreciation for Canfield's leadership has been clearly demonstrated by the fact that in 1987 Canfield was elected vice-president of the College of Bishops.

CHAPTER 7

"Forecasting the Future."

A. Introduction

As this study comes to a close, a question must be asked about the future of the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference. I would divide that question into two interrelated parts: (1) The first deals with the future of the movement from the perspective of revitalization theory: Is the movement tending toward a new steady state in which it will become a new kind of "status quo" requiring a new revitalization process? Or is it able to prevent entropy by continually contextualizing its ministry vis-à-vis the reality of the Sixth Conference? (2) The second question concerns the future of the movement as part of the larger institution -- the Brazilian Methodist Church: How are the people involved in the movement reacting to the criticism coming from other Brazilian Methodists? Are they able to change other people's understanding of it? Is there still the possibility that the movement will result in a split from the Methodist Church? My task in this closing chapter is to deal with these questions.

B. The Future of the Renewal Movement as a Revitalization Movement.

1. A New Steady State?

It seems obvious that the instability characteristic of the transitional stages is no longer present in the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference. As we have seen, enormous changes have taken place in the process, changes that affected both the lives of the people and the conference's structure. Now, however, there is a certain level of stability. The concern today is with the maintenance, preservation, and expansion of the message of renewal.

According to Whiteman (1984a), the eventual fading away of the initial enthusiasm does not necessarily mean the renouncing or rejection of the initial beliefs. Whiteman (1984a:67) says that "the myth lives on, but its manifest expression in the form of a highly energized and visible movement tends to fade." The important thing is that the fading away of the movement's energy and consequent decline -- which Nida (1960) calls entropy -- be reduced to a minimum. In order to do so, it seems necessary, first of all, to understand what causes religious movements to eventually decline. Nida (1960) has suggested some reasons for entropy and the eventual decline of religious movements: (1) Religious movements eventually decline because the information becomes common place and/or

loses its distinctiveness by syncretism. According to Nida (1960:151),

"*faith* tends to become *creed* and *creed* ends up as mere *recitation*."

The new information tends to acquire routinized forms. "The fact that Pentecostal congregations seem to know quite well when they are all to quit praying aloud is evidence of the ritualized forms" (Nida 1960:152).

Furthermore, if in the process of adaptation the movement loses the distinctive nature of its message, entropy will soon occur. In order to be appealing to people, a movement's message must be clear and

unambiguous (Whiteman 1984a:68). (2) Religious movements eventually decline because the original goals are too limited and, therefore, easily

accomplished. Nida (1960:154) says that "without a goal there is no longer a reason for existence." A movement's goals must be expandable

and yet clearly defined. (3) A religious movement eventually declines

because it becomes part of the *status quo*. Nida (1960:155) argues that

"intense persecution can wipe out a minority group, but a certain amount of persecution can actually prevent entropy." Therefore, if in the process of adaptation¹ in response to opposition, resistance and criticism, the basic message of the movement is compromised, entropy can easily set in.

Nida (1960:156) suggests that one way to preserve the vital elements in a movement from entropy is "revitalizing the program by new

information.” It can provide the movement with a continuing momentum and, consequently, increase its drive and extend its influence. In fact, not only new information must be constantly supplied but also new applications of the information must be found. This concern is clearly visible among the leaders of the Sixth Conference. Bishop Canfield says:

The process of constant revitalization is extremely important in a renewal movement. When the natural process of accommodation begins to take place, the tendency is to move toward routinization. The task we face now is that of keeping the movement alive and dynamic while, at the same time, extending its realm of influence. (1989)

The leaders are seeking to preserve the strength of the movement through continuous revitalization. According to Bishop Canfield (1989), that is why the Encontrões Regional de Reavivamento² are so important. “Those encounters are different from any other meeting in the Conference. Its major goal is to help people who are seeking renewal.” In his 1985 report to the Annual Conference, Bishop Canfield wrote:

We are entering the tenth year of renewal in our conference. We praise the Lord for the blessings we have received in many aspects of the life of our church. It is important that we continue to seek renewal through the Holy Spirit, so that the church will continue to be filled with power to fulfill its mission. The search for renewal must be a constant process in the life of the church. We are the heirs of the great Wesleyan revival and therefore we must not lose sight of the constant impulse of the Spirit. (1986:3 emphasis added)

Canfield says that, after more than ten years, the renewal movement has become more mature. There is now both a general acceptance of that movement inside the Sixth Conference and a good level of respect from people outside the conference. Canfield says:

We must take advantage of this situation of acceptance and respect. Now, with more maturity, we must seek to discover what is really essential within the movement and how it could help the church in its mission. Our concern must be to rediscover the essential aspects of a church that is being touched by the Spirit of God. (1989 emphasis added)

As we have seen in the sixth chapter, it is this constant emphasis on renewal for mission that has made the renewal movement attractive to some and respected by others. People have begun to realize that the movement is not an end in itself. It seeks to enable and empower the church for its mission. Canfield (1989) says: "Our desire is to help the entire church to see the renewal movement as a tool provided by the Spirit to make the church strong and participative in its context."

There is also a concern in terms of preserving the clearness of the movement's message by avoiding syncretism.³ In his 1985 Episcopal Report, Bishop Canfield wrote: "The pastors must be careful concerning the infiltration of people who hold doctrines and customs which are different from ours and generate problems in our communities" (1986:3).

And in his 1988 Episcopal Report to the Annual Conference, he wrote:

We live in a time of great tension. Theological and ideological tendencies are present in the life of the church. There are also many doctrinal tendencies related to the various religious movements that exist around us. We are challenged to preserve our Methodist identity. (1988:4)

Neither Bishop Canfield nor any other leader in the Sixth Conference doubts that the movement's tendencies are compatible with the teachings of John Wesley, hence the idea of "preserving our Methodist identity."

2. The Leader's Upcoming Retirement

As we have already noticed, Bishop Canfield plays an important role both in the maintenance of the movement in the Sixth Conference and in the relationship of the movement to the Brazilian Methodist Church at large. Therefore, a question has come to the mind of many people in the Conference: How will Bishop Canfield's retirement affect the future of the movement? This question has become especially significant in the last two years, since, in 1987, after being reelected⁴ for the 1988-1991 period, Canfield announced his retirement effective at the end of that period. In 1989, however, he responded positively to the General Conference's request that he delay his retirement and stay in the leadership of the conference for the period of 1992-1995 (Canfield 1989). The fact remains, however, that in 1996 a new bishop will be in charge of the Sixth

Conference.

Explaining the importance of the figure of the leader in religious movements of renewal, Barrett (1968:162) has written:

The success or failure of every movement is strongly linked with the presence or absence of the founder-leader.⁵ Even when he dies, the mantle is passed on and the movement continues, though often the early zeal and expansion cease and the movement slows to a halt.

According to most people I interviewed both inside and outside the Sixth Conference, Bishop Canfield's retirement in 1995 will not have any drastic consequences upon the movement. Matoso (1989)⁶ suggests that "the movement has already reached a certain maturity and stability and, although Canfield emphasizes renewal at the conference level and is a symbol of the movement at the general level, the fact is that the real strength of the movement is at the local church level." Most pastors in the Sixth Conference agree with Matoso. They are convinced that, no matter what happens at both the conference and the general levels, it will not compromise the grassroots commitment to the renewal movement, basically because the people have had their needs met by the movement (de Souza 1989, dos Santos 1989). Trindade (1989) holds a slightly different position. Though he believes that the bishop's retirement alone

would not compromise the movement, he suggests that, if the 1995 General Conference elects a bishop who is radically against the movement, then the movement will experience great stress. Yet, Trindade himself, as well as most people in the Brazilian Methodist Church, knows that the chance for that to happen is extremely small (A. de Castro 1989, Canfield 1989). The General Conference usually tends to respond to the consensus existent within the Annual Conferences, as was clearly demonstrated in Canfield's election in 1987.⁷

In sum, both the lay people and the pastors in the Sixth Conference believe that, if the next bishop will only take a position of respect for the conference's present tendency, the Sixth Conference will continue to be a voice of renewal within the Brazilian Methodist Church for many years to come (A. de Castro 1989, Passeri 1989, Parreira 1989).

C. The Movement Vis-À-Vis Other Tendencies Within the Church.

1. Tension as a Positive Factor:

As we have already noticed, presently there are three major theological tendencies in the Brazilian Methodist Church. They are popularly⁸ recognized as (1) the "conservative-traditional," (2) the "progressivist," and (3) the "charismatic." Rodrigues (1989) affirms that "both the

charismatics and progressivists are seeking to respond to real problems. Both are trying to make sense out of the church in the concreteness of its existence." The charismatics, according to Rodrigues, act strongly at the personal level and, to some extent, at the community level, while the progressivists seek solutions on global situations. Rodrigues says that "it is a matter of world view."

Rodrigues' observation reflects the issue of "survival and hope" vs. "liberation" already discussed in chapter six. The question, therefore, is one of how to relate to that tension. The issue does not seem to be one of choosing between a ministry of "survival and hope" and a ministry of "liberation." It does not necessarily need to be an either/or situation. There is no doubt that people need a message of "survival and hope," and the renewal movement is providing that. The progressivists, however, say that this message is not enough. The issue, therefore, is one of enlarging one's vision of ministry. A. de Castro (1989) has suggested that a ministry of liberation follows a ministry of survival and hope, without necessarily completely taking its place. The "survival and hope" aspect of the Christian message will always be attractive to people because one can not ignore the existential aspects of one's life (Rosa 1989). Yet, there is a liberating power in the gospel of Jesus Christ, and therefore it is relevant

for people's situation of extreme oppression here and now. However, "the Kingdom of God is not limited by our concept of history" (Rosa 1989).

Both charismatics and progressivists are contributing to the total body of Christ. One needs to draw from the other, working in unity, but not necessarily in uniformity. The Sixth Conference leaders are becoming open to that possibility. Bishop Canfield says:

We are seeking a global vision. The idea that the renewal movement emphasizes only a vertical vision, forgetting the present reality and then becoming an alienating factor is mere prejudice. We have not lost the Methodist vision of reality -- the horizontal vision. (1989)

An obvious sign of the Sixth Conference's increasing "horizontal vision" is the Bóia-Fria (Displaced Farm Workers) Project in the northern area of the state of Paraná. In that area there are more than 250,000 bóias-frias (Y. Silva 1989). They began to appear in the middle 1960's when mechanization and technological advancement expelled them from the land -- their only means of subsistence. Y. Silva (1989) says: "They flocked to the cities in search of hope and ended in the slums on the outskirts of the urban areas." Forced to accept work in rural areas in order to survive, the bóias-frias are transported daily by trucks to their place of work where they make an average of US\$1.50 a day.

The church in the Sixth Conference has felt called to develop a project

intended to assist those people in their process of organizing and mobilizing themselves in search of survival as well as of liberation from the less-than-human situation in which they have lived. Led by a thirteen person team and supported partially by the state government and partially by the contribution of the church at the local, regional, national and international levels, the project now involves about 110 families, with a total of about 1,000 people.

What about the people on the progressivist side? Many of them are also becoming increasingly open to the possibility of balance. Rosa (1989), for instance, suggests that, if people from both tendencies will open themselves to the others' contribution, "in the future we would be able to integrate both aspects and we would no longer need such provisional terms as 'liberal-progressivists' and 'charismatic-pentecostals.'"

Bishop Canfield, however, affirms that one must not be so naive as to think that one day everyone in the Brazilian Methodist Church will think in the same way. He says:

The process of unity is always a process of tension. Unity is not complete peace and harmony. Unity happens within tension. The biblical concept of unity is the concept of a "body." Different members form a body which is a whole. Tension is a sign of life. When a body no longer has tension (or distension) it is a dead body. (1989)

Because people think differently, tension will always be a part of the church's pilgrimage. The motivation for unity is to be found outside the church. There must be an "extra-ecclesia" point of reference (Mattos 1987). Bishop Mattos suggests that the concept of the "Kingdom of God" should be that point of reference. That concept includes the church, but it is not limited by it. Bishop Canfield (1989) suggests that the "mission of the church" should be the point of reference. These two positions are not contradictory, for the missionary task of the church is "participating in the construction of the kingdom of God in the world, through the Holy Spirit" (Cânones 1988:66). Therefore, as the church goes to the people, entering the community and facing reality, it discovers the "extra-ecclesia" point of reference to develop a missionary program that includes various tendencies. It becomes a church in mission. That is the incarnational principle. By entering the reality of the people, the church is challenged to review itself and its theology. In the case of the Brazilian Methodist Church, the two codes -- "liberation" and "survival and hope" -- would be challenged to work in a creative, continuous tension, looking at tension as a positive factor, without which any tendency is swallowed by its own pride and consequently loses its relevance and impact on society.

2. Signs of the Influence of the Renewal Movement Upon the Church at

Large:

There are at least two important indications of the fact that the Brazilian Methodist Church at large has begun to recognize that the movement of renewal offers the church a genuine ministry. The first sign is that renewal is also breaking out in both the First and the Fourth Conferences.⁹ According to Bishop Canfield, the Sixth Conference has no direct influence on whatever is happening in the First and Fourth Conferences. Rather, those conferences "have sought direction from the Sixth Conference leaders because we (the leaders of the Sixth Conference) have had the experience of renewal for a longer period of time" (Canfield 1989).

In 1988 Canfield participated in the Fourth Conference's Encounter of Renewal where approximately 1,000 people sought the renewal experience. For three days, Canfield ministered on the subjects of "Baptism with the Holy Spirit" and "The Gifts of the Spirit" (Canfield 1989).

The spread of the renewal movement throughout other conferences created in the leaders the desire to have a National Encounter of Renewal, which took place in April 1989.¹⁰ Besides the emphasis on the baptism

with the Holy Spirit, the second strongest emphasis of that encounter was on unity (Canfield 1989).

The second and possibly the most significant sign of the general church's recognition of the importance of the emphases stressed by the renewal movement is that the 1987 General Conference, gathered together in July 1987 in the city of São Bernardo do Campo, took a bold step. They changed the structure of the Brazilian Methodist Church by deciding that, beginning in 1988, the commissions and societies in the Brazilian Methodist Church would be dissolved, and the church would establish ministries based upon the specific gifts existent at both the local and the conference levels. Therefore the local churches no longer have the obligation to have a certain number of commissions and societies in order for them to be recognized as churches. Instead, the number of ministries in a specific church will vary according to the spiritual gifts existent in that church. The Manual Missionário do Povo Metodista (Missionary Manual of the Methodist People) elaborated by the Secretary of Ministries of the Fifth Conference explains:

The decision about the missional path that a local church will follow will depend upon the gifts and ministries of the members of the local church. Gifts are given by God's Spirit as He works with our talents. Therefore, it should be very clear that no ministry can be imposed upon the church. (1988:6)

While emphasizing spiritual gifts and ministries, the General Conference's new decision puts the church more in touch with the context in which it exists. The Manual Missionário do Povo Metodista says: "The decision about what to do will depend basically on the necessities and challenges which the church will discern in its context" (1988:6). Therefore, both the church's program and its structure must be flexible because "its program as well as its structure will depend on both the ministries that will be organized and the challenges of the needy" (1988:6).

Commenting on the radical change that is taking place in the structure of the church, Bishop Canfield says:

Some people have said that the Sixth Conference is responsible for the 1987 great shift in the church's legislation. I do not believe so. It was the work of the Holy Spirit. There was no specific proposal coming from the Sixth Conference. It worked out in an inexplicable way. The church began to feel that the only choice it had was the emphasis on "gifts and ministries." As a matter of fact, the "gifts and ministries" project was elaborated by some people from the progressivist movement. They also have understood that service depends on ministry. (1989)

Gifts and ministries are, therefore, a new code intended to revitalize the national church. According to Bishop Canfield (1989), "the conservative people do not accept it. They say that the church must have fixed numbers of societies and commissions. But, amazingly enough, progressivists and charismatics have finally found a common ground."

D. Summary and Conclusion to Chapter 7

In this chapter I have sought to bring this study to a close by looking at the most recent events taking place in the life of the Brazilian Methodist Church both in the Sixth Conference in particular and in the national church at large. I have looked at those events as signs of what may occur in the future. As we have noticed, in the Sixth Conference the renewal movement has reached what we could call a "New Steady State," but in the national church at large, that movement is still in the process of what Wallace would call "communication," as it extends its influence over other conferences. Yet, as that movement influences other people, it also receives influence from other tendencies, expanding its vision and goals. I believe that this process will certainly bring growth to the Brazilian Methodist Church.

E. Summary of Insights Generated by This Study

1. The Use of a Social Science Model for Religious Understanding

Using an anthropological model to study religious changes provides the researcher with a neutral ground from which s/he is able to consider aspects of a religious movement that might otherwise be easily be ignored. For example, it enables one to discern the aspect of the felt needs that the

movement is meeting and consequently makes it attractive to people. In the case of my research, the use of any theological model would have tended to force me to take a theological position creating biases that could compromise my work.

2. What Keeps the Movement From Dying (Entropy)

a. Felt Needs:

Religious change is directly related to the concept of felt needs. Needs are strong motivators of behavior and, as Smalley (1957:233) has suggested, "People do not change their behavior unless they feel a need to do so." However, in a changing society, people's needs also change. Thus, if a religious movement is to be kept alive, its leaders must be acutely aware of the changing character of people's needs.

b. Involvement/Mission:

As the church leaves the temple and becomes involved in the community, it becomes a church in mission. It shares a message of salvation (teaching), and at the same time it learns from people's lives. In this process of giving and receiving, the church becomes a church of the people. It becomes relevant and, consequently, alive.

3. What Prevents Break-Aways:

In this study we have described and analyzed a movement which has resisted a break-away tendency that seems to follow most religious movements of renewal. It has been my thesis that the leadership of the movement has an important role in avoiding division. In our specific case, the leader's ability to compromise non-essential aspects of the movement, such as, for instance, the issue of the form of baptism, and his willingness to become a bridge between those people who were in favor and those who were against the movement was fundamental for the preservation of unity despite the existing adversity.

4. "Forecasting the Future"

Another clear benefit of the use of a social science model is that it helps us to be aware of possible future development related to the movement, as we have sought to do in this chapter.

In this study, we have made use of anthropological and sociological models and theories to analyze a religious movement. Therefore it seems appropriate to remember Whiteman's suggestion that:

By analyzing the cultural dynamics of a revival movement we do not dismiss the work of the Holy Spirit. We may be able to provide a cultural explanation of the revival movement, but this explanation cannot be a substitute for the real cause of it. In other words, it is the movement of

God among his people that is the cause of a revival, but the patterns the revival follows will often conform to familiar, human, cultural patterns within that society. (1984a:52-53)

The work of the Holy Spirit has been our presupposition throughout this study, for it is obvious that "The wind (Spirit) blows where it wills, and you hear the sound of it, but you do not know whence it comes or whither it goes. . ." (John 2:8).

Chapter 7 Notes

1. "Adaptation" refers to the fourth "function" of what Wallace has called "the process of revitalization." See chapter one: "The Revitalization Model" (pp.8-16), and chapter five: "The Period of Revitalization" (pp.163-173).
2. See "a Renewed Conference" in chapter five, p.153 where I talk more extensively about the Encontrões Regional de Reavivamento.
3. For a thorough review of the term Cf. Boff 1985:89-107. See also Tippett 1975:16-27.
4. As I have pointed out in chapter two, the duration of a Brazilian Methodist bishop's mandate is four years (p.48). After that the bishop must be reelected to continue in his or her position (p.61 #14).
5. Although it has become clear that Canfield was not the "founder" of the renewal movement in the Sixth Conference, it is equally clear that he has always been considered the main leader of that movement.
6. Matoso's authority to speak on this subject is related to his position in the Sixth Conference today. He is one of the two Conference Secretaries. Together with the bishop, those two secretaries decide for the conference whenever any important decision needs to be made between Annual Conferences. Matoso is also a local pastor in Curitiba.
7. As we have seen in chapter five (p.152), the General Conference elected Canfield as the bishop of the Sixth Conference, though he represented a different tendency from that of the other leaders of the church. Those leaders knew that Canfield was well accepted by his own conference.
8. That was the language used by most of the interviewees during my field research in early 1989. I interviewed both lay people and clergy from at least three conferences of the Brazilian Methodist Church.
9. See map of the different Annual Conferences at the end of the first

chapter, p.31.

10. Although, according to the application form sent to the Brazilian Methodist pastors, that encounter had the approval of at least three bishops, the encounter was considered "unofficial" because it was not on the 1989 agenda of the General Council.

APPENDIX I

The Interviewees

1. Mr. Cicero Ferraz de Almeida, a lay evangelist appointed as a full-time leader of the newly planted church in the city of Guarapuava, Sixth Conference.
2. Mr. Helio Cesar de Inacio Alves, a student at the Methodist School of Theology in Rudge Ramos, São Paulo.
3. Rev. Jairo de Oliveira Barros, an ordained minister in the Third Conference, in the greater São Paulo area.
4. Rev. Lawrence A. Brown. He is an American missionary. He works as a theological consultant for the Methodist Seminary in Londrina and is one of the pastors of the Londrina Central Church.
5. Mrs. Cleide M. C. de Camargo, a lay leader in the Londrina Central Church. She has a special ministry in the area of discipleship.
6. Bishop Richard Santos Canfield, the present Bishop of the Sixth Conference, and vice-President of the College of Bishops of the Brazilian Methodist Church. He provides the principal leadership for the renewal movement.
7. Rev. Estevão Santos Canfield. He is the pastor of the Methodist Church in the city of Mandaguari, Sixth Conference. He is also one of the secretaries of the Sixth Conference, and son of the bishop.
8. Rev. Acidy Martins de Castro, the pastor of the Methodist Church in the city of Cornélio Procopio, serves also as a district coordinator.
9. Rev. Clovis Pinto de Castro, the coordinator of the National plan of Theological Education in the Brazilian Methodist Church, pastors part-time in the greater São Paulo area.
10. Rev. Rosalino Domingues. He is one of the pastors of the Curitiba Central Church. He is also a district coordinator.

11. Mr. Evandro de Freitas Gauna. He is a former student of theology and presently works with the Ecumenical Pastoral for the Street Children in São Bernardo do Campo, São Paulo.
12. Rev. Zulma Ferreira Gomes, a minister in the Third Conference. She also serves as a district coordinator.
13. Dr. Ruy de Souza Josgrilberg. He is a ministerial member of the First Conference. Josgrilberg is also the present rector of the Methodist School of Theology in Rudge Ramos, São Paulo.
14. Rev. Josue Adam Lazier, the rector of the Methodist Seminary in Londrina.
15. Rev. Reinaldo Ferreira Leão Jr. He is a retired Methodist pastor. He served the Sixth Conference since its beginning.
16. Rev. Waldir Marins, a retired minister in the Sixth Conference. He presently works as a volunteer in the Ministry of Evangelism in that conference.
17. Rev. Neivair de Jesus Matoso. He is one of the pastors of the Curitiba Central Church, and one of the secretaries of the Sixth Conference.
18. Mrs. Amelia Tavares Correa Neves. She is the executive secretary of the Masters Degree Program in Sciences of Religion at the Methodist College in Rudge Ramos, São Paulo.
19. Rev. Estephen Newnum. He is an American missionary and the pastor of the Methodist Church in the city of Apucarana, Sixth Conference, and teaches at the Methodist Seminary in Londrina.
20. Mrs. Aliete de Oliveira, a member of the Londrina Central Church and part of the prayer ministry in that church.
21. Mr. Sergio Paulo de Oliveira, a member of the Londrina Central Church.
22. Dr. Ary Parreira, a lay member of the Londrina Central Church

and a cabinet member of the Brazilian Methodist Men Confederation.

23. Rev. Elias Passeri. He is the pastor of the Methodist Church in the city of Maringá, Sixth Conference. He is also a district coordinator.
24. Dr. Duncan Alexander Reily. He is an American missionary to Brazil. Reily is also a professor of both Church History and History of Methodism at the Methodist School of Theology in Rudge Ramos, São Paulo.
25. Rev. Elerson Bastos Rodrigues. He is the executive secretary of the College of Bishops of the Brazilian Methodist Church.
26. Dr. Ronaldo Sattler Rosa. He is a professor of Pastoral Theology at the Methodist School of Theology in Rudge Ramos, São Paulo.
27. Mr. Dionisio Agnelo dos Santos. He is a lay evangelist, appointed as an assistant pastor for the Londrina Central Church.
28. Mrs. Hilda Gertrudes Hildebrande da Silva. She is one of the coordinators of the Ecumenical Pastoral for the Street Children in São Bernardo do Campo, São Paulo. She is a former member of the Londrina Methodist Central Church.
29. Rev. José Victor da Silva. He is an ordained minister in the Sixth Conference and is presently on a leave of absence.
30. Rev. Melchias Silva. He is an ordained minister in the First Conference, in the Rio de Janeiro area.
31. Rev. Yone Silva. She is a Methodist minister, serving in the Sixth Conference. Silva is also the coordinator of the "Displaced Farm Workers Project," a social project of the Sixth Conference.
32. Bishop Wilbur Smith, a former bishop (retired) of the Sixth Conference, lives in Boca Raton, Florida.
33. Rev. Luis Wesley de Souza. He is a pastor at the Londrina Central Church. He also teaches Pastoral Theology at the OMS seminary in Londrina.

34. Dr. Norival Trindade, a member of the Londrina Central Church, and Mission Coordinator for the Sixth Conference, is also the present president of the new founded Comunidad Evangelica Metodista del Paraguay.

APPENDIX II

The COGEIME Document Fundamentals, Directions, Policies and Objectives for the Methodist Educational System.

Preface:

This document is the final result of a process of work developed to implement a project approved by the General Council of the Methodist Church of Brazil. This process culminated in a consultation which examined basic principles in the earlier analysis made of the reality in which the Church and its institutions are involved and in which they have a part. The participants of this seminar offer this document in response to the request of the General Council of The Methodist Church in the hope that they have completed with faithfulness the task with which they were entrusted and that it contributes decisively to the attainment of the mission to which the Church is called in this moment of history.

Introduction:

It is not possible to understand the present state of the Methodist educational system, as it sets new fundamentals or directions, without the recognition of some initial presuppositions:

1. From the beginning our historical point of view was derived from missionaries who accepted the gospel as a message for the individual and society.
2. One of the instruments always present in the work of the Methodist Church for both individuals and society is

education.

3. Education is one of the instruments for social transformation and an essential part of the Church's involvement in the process of bringing about the Kingdom of God, as proclaimed in the life, death and resurrection of Christ.
4. The Methodist institutions of learning are the fruit of this missionary vision which took into account the dimension of totality of life and the gospel. In this sense the educational projects were innovative and humanizing.
5. The missionary theological vision of the period, however, was committed to a liberal political option with the purpose of the democratization and liberalization of Brazilian education. As the Brazilian social process takes on characteristics of liberal capitalism, it is obvious that the proposed objectives of the missionaries are not attainable. In that context, the educational process developed through the Church was merely a reproduction of official education, emptying itself of and losing its confessional identity, disconnected from its commitment to the gospel of Jesus Christ.

Starting from those presuppositions the present document sets forth the biblical-theological bases and fundamentals for the building of a philosophy of education and proposes a policy for the Methodist Educational System for its units both in secular and theological training.

Biblical-Theological Bases:

The theological fundamental for all educational effort undertaken by

the Methodist Church is Jesus Christ and his historical mission to establish the Kingdom of God (Quadrennial Plan, 1978, pages 10-12).

All acts of the Church necessarily imply a dialectical analysis of the reality, a hermeneutical engagement with the biblical tradition and a praxis of liberation. In other words, a relation between the reality, faith, and life.

The God of the Bible, who is Father, Son and Holy Spirit, reveals himself in history as creator, redeemer and strengthener. God, by his own nature, is not an individual reality, but social, communal, collegial. This Triune God constitutes also, in his relation with the human being, a new community historically known in the life of the people of Israel and the Church. The divine activity always points us to the full realization of the Kingdom. Hope in this Kingdom is lived and experienced partially in the life of the people of Israel (Promise to Abraham -- Gen. 12:1-4; 13:14-17; 17:8-9; 22:15-18; the experience of the Exodus -- Deut. 6:1-9; 7:6-8; Ex.3ff., the conquest of the promised land -- Josh. 1:5-9; 13-15; the preaching of the prophets -- Is. 49ff; Ezek.36-37; Joel 2:12-32; Micah 2:12-13; 4:1-13; and manifested in its fullness in the life of Jesus of Nazareth -- Mark 1:15; Matt. 6:9-13; Luke 4:19-21; Mark 14:23-25; I Cor. 11:25-26; Mtt. 28:1-10). Through the victory of Jesus Christ over the power of sin and death we have the certainty of the realization of the fullness of the Kingdom of God.

The activity of the Triune God -- Father, Son and Holy Spirit -- makes itself real through the manifestation of the Spirit. The gift of the Spirit is the strength and power of God which cause to spring up, here and now, among us, the first signs of the Kingdom of God and of his justice, the

new creation, the new man, the new woman, the new society. The Spirit reveals to us that the Kingdom of God transcends every institution, every historical project, being the criterion by which all our practice is judged. The Spirit is free and sovereign. He acts where, how and when he pleases, in keeping with his purpose to make mature conditions for the consummation of the Kingdom. This consciousness always commits us to the project of God and frees us from the totalitarian illusion of human projects, causing us to renounce all and every attitude of institutional triumphalism.

Starting with the perception that the activity of God in history constitutes a teaching process, the faith awakens in us a critical conscience (Deut. 6; Matt.28-29).

The Kingdom of God manifest in Jesus Christ reveals the liberating plan of God who gives to human beings "a new life in the likeness of Jesus Christ, through the activity and power of the Holy Spirit" (Quadrennial Plan, 1978, item 4, page 10; John 8:32; Luke 4:18-21) by confronting every oppressive force (Luke 11:29-46; 22:1-2; 1:51-53; 4:18; 6:20-21; 24-25; 12:15-21; 18:24-30). These oppressive forces are condemned as expressions of sin, as much individual as social.

The oppressive forces which operate in the social and individual life of the human being are the fruits of sin. This should be understood not only as an act of individual rebellion against God, but also, and especially, as a cultural-ideological reality which enslaves the human being socially and individually.

Salvation, therefore, must be seen in its wholeness, as the result of the activity of God in history and in the lives of persons. Biblically, the idea of

salvation is not limited to the spirit. Historically this limited definition of salvation has characterized individualistic-pietistic Protestantism. The activity of God, however, works in the cultural-ideological reality of every people and every individual freeing them for service of God and neighbor and for participation in the abundant life of the Kingdom of God.

The revelation of the Kingdom of God in Jesus Christ is the basis of hope for the Church. Its partial realization in history is a sign of the possibility of future fullness. It is the enduring model for the activity of the people of God. It develops a critical conscience for unmasking all ideologies which pretend to possess the absolute truth. The hope of the Kingdom permits the Church to live historical projects which seek the liberation of society and the human being.

The activity of God, model of the missionary activity of the Church touches, transforms and promotes the human being to the extent that he/she is called to a vocation for a rich and freeing relationship with God and others for concrete service in the community. The nature of the Kingdom is also temporal in so far as it demands commitment to the new human and his society, toward the abundant life, justice and liberty (John 8:32; Rom 12:2). In Jesus the Kingdom of God is opened to all people, especially the poor (Matt. 5:3-11; Luke 1:51-53; 4:18; 6:20-21; 24; 25; 12:15-21; 18:24-30) who are welcomed as privileged in the Kingdom precisely because of their greater need of liberation.

God, in his plan to save the world, always manifests himself in acts of love, for he is love (John 3:16; I John 4:8, 16). His love has as its object the whole of creation, since nothing is outside divine grace (Rom.8). In his love, God saves and redeems us. In Christ he loves us so much that he

gave his life for all, especially for the poor, oppressed and marginalized (Luke 4). His love breaks the chains of oppression, sin in all its dimensions. By his love we are free from self-centeredness, for a life in the community of love and service to the neighbor. The new life which Christ offers us manifests itself when in community our actions reveal his love. Just as love was the source of the activity of God, all acts of the Church should express this love which God offers us.

The nature of the Kingdom of God is all encompassing as it demands commitment to the human being and his/her society, reaching all persons, all institutions, and all sectors of life, as well as the total person, in the different aspects of life. The Kingdom of God reaches every kind of person, no matter what his/her ideas, social, cultural, political, economic or religious conditions. The Kingdom of God takes in equally, individual wholeness, including body, mind and spirit in all their demands.

Fundamentals for the Establishment of a Philosophy of Education:

No educational program is developed without a philosophical base. A philosophy is the motivating force for critical reflection on the present reality and in the search for truth.

In our schools, this should be developed and must be integrated theologically so as to reflect the purpose of the church.

Until now the fundamentals implicit in liberal philosophy, typical of capitalist society, have given direction to the educational process of our institutions, resulting in a type of education which emphasizes individualism.

Some of the fundamental elements of this philosophical current, which must be rejected, express themselves in:

- (1) Preoccupation with upward social mobility of the individual, regarded exclusively as personal success;
- (2) Accepting the competitive spirit;
- (3) Accepting utilitarianism as the norm of life;
- (4) Basing economic relations on the accumulation of wealth, resulting in the exploitation of human beings by human beings.

None of these is in harmony with a theology and philosophy which should serve as the basis for a Methodist educational practice.

For that reason it is necessary to develop a new philosophical instrument of liberating dimension (conforming to the Quadrennial Plan of 1979), which will permeate all of the work developed in Methodist educational institutions from the curriculum to administrative practice.

By this means it will be possible to develop:

- (1) a critical consciousness of the reality;
- (2) social values;
- (3) solidarity;
- (4) spirit and practice of justice;
- (5) education inserted into the concrete reality with the purpose of individual and social liberation;
- (6) the realization of the full person as the fruit of all combined efforts;
- (7) equitable distribution of social benefits;
- (8) The concept of what is useful as that which has social value in the Christian perspective and is consistent with a scale of values which promote the humanity of persons.

Policies and Objectives for the Brazilian Methodist Educational System -- in the Secular Area.

Methodist missionaries and educators practiced, from the Second Empire to the present moment, a liberal humanistic education based in the North American economic system and in the traditions of our denomination. This educational practice had its place in history and contributed to the development of an educational alternative to the rigid Jesuit and governmental system in our country.

Nevertheless the benefits of this educational practice are overridden for various reasons: by its failure to identify with the national culture in its totality; by being based exclusively in the individual without adequate social concern; by becoming elitist and showing little concern for the poor and needy thus limiting the Christian vision of education by failing to respond satisfactorily to the needs of the majority of the Brazilian people.

Even though a significant portion of The Methodist Church finds itself accommodated to this type of education and in agreement with this mentality, the moment has arrived to break, even if only gradually, with this commitment still related to an education based in the presuppositions of liberal capitalism and therefore beneficial to elite leaders.

The Brazilian educational system is also elitist, discriminatory, creating dependency and aimed at the preservation of the "status quo," imposing the culture of the dominant class on the popular class and increasing their level of dependency.

The life of Methodist institutions of learning is not contingent on the deficiencies of the State to fulfill its educational responsibilities, but on the conviction of the Church that private confessional training has to be

preserved as a democratic option.

Based on these truths, we declares:

1. That Methodist institutions ought not to function merely as repeaters of current educational philosophy;
2. That they should operate differently -- with a liberation posture aiming, both in formal and non-formal education, to liberate the poor, the oppressed, the destitute and the oppressors from the bondage of oppressive structures.

Education which begins in popular, non-formal expression should be turned against all types of discrimination and domination and, more specifically, in the present moment and circumstances, should turn first to the problem of marginalized young and aged, machismo, oppression of women, prostitution, racism, the rural exodus resulting in poor land use, the exploitation of farm workers and increasing the numbers of humans forced to live on the edges of the cities in conditions of extreme misery.

Educational practice must, therefore, be liberating and aim to transform the student into a positive agent of liberation.

There is full awareness of the massive obstacles institutions will face in the educational struggle on behalf of the less favored. Such obstacles are: the limited leeway allowed within the formal educational system; the privileged economic level of student bodies in relation to the majority of the Brazilian population; the stance of the teachers; the mentality of current administrations which are responsible to the supporting institution, the church, which is very concerned with its own financial situation and supported by very rigid structures of power; and by the fact

that the educational institutions are dependent on the tuition paid by the students, which is always insufficient in relation to the cost of instruction. All these factors limit an institution's liberating potential. In spite of such obstacles, it is the obligation of the institutions to take responsibility for the poor in their actual need and use all available resources in such ways as to put them in solidarity with their misery.

Based on these declared positions, the following directions are set:

1. Everyone -- church, teachers, staff, students and community -- are to be informed of our commitment with the poor and engaged in their liberation;
2. The formal training given to those who attend our institutions will not have as its goal the simple transmission of the dominant culture and mere preparation for the work market, but for the formation of critical consciences and feelings for the problem of the oppressed and down trodden;
3. Openness to and the preparation of new courses which will always take into consideration the objectives of the mission of the Church, consistent with its official documents and the needs of its regions;
4. Research will be carried out at the level of regional and general institutions as to how to develop the curriculum and adapt existing courses to the purposes stated here;
5. A significant portion of the budgets will be placed at the disposition of popular education with the view to develop the critical consciousness of those who live on the periphery.
6. Institutions will maintain strong relations with the communities where they are, sharing in their problems and using facilities for the

- discussion of items of community interest;
7. Institutions will make available physical space, rooms and auditoriums to the community, principally to the poor and their organizations, including weekends and vacation times;
 8. Priority will be given to the creation of vigorous pastoral departments to function as the critical conscience of the institutions, in all aspects, and to promote and support extra-class activities, including work with the community. All these efforts will be shaped by a sense of liberation.
 9. Administrators should seek a balance in the power structures so as to guarantee the tranquility of professors, students and staff and the security of the institution;
 10. There must be developed in the institutions a Christian life-style coherent with the directions now set forth;
 11. The training institutions will develop programs that provide conditions for liberation from injustice and the visible social evils for the participants in the educational process. Examples of those evils are the organization of society, the deterioration of relationships between persons, the distortion of sex, vice and many others;
 12. There will be developed projects to care for needy pre-school children, as preventive action against their marginalization and delinquency.
 13. Viewing the educational unity of the Church in its mission, the conferences will help their churches discover ways of using their human resources and patrimony in favor of the community, above all in favor of the poor, and, where possible, in projects which unite the

educational institutions and the churches.

14. There should be developed in the schools and churches a concern with the formation of teachers and specialists so as to overcome this lack in our institutions;
15. Institutions which, eventually, do not square with or correspond to the demands of the present directions will be helped to redesign their objectives; if after careful and deep evaluation it is determined that a change in direction is not possible, they will be closed.

Policies for the Methodist Educational System -- in the Theological Area:

The following directions are established for the Methodist Educational System in the theological area:

1. Organizational aspects -- urge the centralization of pastoral formation in the School of Theology and the diversification of the specialties. At the same time, continuing education of pastors and training of the laity should be decentralized in regional centers. Such regional centers will also be involved in research and theological debate.
2. Academic aspects -- Curriculum will be established based on the theological fundamentals recognized by the Methodist Church with a view to:
 - changes in pastoral practice, lay activity and local church,
 - changes in the methodology of the theological task, so that it arises from the people,
 - changes in the programs of theological education designed for laity and pastors, by formal, non-formal and informal methods.

COGETE will identify curriculum structures that permit future pastors to maintain frequent relationships with their regions of origin, with the view to better adaptability on their return.

3. Faculty -- In recruitment and selection of professors of theology for laity and pastors, the adequacy of their qualifications in the courses they are to teach will be taken into account. Professors should be offered opportunities for continuing modernization and improvement. Professors of theology, when they are active Methodist ministers, should be at the same time pastors.

4. Aspirants to the pastorate -- the process of recruitment of students who aspire to the pastorate would include systematically, a pre-theological program.

The selection process will be obligated to include an evaluation of the ability of the candidate and, along side it, an evaluation of the intellectual requisites and fulfillment of the other demands expected by the Church.

5. Complementary Theology -- It will be possible to obtain the degree of bachelor in theology, also through the Complementary Course without the demands of regular attendance at the School of Theology, for persons of proven vocation and service and with an academic formation of superior level, who are not able to do the regular theological course.

6. Administration of the School of Theology -- An autonomous administration system should be established for the School of Theology.

7. Complementary support of Theological Education -- In addition to the

programs of theological education of the institutions themselves, whose basic resources are already provided, there will be created a Complementary National Fund for Theological Education provided for by the payment of student fees, contributions by the churches, donations, legacies and others -- for the purpose of providing supplemental resources to existing projects related to the System of Theological Education of the Methodist Church.

8. **Relationships** -- Theological Education will be developed observing the following relationships:
- Relation with the social context: a methodology of theological work, at all levels, will be directly related to the reality of the less favored of Brazilian society, with the view to their liberation.
 - Relation with the context of the Church: the theological task, coordinated through COGETE, will have a prophetic dimension and, for this reason, should maintain a necessary autonomy in relation to the higher organs of the church.
 - Relation with other institutions of learning: the theological task should preferably be integrated into the fuller university life.
 - Relation between Methodist institutions of theology: meeting to evaluate and plan the theological practice to be coordinated by COGETE.
 - Ecumenical relations: Theological education will be enriched by contact with other churches, including those from other countries, without weakening the specific confessional aspect of Methodism.

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