The Pentecostal Movement:
# Social Transformation and Religious Habitus

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In memory of Waldo Cesar

Pentecostalism is the most dynamic religious movement in the world today. This is why it is significant that the Religion Monitor's data allow it to be studied rather closely in several countries.

Pentecostalism is only 100 years old. Especially in the so-called Third World, it is growing precipitously even as its religious orientations and forms of organization are strongly in flux. After just 100 years, it already comprises a third of all Christians worldwide (521 million, versus a total of 1,475 million, according to

Figure 1: Pentecostals and Charismatics vs. other Christians, 2000

Legend: Pentecostals/Charismatics ■ Other Christians   All data in percent
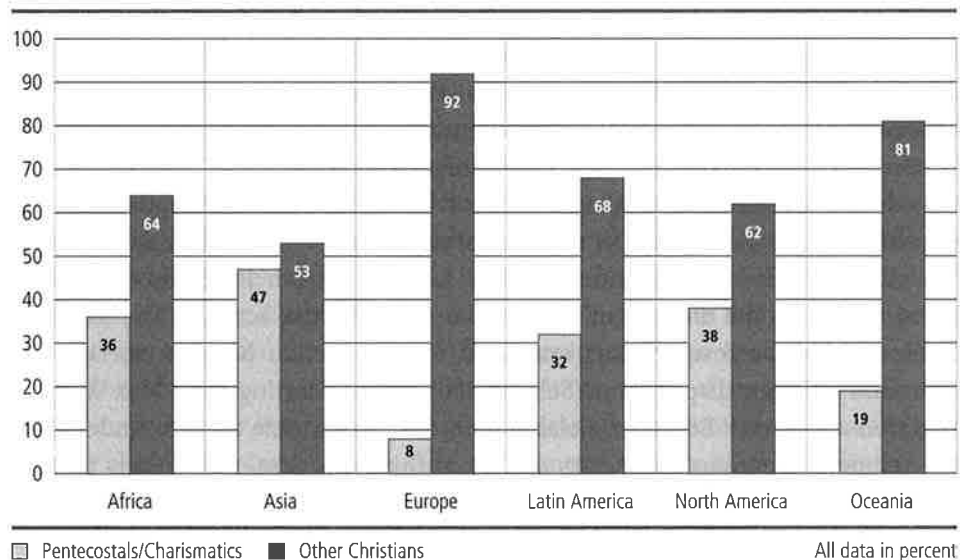
Source: Barrett 2001

Barrett 2001). It should be noted that in Barrett's data, what we refer to here as the Pentecostal movement includes all Christians who consider themselves Pentecostal or Charismatic and pursue the corresponding religious praxis. Catholics and Protestants—not just members of organized Pentecostal churches—are therefore also included in Barrett's calculations.

These statistics testify to strong growth dynamics. They also hint at how much power the Pentecostal church and the Christians it influences have in shaping many societies and representing Christianity in the world—even if Europeans, in their splendid isolation, have not yet paid much notice. In the Southern Hemisphere, a "new Christendom" (Jenkins 2002) is developing as Catholicism changes and, above all, as Pentecostalism spreads. However, Pentecostalism is significantly harder than Catholicism to analyze from a sociology of religion perspective.

Understanding Pentecostalism from a sociological perspective

Its fluidity and versatile adaptability give Pentecostalism the character of a social movement (in a strong sociological sense) that has virtually nothing in common with the European model of institutionalized religion. The actors in Pentecostalism—both individual and collective—react strongly to changes in the social context and rapidly adjust their strategies to a variety of dynamics. To be sure, certain patterns of perception, thought, and action solidify over time, and organizational structures emerge. Even so, most actors within the movement—especially the leading ones—are highly versatile.

For this reason, I regard Pierre Bourdieu's social theory as particularly well suited to understanding this movement. I have also seen this repeatedly confirmed since the early 1980s in research projects on Pentecostalism and through my own intensive collaboration with the Latin American Pentecostalist movement. This puts the movement's individual and collective actors in the center of interest. Previous research has examined the connection between social positions and religious dispositions (Schäfer 2005, 2006). Starting from Max Weber's tradition and Pierre Bourdieu's elaboration of it, this article aims to understand the religious meaning that actors ascribe to their practices, particularly in connection with their specific social-structural conditions. In short: For which social status does a given set of religious convictions provide these actors the most plausible explanations and suggest the most reasonable options for action? This conceptualizes social transformation processes and cleavages as relevant to reli-

gious praxis; conversely, religious praxis is also relevant to social processes. This approach incidentally is also consistent with a widespread self-perception within the movement as well as conclusions of Walter Hollenweger (1994), the doyen of research on Pentecostalism.

Although the Religion Monitor unfortunately does not present any data on social structures that could be used to statistically operationalize this question, it contains excellent data on actors' religious convictions and practices, particularly in regard to their cognitive and emotional perceptions and processing of specific experiences of time and space. These data can be interpreted in the context of the various countries' broader social environment by drawing on the literature and my own knowledge of the field.

Pentecostalism's aforementioned fluidity means that there is anything but consensus on its composition. Above all, it is clear that strictly speaking, a single, homogenous Pentecostal movement does not exist. Rather, highly varied forms of religious praxis and organization have emerged—different currents, so to speak. A very brief sketch of the history of Pentecostalism is thus in order. It arose from the Holiness Movement (which in turn has roots in Methodism) at the beginning of the 20th century in the United States. While it was ethnically mixed at first—particularly at its main church, the Azuza Street Revival in Los Angeles—white congregations soon segregated themselves and organized as the Assemblies of God (AoG). Very rapidly—and partly in parallel with this last development in the United States—Pentecostal activities also appeared in Latin America (Chile), India (only marginally), and Europe (especially Norway).

With regard to social structure, the black congregations in the United States generally continued to be linked to the underclass and limited advancement; the white churches, by contrast, established themselves in the consolidated, conservative middle class. Crucially, a new current catering to the American upper-middle and upper classes, neo-Pentecostalism, appeared in the 1950s with the founding of the Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International (FGBMFI).

In the 1960s, the Charismatic movement picked up the Pentecostal impulse and interpreted it for the upper middle class in mainline Protestantism. Over time, these last two currents amalgamated in a variety of ways. Then, in the 1980s, conservative Evangelical churches also took up Pentecostal practices in the so-called third wave. During this, neo-Pentecostalism, in particular, tended toward radicalization, established religious media empires, and contributed to the revival of Protestant fundamentalism in the United States. In missionary activities, which burgeoned during the 1980s, it is mainly the established major churches such as the AoG and neo-Pentecostal groups that have been active.

In the course of the 20th century, the spread of Pentecostalism followed the trail of the rapid and convulsive social change in the Third World. At the same time, the movement formed an inner structure capable of reacting flexibly to a wide range of social demands on religious actors. The most important change in roughly the past 30 years is the emancipation of the Pentecostal churches in the Third World, which is associated with social differentiation and transnational mission activities that originated in those countries, among other things.

Given this history, analysis of the data first requires us to formulate a definition of Pentecostalism. Definitions should reflect the observer's theoretical approach and be grounded in the object of study only to a limited extent. When researchers rely too heavily on their subjects' self-understanding, they can easily end up with a glut of categories or types. This is the case with Barrett (2001), who refers to (denominational) Pentecostals, neo-Pentecostals, Charismatics, neo-Charismatics, first-, second, and third-wavers, post-Pentecostals, and post-Charismatics, but then subsumes all of these categories under "Pentecostal/ Charismatic" in his statistical summary.

The Pew Forum takes an entirely different approach. It defines both categories, Pentecostal and Charismatic, based on a combination of religious organizational structures and respondents' self-understanding. "Pentecostal" thus refers to someone who belongs to an established Pentecostal and/or Charismatic Christian church, which vary as widely as the AoG and the Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus (IURD). "Charismatic" is any Christian—irrespective of confession—who identifies as either Charismatic or Pentecostal but does not belong to any such church, or who "speaks in tongues" multiple times per year. Both categories are subsumed under the umbrella rubric of "renewalists."

Yet a third approach generates categories from historical knowledge of the movement and observations of its social structures. Such categorizations are based more on previous scholarly studies of religious praxis than on the actors' self-understandings. A social-structural distinction between traditional and neo-Pentecostalism, roughly speaking, has emerged from my fieldwork on the movement in Central America. This distinction has proven informative and helpful over my two decades of research, validation and close work with the the Pentecostal movement in Latin America. However, it is merely a heuristic model, though one that is definitely also capable of revealing completely very different and unexpected conditions. Precisely this "understanding" and "interpretive" approach (Weber) to the production of meaning and to the actions of actors prevents facts from being sacrificed to theory.

Based on these considerations, a (less complex) interim solution to the definitional problem had to be found for the Religion Monitor—one that would also invite the respondents to place themselves in one of the categories. The distinction between "Pentecostal" and "Charismatic" presented itself because—at least in its usage in Germany, the United States, and Latin America—it is most likely to produce systematically interesting differentiations. Yet this distinction has not yielded adequately good results everywhere. Apart from the interviewers in Korea leaving out a whole category, a likely reason for this is demarcation struggles within the movement as its adherents further differentiate themselves. Those who belong to a new group within neo-Pentecostalism (such as power evangelism) tend not to want to be identified with "traditional" Pentecostals or Charismatics and respond to the interviewer with "evangelic" or "other."

Also, because many (predominantly poor) members of the Pentecostal movement presumably lack a telephone, phone surveys distort the findings (not to mention other sampling problems among marginal religious actors). Pentecostals and Charismatics may be significantly underrepresented as a result. Conversely, a number of Pentecostals may be concealed in the categories "Protestant," "evangelical-independent," and "other."

The sample sizes for Pentecostals and Charismatics are actually too small—with the exception of Nigeria (231 and 2), where face-to-face interviews were conducted—to support reliable conclusions. But they are large enough in the United States (34 and 11) and Brazil (54 and 19) to be interpreted as indicators in the context of the scholarly literature and in-depth knowledge of the Pentecostal movement in those countries.

One may also safely assume that those respondents who describe themselves as Pentecostal or Charismatic do indeed belong to these groups. To maximize the significance of these small samples, I generally combine the Pentecostals and Charismatics into a single category for purposes of calculation and contrast them with Protestants ("evangelic" plus "evangelical-independent"). "Other" confessions are excluded from consideration.

Pentecostalism, total populations and social structure

General demographic observations yield the following picture. If one considers the Pentecostal movement worldwide in relation to other Christians (Figure 1) or in individual countries compared to their total population (Figure 2), its low percentage in Germany is especially striking. This can be attributed to several

Figure 2: Pentecostals and Charismatics as a percent of 2000 population
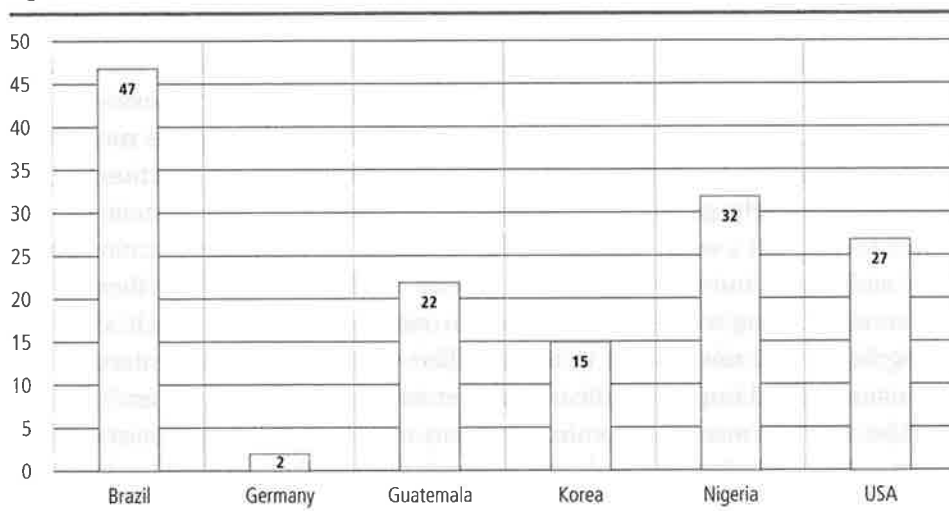
Source: Barrett 2001   All data in percent

factors. One is definitely the close connections among the Enlightenment, secularization and rationalism. Another is the longstanding hegemony of the official churches in the religious arena. A third reason would be that stable social systems provide a cushion against existential uncertainty. A fourth might be the commodity fetishism of capitalist consumer societies that propagandizes the fulfillment of human existence through the consumption of goods.

At any rate, the first stirrings of the movement around 1906 in Cassel were rapidly absorbed or marginalized by the Evangelical Community Movement (Evangelische Gemeinschaftsbewegung) within the established Protestant churches. Only today are postmodern charismatic groups and African immigrants' churches beginning to arouse a certain interest among the public. In South Korea, the spread of Pentecostalism has run up against a very strong shamanist and Buddhist tradition. The movement was able to take advantage of the sense of crisis and the process of social upheaval following the Korean War and as the country was modernizing very rapidly. In particular, the Yoido Gospel Church—which began as Pentecostal and later became neo-Pentecostal—has managed to establish a very solid foundation with a message of prosperity aimed at the ambitious lower middle class. It has thus strongly advanced the trend of the Korean middle class being mobilized by Protestantism. However, Korea will not be discussed further below because the RM includes no data on its Pentecostal churches.

Nigeria has been predominantly Islamic in its northern regions (43 % of the population, according to Barrett) for some time now. If Pentecostals make up 32 percent of the total population, one can assume that Pentecostal churches strongly dominate the country's Christian south. A significant portion of these are African-influenced Aladura churches, which ever since the 1930s have incorporated Pentecostal impulses into an ethnically oriented form of African piety.

The Aladura churches make evident that the more European and rigid praxis of piety historically linked to Protestantism (the "orthodox churches," as they are called in Nigeria) were unable to adequately adapt culturally; not so for the Pentecostal churches. The conflict-ridden modernization of this oil-rich nation has fostered the growth of both Pentecostalism and Islam. Since the 1990s, new groups aimed at the middle class have appeared within Pentecostalism, rapidly gaining formative influence to such an extent that young urban Muslims are trying to integrate charismatic practices.

The comparatively low percentage of Pentecostals in Guatemala in the face of a strong Protestant presence dating back to the 19th century (see the article on Latin America) is due partly to the strong position of Evangelical churches among the conservative and more reserved indigenous population of the highlands. A further explanation is that social change has been less discontinuous in this area than in the agro-industrialized lowlands. Yet one should not conclude that Pentecostalism carries little weight in Guatemala. The situation in Guatemala is distinguished mainly by the strong position of neo-Pentecostal churches, part of whose clientele belongs to Guatemala's upper class and wields significant political influence. As a result, on the one hand these churches have managed to establish quite a strong influence on society and politics; on the other hand, the Pentecostal movement in Guatemala is marked even more strongly by social cleavages than in other countries. Guatemala cannot be included in the analysis here. Except for six cases, all respondents termed themselves "evangélicos," mostly likely due to conformity and reticence (and especially since this category was mentioned before the "Pentecostal" category).

The figures for Brazil are explained by the Pentecostal movement's early and strong presence there, dating from 1910, along with its role in the cataclysmic modernization and migration processes resulting from Brazil's industrialization and rural exodus that have transformed the entire country. A further explanation is the decline in the Catholic Church's control over the religious field due to liberal influence in politics and cultural pluralism. In Brazil, too, the growing influence of neo-Pentecostal churches with a strong claim to shaping society has been noticeable since the 1990s at the latest.

Finally, the United States is the birthplace of the Pentecostal movement. Though it established itself as a religious force relatively quickly, from its beginnings the movement faced tough competition from Evangelical and mainstream Protestants and from a well-consolidated Catholic Church. As already sketched above, neo-Pentecostal churches have taken up strong positions in the United States over the past 20 years (Schäfer 2008).

All and all, the following conclusions can be derived from the differences and commonalities among countries. First, Pentecostal churches grow especially fast in the context of conflict-ridden and fragmentary modernization. The typical situation of converts is relative deprivation: people whose situation noticeably deteriorates, through no fault of their own, compared to the situation of their socially similar counterparts and compared to their own expectations. This can happen to individuals in any circumstances—by no means only those in poverty. The religious praxis and symbolism of the Pentecostal movement is—to a much greater extent than those of traditional Protestantism—suitable for imbuing such situations with meaning, interpreting conflict and change in religious terms, and helping actors find new social strategies. Second, widely varying Pentecostal churches around the world are united into a large movement through their similar inventory of religious symbols and through identification with each other. This produces a specific type of identity that is intrinsically globally oriented, which enables transnational mobility or just identification with significant others, even virtual others. Third, the social structure in each location exerts a major influence on the local form of the Pentecostal movement. This, in turn, results in tensions and alienation within the movement, which stand out to an observer only upon close scrutiny.

That the Pentecostal movement does not represent a cohesive entity—nor unequivocally a church of the marginalized—is already evidenced by the debates over its definition. But the key to understanding its variety can by no means be found only in its theological traditions or the self-attributions of its adherents. Instead, one must grasp the complicated interplay between a society's differential demands for religious meaning and the meanings that various groups offer. Social structural factors such as income, education, ethnicity, gender, future prospects related to one's position, and so on, all substantially influence this. The more flexibly a religious community can adapt its identity-forming religious content to its social conditions, the greater success it will have among the people affected, particularly when social change is *rapid*. That is Pentecostalism's recipe for success. The fluidity of religious symbols within the movement is fostered by one factor in the church's organization: Unlike Catholicism, there is no magiste-

rium and no overarching hierarchy, though there is sometimes a strict hierarchy within a given church. This means that new groups with new profiles can arise again and again in response to changes in society or within the church. The metaphor for the movement's organization is a network, not a hierarchy, including and especially on the transnational level—a crucial aspect, though it cannot be further elaborated here.

Regarding the movement's growing internal organization and its currents, one can nonetheless roughly distinguish several types, *mutatis mutandis*. However, one must keep in mind that these are "pure" types, idealized clusters in the religious field if you will; in the reality of society, one must attend to mutual influences, special developmental paths, and the like.

The classic type is the large, established church with centralized administration and international missionary activity: AoG, Church of God (Cleveland), etc. With their missionary work, these churches have done the most to spread Pentecostalism internationally since the first half of the 20th century and have given it an American flavor. In the United States, these churches are rooted in the middle class; in Third World countries, most of their members tend to belong to the lower strata, while the leadership and a few of the central congregations can be deemed middle class.

These churches increasingly tend toward Evangelical models of piety and demand holiness and distance from the "world" as their adherents' basic religious attitudes. However, one must consider that the different class affiliations of these churches' members can also result in distinctly different profiles of piety and patterns of identity *within* an organizational entity of these churches. For instance, ascetic forms might prevail among the leadership and in middle-class congregations, while apocalyptic forms might carry more weight in lower-class congregations. Since about the 1950s—and in Africa partly in the course of decolonization—national churches have repeatedly split off from these classic Pentecostal churches in the "mission countries" (Príncipe de Paz, Guatemala; Yoido Gospel, Korea; African Instituted Churches, etc.).

The independent churches that began in this manner make up the second type. Compared to the established, classic Pentecostal churches, they gain their capital precisely by adapting to special local demands for religious meaning. This is how the African Instituted Churches in sub-Saharan Africa developed their profile, for example. Independent religious production allows patterns of ritual and religious convictions specific to a culture to be integrated and reshaped (elements of ancestor worship, healing ceremonies, belief in ghosts, etc.). Similarly, Pentecostal churches are springing up in Latin America that

draw on Indian culture and emphatically call themselves indigenous Pentecostal churches. Moreover, in an urban milieu these churches often form in modernizing sectors of the lower classes (industrial workers, coal miners, etc.) and in the informal sector. In every regard they offer (ethnically or socioeconomically) marginalized sectors of the population important foci for social organization.

Their models of piety often center on spiritual presence (glossolalia), empowerment of members, and the healing of physical and especially psychic afflictions. In the slums of Third World countries, this type of Pentecostal church has been a decisive factor in social survival and in organizing. Incidentally, the lower-class parishes of the Catholic Charismatic movement—which the Catholic clergy supports as an antidote to independent Pentecostal churches—function similarly.

Just as class-specific, albeit oriented toward the upper middle class, is the third type: the neo-Pentecostal churches (including the so-called third wave). This movement's first organization in the United States was the FGBMFI, which has targeted the upper class worldwide since the 1960s. Despite social diversification, the movement still focuses mainly on the upwardly mobile middle class.

Since the 1970s, an increasing number of communities from the United States have been implanted in the Third World (such as El Verbo in Guatemala) and existing churches have been recast as neo-Pentecostal (through the activities of Youth with a Mission, for instance). Shortly after this, upwardly mobile locals began to found their own churches (Nigeria's Sword of the Spirit, Brazil's IURD, Guatemala's Fraternidad Cristiana, etc.). Many of these understand themselves as communities "where well-to-do people congregate" who even in religious terms "have something special that normal, superstitious Pentecostals lack," as an adherent of the Hombres Cristianos in Guatemala told me. A particular feature of these actors' religious identity is their belief that they will gain material wealth through their engagement on behalf of the church (prosperity gospel) coupled with personal empowerment through the Holy Spirit. These churches are generally quick to achieve social and political influence, not least due to their financial ability to buy television networks, publish newspapers, produce recordings, and so on. Due to a broad range of factors, the extent of their political engagement varies (heavy involvement in the United States and Guatemala, less so in Nigeria). But in any event, upwardly mobile modernizers determine the style of these communities.

Groups of this type have grown into the megachurches of the Third World and the United States. Many of them also cooperate with upper-middle-class Catholic Charismatics. Some of these neo-Pentecostal churches grew out of independent

churches that belong generally to the classic type (Redeemed Christian Church of God [RCCG], Nigeria; Elim, Guatemala; Deus é Amor [IPDA], Brazil; etc.) and have undergone a transformation toward the neo-Pentecostal model. While they are relatively weakly organized ("established sects" in Milton Yinger's model) as a result of this (and also other factors), they nonetheless reach a discipleship drawn from multiple social classes. My research in Latin America clearly shows, however, that different religious styles predominate in socially varied congregations.

This fact draws attention to a second strand of differentiation: internal religious organization. Especially in classic Pentecostalism and in neo-Pentecostalism, the distance is great—both socially and in the church's structure—between lower-class members and leading functionaries of the church. Neo-Pentecostal churches reinforce and legitimate this distance with special offices, particularly those of "Apostles," which endows the church leaders with inviolable authority, similar to papal infallibility, but with a broader base of recognition. Mid-level leadership jobs in megachurches, such as Brazil's IURD and Nigeria's RCCG, are coveted upwardly-mobile positions that offer not just good incomes but also management training and first-rate social contacts. Some of these churches own banks, holdings, real estate, media companies, and large legal departments in which the clergy enjoy a special position. Some churches, such as the IURD, even have their "own" members of parliament.

Finally, lower- and middle-class members contribute a major part of these churches' financing with their tithes and donations. The IURD, for example, has developed an elaborate system that is a Pentecostal version of selling indulgences, which is based on an interplay between promises of material prosperity and threats of demonic possession. At the same time, neo-Pentecostal megachurches are building more and more educational and social organizations. Their management again requires mid-level clerical leaders, thus converting religious capital into social and finally economic capital.

In this context, the Religion Monitor data offer insights into respondents' religious practices and convictions. In accordance with the sociology of religion theory outlined above, these insights allow conclusions to be drawn about the actors' religious identities and strategies. Of particular importance for grounding religious agency, in its broadest sense, are religious paradigms connected to the perception of space and time. Believers will perceive different opportunities and constraints in different ways depending on these paradigms. The precondition for this, however, is that religious faith must actually be relevant for a given person. One must therefore first inquire into the centrality of religion and the intensity of religious praxis.

I will explore these and all subsequent themes using the examples of Nigeria, Brazil, and the United States, for which the best data are available. Occasionally, I will draw on Germany by way of illustration. After first analyzing the experiential components of Pentecostal religiosity, I will discuss religious concepts of space and time and conclude by outlining political and transnational strategies.
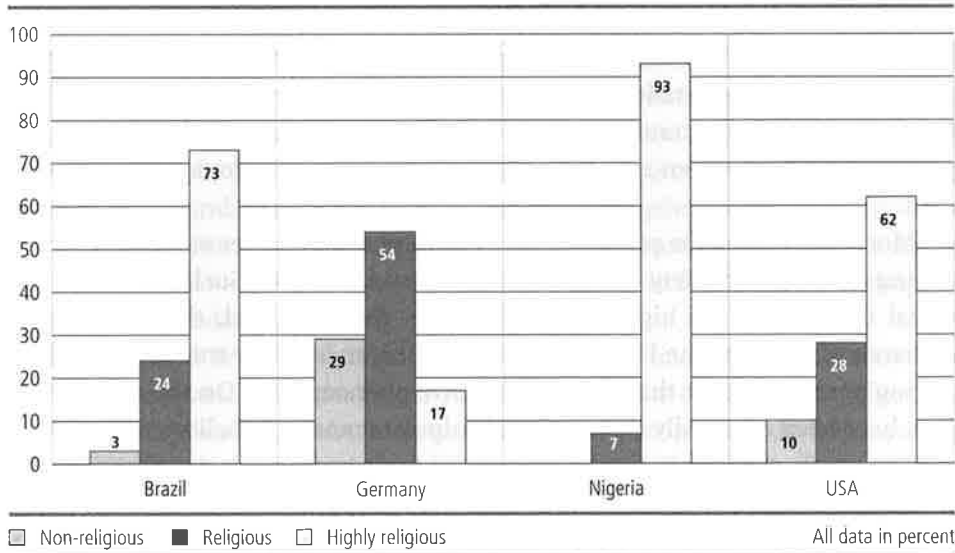
Experiential religiosity

In contrast to Protestantism's historical rationalism, Pentecostal religiosity is based on practical experience. Worship services, fasting and prayer groups, ecstatic practices such as "speaking in tongues" (discussed below), prophecy and trances, exorcism, and faith healing are decisive reference points for constituting Pentecostal identity. One result of experience "with all the senses" is that the cognitive level of identity is closely interwoven with the affective and corporal levels. Staunch Pentecostals consequently view their faith as an integral part of their lives, which cannot be segregated out of daily praxis into a "subsystem" of life but instead determines their entire lives.

The centrality of religion (see also the article on Latin America) is virtually self-evident to Pentecostals. Religion affects all realms of life; its praxis is thus not limited to liturgical exercises or specific times and places. In addition, the praxis of piety is enthusiastic.

In the Religion Monitor's statistics on the centrality of religiosity, differences stand out first of all between Germany (or Central Europe) and the Third World countries as well as the United States, which occupies an intermediate position. Compared to Nigeria and Brazil, Germany shows a high percentage of individuals who are non-religious or only moderately religious. On the one hand, this is an expression of European secularization. On the other hand, these findings indicate the major role that religion plays in private and public life in Nigeria and Brazil. Despite all the social upheaval and modernization of the colonial and neo-colonial eras, religion was not eradicated in Africa and Central America. Both continents developed their own more or less precarious forms of modernity in which religion plays a striking role.

Religious praxis has also changed in the process. Tribal religions in Africa and indigenous religions and folk Catholicism in Latin America are being replaced by mobilized Catholicism, Islam and increasingly Pentecostalism. The general openness to religiosity that is evident in the Third World constitutes an ideal opening for the Pentecostal movement. In contrast to Europe, where expe-

Figure 3: Centrality of religiosity by country

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riential, emotional religiosity is incomprehensible to most people, Pentecostal emotionality and spontaneity represent an elaboration of traditional piety, with the further advantage of offering adequate responses to the frictions and contradictions of modernization processes.

With respect to particular forms of religious praxis, data from the Religion Monitor clearly confirm that Pentecostalism is at the avant-garde of modern Christianity when it comes to lived piety. In all three countries under study here—the United States, Brazil and Nigeria—the findings for frequency of attending religious services and engaging in prayer rank at the very top (tending toward "very important," with a combined average for all countries of M = 1.61 on a five-point scale). This is significantly higher than the likewise high scores for other Christians (who tend toward "fairly important," M = 2.38).

It is important to note here that the Pentecostal movement cultivates ecstatic worship practices as part of religious services and prayer. In contrast to the Catholic liturgy and the austere attitude toward the Word of God in Protestantism (and Islam), Pentecostal worship activities range from lively, upbeat communal singing (always with rhythmic clapping) to collective glossolalia (speaking in tongues), exorcisms and ecstatic trances.

Services can vary widely with regard to spontaneity and the usage of certain practices. In neo-Pentecostal megachurches, it is very common for assistants to prepare for and instigate glossolalia and trances. During my fieldwork, I was

able to observe training in this (which of course is not public). Ecstasy and trances play a similarly key role in the small independent churches, though they are generally more spontaneous and develop in a much less controlled manner. Collective glossolalia—ecstatic utterances that are not even understandable to the speaker—is often the transition into trancelike phases during worship services. It too can waver between a routinized program and spontaneous ecstatic expression.

Moreover, glossolalia plays a central role in personal prayer at home in intensifying an emotional piety that defies intellectual rationality. Such powerful emotional experiences are highly ambivalent. On the one hand, they allow for a catharsis of the soul; the literature has found this to be more true for glossolalia during personal prayer than for the collective phenomenon. On the other hand, they have been repeatedly exploited to manipulate masses of believers.

The praxis of worship can be interpreted from two further perspectives: religious symbolism and social practice. In the symbolic practices of worship, everyday problems—alcoholism, economic failure, experiences of violence, etc.—become the direct object of religious activities. This means that they are transferred from the various fields of praxis where they are experienced into the field of religious authority where they are dealt with, and sometimes solved, with the tools of religious logic. More than a few Pentecostals have gone dry after chants and exorcisms to drive out alcoholic demons.

In religious praxis, the tight integration of experiences in various fields with entirely different concepts of power relations is precisely what lends Pentecostal rituals their social persuasiveness. Instead of the power of addiction, for example, the power of the Holy Spirit is in charge. The people involved are moved to recognize the efficacy of the Spirit, its representatives, and its rituals, to invest their faith in them—and to actually behave differently in fields of praxis other than those of religion.

Situation-specific spontaneity, as found in the small, independent Pentecostal churches, is particularly effective in this way, not least because it is seconded by a manageably sized religious community. Anyone who has publicly experienced liberation from possession can also count on practical help from the congregation. This is where a second practical function of Pentecostal worship has traction. The congregations constitute spaces that offer mutual trust and obligation as well as informal provision of mutual aid or even job prospects (see also the article on Latin America).

Pentecostals' primary experiences of God occur through worship services and personal prayer. It is striking that with respect to experiences of God, Pentecos-

tals differ more sharply from Evangelicals and mainstream Christians in the United States than in Nigeria or Brazil. This may be because the Pentecostal movement in the United States has long sought to define itself clearly against well-established Evangelical Protestantism. Where Pentecostalism emphasizes experience and charismatic legitimation, Evangelicals concentrate on texts and rational, legalistic legitimation. Only in the past 20 years with the third wave have these boundaries become more porous. Evangelical congregations have been drawn closer to neo-Pentecostal models of legitimation and piety—a development of major significance to the neo-Pentecostal and charismatic reshaping of American fundamentalism.

In the Third World, the history of Protestantism has given less impetus to sharp demarcations. Historically, the Protestantism of the old missionary churches and the Evangelical missions never put down deep enough roots in the populace to be able to halt the "Pentecostalization" of many of their congregations at an early stage. Congregations, churches, and spiritual leaders who did not follow this trend have fallen into a marginal position in the religious field.

With regard to Pentecostals' religious experience as such, it is striking that positive experiences are strongly emphasized. Pentecostals experience "strength," "gratitude," and "joy" almost "very often" (M = 4.65) and without much variation among themselves (standard deviation SD ≈ .50). They "often" (M = 3.70) experience "liberation from evil powers." This accords with the theological teachings promoted by neo-Pentecostal groups.

For Pentecostals, these experiences of piety go together with the certainty that God intervenes in their lives, ranging from "often" to "very often," whether in the United States, Brazil, or Nigeria (M of about 4.15). But comparing Pentecostals in the various countries with non-Pentecostal Christians reveals an interesting difference. In the United States, 67 percent of Pentecostals believe God often intervenes in their lives, but only 19 percent of other Christians share this view. In the Third World, by contrast, this conviction is also very common among non-Pentecostal Christians.

One might interpret this as evidence that despite widespread public religiosity in the United States, secularization has left a deeper mark on Christians there than in Brazil and Nigeria. Once again, a picture emerges of significantly better cultural conditions for the reception of Pentecostalism's special features in the Third World than in richer countries, particularly in the context of daily life. Pentecostals can easily build on these conditions since they spell out implications for conduct in most areas of life that stem from being aware of God as a constant presence in one's life. Pentecostals generally tend to feel a strong influ-

ence of their religiosity on coping with illness (M = 4.48) and life crises (M = 4.77), along with child-rearing and paid work.

Here, too, the differences between Pentecostals and other Christians are less pronounced in the Third World than in the United States. Belief in God's direct intervention in illness and its expression in faith healing has been one of Pentecostalism's defining features since its inception—and one of its main points of conflict with the rest of American Protestantism. But precisely this praxis renders it highly compatible with the cultural conditions of many Third World countries, especially in Africa, where it is considered plausible that people can be healed by God's power, either through an intermediary or directly. This does not mean that the Aladura churches in Nigeria, for example, translate African rites directly into their practices, as has been repeatedly argued. More likely, this expresses a functional equivalence that can result in Pentecostal churches becoming strong competitors to traditional healers. Whether that actually occurs depends partly on contextual factors, in my judgment. There were fierce confrontations in Brazil during the 1980s and 1990s between Pentecostal churches and adherents of Afro-American religions, which are still perpetuated today in the harsh polemics of the IURD. On the other hand, some believers also practice multiple religions or—as in a case I am familiar with in Cuba—Pentecostal worship services may deliberately integrate Afro-American healing rites.

Despite all local and type-specific distinctions, the Pentecostal movement has in common that it reacts to crisis situations in particular ways and is viewed as especially competent in such situations. That should come as no surprise, since similar movements in the history of Christianity—such as the Montanists, Joachimites, Thomas Müntzer's Reformation, and the Anabaptists—also stood out as crisis religions.

Conversely, an "Evangelicalization" of piety has been observed in the Pentecostalism of America's solid middle class (such as the AoG), and its enthusiastic elements have almost completely disappeared. In those places where the Pentecostal movement (still) has the dynamic of a crisis-based religion, it deals with illness, life crises, and social crises religiously and theologically rather than socially or therapeutically. Pentecostals interpret crises large and small with highly idiosyncratic theological paradigms that are scarcely acknowledged or known in Europe. They thus present primarily *religious* solution strategies to their adherents and put them under pressure with demands for religious decisions and actions. One cannot understand the Pentecostal movement if the inner dynamic of its religious logic remains unintelligible—for the simple rea-

son that this logic is extremely relevant to its adherents' actions, even across the boundaries of different fields of praxis.

Religious-symbolic processing of time and space

Structuring the experience of social time and social space is among the most important functions of religious and other "worldview" systems of praxis. This work of structuring spawns identities and strategies. Socially learned and thus modifiable dispositions are decisive for the cognitive, affective and corporeal processes that such structuring comprises. Actors' dispositions allow them to interpret their experiences immediately as they are perceived and figure out how to react appropriately.

An especially significant aspect of religious belief is that it promises rescue, redemption and liberation in the face of negative experiences—especially threats to life itself and to one's way of life (see also Riesebrodt 2007, Schäfer 2005). Pentecostalism's main religious metaphors for this are empowerment through the Holy Spirit, the ability to speak in tongues inspired by the Spirit (glossolalia), salvation through the Rapture just before the end of the world, and ascetic detachment from the world through a life of holiness.

These varied expectations of salvation are each linked to specific social situations and to churches' self-understandings. Pentecostals who focus on empowerment by the Holy Spirit (and who ritually foreground this in their worship services, for example) often see themselves as individuals endowed with power who can confront perceived threats in public or private life with the full authority of the Spirit.

Those who await the Rapture view themselves as a community preparing for this event and keep their distance from "the world." Those with the gift of tongues see themselves as custodians of truth in a treacherous world. These different self-understandings also correspond to the different ways believers position themselves in the religious field and in the broader social space along with matching their different religious identities. These identities, in turn, prompt specific strategies in the context of existing opportunities and constraints. A church preparing for the Rapture will attribute negative developments in social or family life to the general deterioration of conditions in the last days. It will thus forgo all efforts toward social improvement and at most seek to stabilize the congregation and its families.

Believers authorized by the Spirit will try to deploy their authority against the evil they perceive, though here, too, the choice of strategies will ultimately depend

on the purported causes of the evil. Those who attribute problems—bulimia, say—to secular causes will turn to medication or a psychologist; those who attribute them to demonic influence will use their divine authority for exorcism. Those who have learned to articulate themselves in accord with "God's truth" through speaking in tongues will more inclined to dare to protest against social problems. All three of these examples make apparent that religious identities and strategies tend to correspond to people's social circumstances. These three different types of identity thus correspond more or less precisely to the three types of Pentecostal community-building outlined above.

It is clear that the variety of Pentecostal praxis cannot be exhausted by either examples or typologies. But in accord with the data on the intensity of religious life, they at least make evident how important Pentecostals' various religious convictions are to them in coping with the demands of social life. Religious dispositions that regulate perception, judgment and action allow individuals within their church communities to interpret and evaluate their experiences in every dimension of the social world in a specific religious manner. On this basis they develop strategies that always differ somewhat from the conventional strategies in their social environment—just enough so that Pentecostals can be linked to them while also setting themselves apart—because they are operating with schemes of interpretation and action that are specifically *religious* (i.e., refer to transcendence).

When one cannot fall back on basic sociodemographic data—as is the case with the Religion Monitor's data—but has good data on religious convictions and practices, it makes sense to interpret the material according to two fundamental categories of experience: the question of how religious actors cognitively (and at the same time, affectively) organize their experience of social time and social space. Which religious dispositions are available to them, and how are they applied in ordering experiences of space and time?

The Religion Monitor offers some variables that go back to very old religious models of cognitive and affective conceptions of space and time: the question of the world's future—that is, the infinite or finite nature of time; and the question of the division of social and thus also symbolic space into good and evil—that is, the influence of divine and demonic powers.

Time

If one asks how time is cognitively organized, Pentecostalism offers a radicalized version of an evolutionary, linear conception of time. This corresponds to an important current in the Christian tradition. Christianity began as an apocalyptic religion and was thus defined by the idea of linear time converging on an endpoint. During late antiquity, however, this approach was supplanted by the idea of an eternal parallelism between heaven and earth. Historically, the apocalyptic current in Christianity has been repeatedly revived in times of crisis and "from below." It has often been linked to revolution and social reform, but often also to strategies of "fleeing the world" and retreating into "sects" in times of crisis. In any case, the early Pentecostal movement followed the apocalyptic tradition by way of American evangelicalism, carried the conflicts over the theory of evolution in its immediate historical "baggage," and initially espoused an apolitical form of apocalyptic thought focused on believers withdrawing from the world (premillenarianism).

This conception of time very closely matches the dynamics of a capitalist economy as perceived by marginalized sections of the population. In the course of the 20th century, parts of the American neo-Pentecostal movement transformed apocalyptic thought into a form that outright demanded the reshaping of society (postmillenarianism). However, the classic Pentecostal missions exported premillenarianism, and most churches in the Third World initially adopted it. In some of those churches these ideas continue to shape their identities. In others, though—for example, in Brazil—they seem to have become "sedimented symbols" (Ricoeur) that have lost their significance for identity formation.

In asking Pentecostals about this complex of topics, it is advisable to tap into the eschatological tradition. The question of whether the end of the world is imminent foregrounds the respondents' experience of time, particularly with regard to apocalyptic notions of the course of time. Do respondents conceive of time as potentially endless and therefore base their religious beliefs on the parallelism of earth and heaven, time and eternity, as well as on the idea of the soul's immortality? Or do they see time as progressing linearly toward the end of the world and await it with varying degrees of urgency, foreseeing battles ahead and putting their faith in a new creation?

The question of whether the end of the world is imminent allows us to roughly assess the direction of the respondents' thinking. Our hypothesis was that Pentecostals would be significantly more likely than other Christians to agree that the end of the world is near. This hypothesis was impressively confirmed in the United States. It was just as impressively refuted in Nigeria. Whereas Pen-

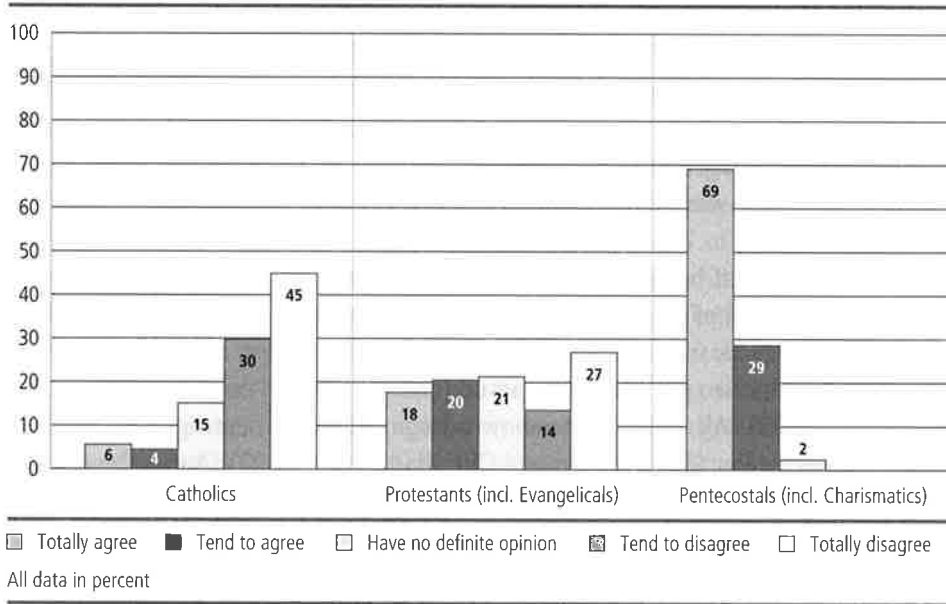Figure 4: End of the world nearing, agree/disagree
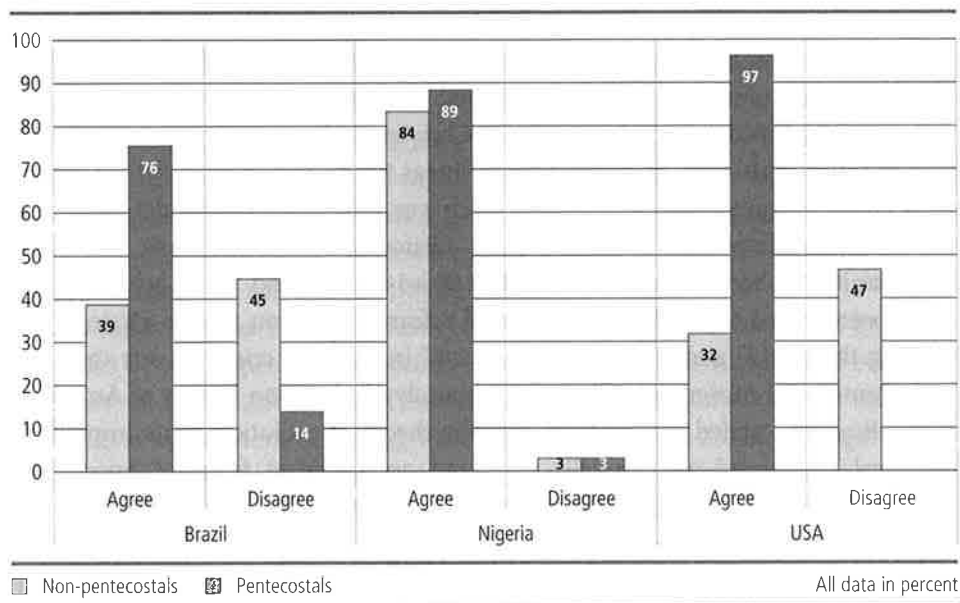
tecostals' apocalyptic beliefs set them apart from other Christians in the United States, in Nigeria nearly all Christians (and Muslims) believe in the apocalypse. In addition, in the United States there is a significantly stronger correlation between Pentecostals' belief in the imminent end of the world and the opinion that their religiosity affects their political views. How should these findings be interpreted?

In the United States, Pentecostals believe significantly more strongly than other Christians that the end of the world is near (Pentecostals: 97 %, upper two [based on a five-point scale = u.t.], M= 1.34; other Christians: 32 %, u.t., M = 3.38; margin of error p ≤.000; see Figure 4). There is absolutely no disagreement among Pentecostals with this statement (0 %, lower two [= l.t.]), whereas almost one-half of other Christians reject it (47 %, l.t.).

While Pentecostals in the United States demonstrate homogeneity in their belief that the end of the world is near (SD ≈ .53; see Figure 5), other Christians express a diversity of views on the subject (SD ≈ 1.48). If we look separately at Catholics, Protestants (including the Evangelicals) and Pentecostals, we see a certain polarization of the field. Catholics and mainline Protestants make up the majority of those who disagree strongly that the end of the world is near, while Pentecostals and (presumably Evangelical) Protestants number high among those who believe it is at hand.

Figure 5: Believe that the end of the world is near—United States

| | Totally agree | | Tend to agree | | Have no definite opinion | | Tend to disagree | | Totally disagree |

All data in percent

These data point to long-running eschatological disputes that are closely associ-ated with the debate over fundamentalism. With their apocalyptic and funda-mentalist tendencies, Pentecostals and Evangelicals have distanced themselves from mainline Protestantism and Catholics. Clearly, compared to the total num-ber of Christians, believers in the imminent end of the world are a minority, albeit an impressive one (33 %, u.t.), against those who reject it (50 %, l.t.). How-ever, this is a highly active minority.

Since the revival of the American fundamentalist movement in the late 1970s, their activities have become ever more tightly integrated into conserva-tives' strategies in the culture wars. This also corresponds with the strong politi-cization of religious positions among American Pentecostals. The data show Pentecostals attributing a greater degree of religious influence on their political attitudes than other Christians (question 14.5), even if they consider politics a relatively unimportant aspect of their life (question 1.5).
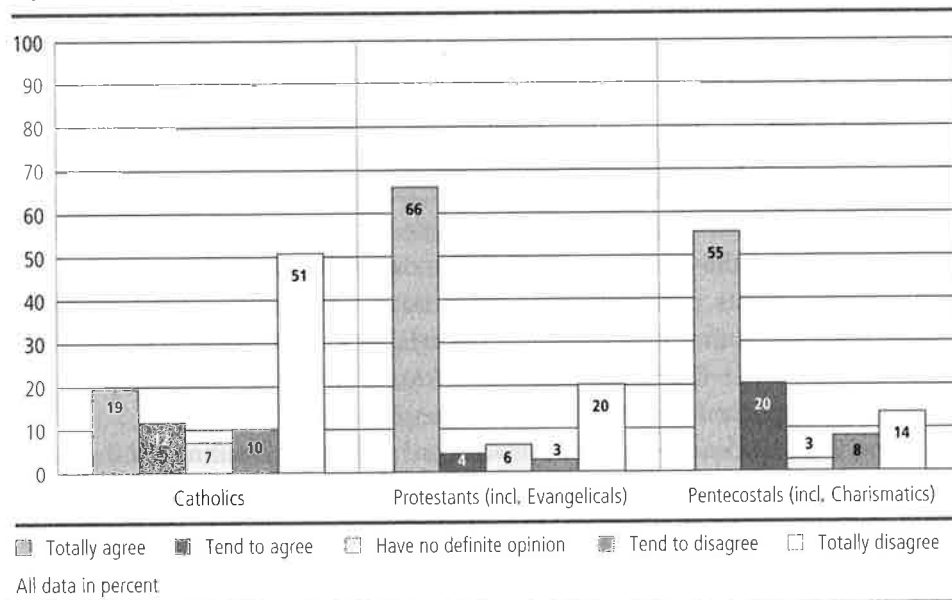
There is also a clear correlation between eschatological ideation and the influ-ence of religiosity on political attitudes (questions 14.5 and 16.7, correlation r = .303). In fact, apocalyptic Pentecostals—and more precisely, neo-Pentecostals—have played key roles in mobilizing the Christian right: as activists, as a political base, and as Republican voters.

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Views on how the end of the world will transpire have undergone several changes in this process. Those who believe in the Rapture—the traditional pre-millenarian teaching that God will rescue the faithful from the Earth before Armageddon—are difficult to mobilize politically. In the interest of mobilization, however, the Left Behind series and Restorationism have (each in their own way) brought Armageddon into believers' purview of action. Political teachings on the end of the world have been further radicalized by theories of demonic activity (see below).

The landscape of beliefs in Brazil is less polarized. While fewer Pentecostals believe that the end of the world is near (76 %, u.t.), a greater percentage of other Christians do (39 %, u.t.; see Figure 4). There is nevertheless a significant difference between the two groups on the issue (question 16.7: Pentecostals M = 2.03, others: M = 3.32). All confessions show a large degree of heterogeneity in their views (Pentecostals: SD ≈ 1.47, other Christians: SD ≈ 1.77). As in the United States, we see polarization in Brazil between the Pentecostals and Evangelicals—who tend to believe in the apocalypse—and Catholics and Protestants, who generally do not (see Figure 6).

The hierarchy and traditions of Brazilian Catholicism and Brazil's relatively strong Lutheran Church are unlikely to be influenced by apocalyptic teachings.

Figure 6: Believe that the end of the world is near—Brazil

Totally agree   Tend to agree   Have no definite opinion   Tend to disagree   Totally disagree

All data in percent

However, it is worth noting that 19 percent of Catholics in Brazil believe that the end of the world is near, whereas 14 percent of the country's Pentecostals do not. This segment of Catholics are likely to be Catholic-Charismatic Christians who are competing with independent Pentecostal churches for members among the lower socioeconomic classes in the slums.
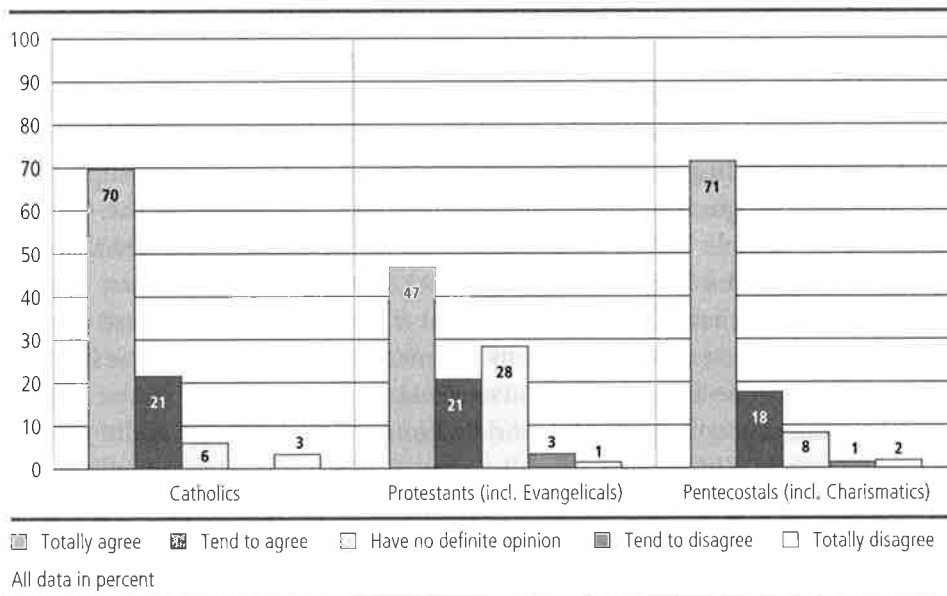
The data, including a very small sample of Charismatics (n = 19), support at least an educated guess about the non-eschatological Pentecostals. The Charismatics in the sample believe significantly less in the end of the world than do the Pentecostals (M = 3.38 in contrast to M = 1.56). Of the Charismatics, 58 percent (l.t.) do not believe the end of the world is imminent (and because of how the data set is broken down, they are by definition not Catholics). These individuals are likely to be committed neo-Pentecostals, such as those in the IURD, who are more concerned with this-worldly exorcism strategies. In addition, one suspects that while more than a few Brazilian Pentecostals are nominally familiar with eschatological expectations, they grant them only a marginal place in the network of their religious convictions. A low-level functionary in the IPDA whom I interviewed went on at length about all sorts of miracles and magic; but he addressed the topic of the end times only when questioned specifically about it, and then in a detached way, as if reciting a catechism.

The findings thus mainly indicate that religiosity in Brazil is highly pluralistic and competitive. The religious symbolism of eschatological expectations seems to have only minor significance. This may have a variety of causes. Measured against the historical emergence of millenarian expectations, the Brazilian context is different in that there is neither an abrupt, widespread experience of crisis, nor are social conflicts being carried out (though the latter is due to strong state hegemony and a lack of organized political actors, not because there are no cleavages).

The question of social survival is being decided not through political conflicts—as in Latin America during the 1970s and 1980s—but through the ability to find a niche in the system or a good position for social advancement. This social context renders Brazil's second distinctive feature relevant: the strong influence of magic in public consciousness. But magic is the strategy of the sorcerer, not the prophet, so to speak. Revolutionary political action is not on the menu. In lieu of a prospect of revolution, individuals develop strategies to deal with Brazil's ubiquitous corruption. Magic is competent in this realm, and the combination of religion and money can lend magical attributes to the latter.

It is thus understandable that Brazil's Pentecostals stand out no more than other Christians when it comes to politics and that the views of all the groups

Figure 7: Believe that the end of the world is near—Nigeria

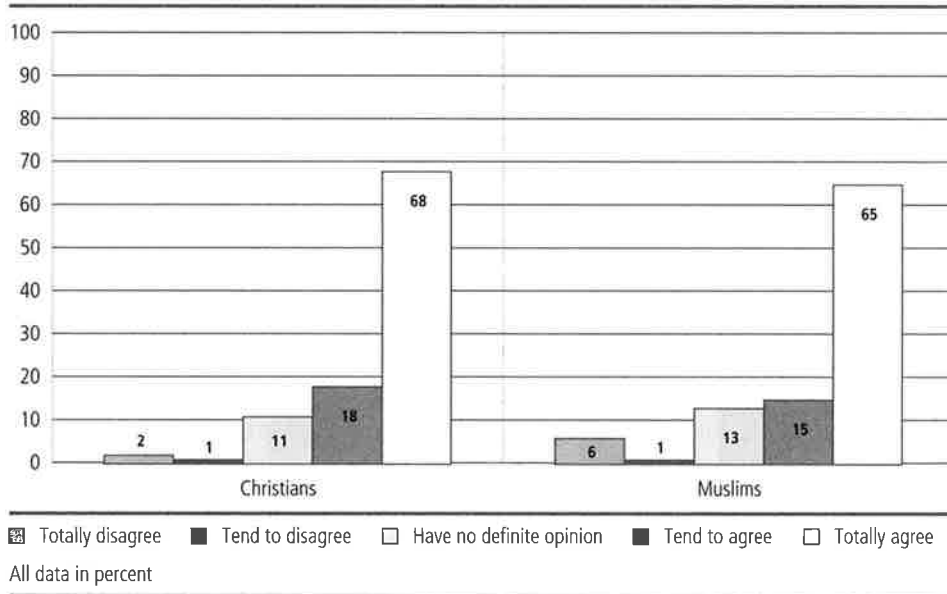| | Totally agree | Tend to agree | Have no definite opinion | Tend to disagree | Totally disagree |

All data in percent

surveyed are all over the map. Again, there is great plurality in the field; a first glance at the statistics does not show confessionally specific differences in political attitudes. In any event, one cannot speak of eschatological political mobilization of religious actors in Brazil. Of course, this does not mean that neo-Pentecostal magicians of wealth—such as Edir Macedo, the bishop of the IURD—do not exercise major influence on the country's political decision-makers.

In Nigeria, the situation is again different than in Brazil and the United States. Nearly all Nigerian Christians believe the end of the world is near (89 % of Pentecostals and 84 % of others, u.t.; see Figure 4). If we differentiate more finely among the groups, we see significantly fewer Protestants who agree with this statement (47 %) than Pentecostals (70 %) or Catholics (69 %; see Figure 7).

The low number of non-Pentecostal Protestants expressing this view is likely linked to the decidedly non-apocalyptic influence of the older Methodist, Presbyterian and Baptist missionary churches. The uncommonly high number of Catholics agreeing with this statement is presumably due to the Catholic charismatic movement's strong influence.

All in all, Nigerian Christianity is strongly shaped by eschatological expectations but not necessarily political as a result. To ascertain how political this eschatology is, one can look for a statistical correlation. But it is impossible to demonstrate any such correlation between expecting the imminent end of the

Figure 8: Eschatological views in Christianity and Islam—Nigeria

All data in percent

Legend: Totally disagree | Tend to disagree | Have no definite opinion | Tend to agree | Totally agree

world (question 16.7; see Figure 8) and the impact of religiosity on political views (question 14.5).

One should thus avoid hypothesizing any sort of politically charged apocalyptic thought in Nigeria. However, Nigerian Christians have very diverse perceptions of the significance of "politics" as an aspect of one's life (question 1.5, SD ≈ 1.56, see Figures 9 and 19. Responses show a clear polarization between those who consider politics only somewhat important (41 %, l.t.) and those who consider it important (43 %, u.t.). Here we must again differentiate further. The apocalyptic time scheme can be transformed in different ways, depending on one's view of politics and one's options for action. It can either legitimize retreat from worldly conflicts (premillenarianism) or be transformed into a combative ideology (postmillenarianism). Experiences in the United States and Latin America show that only groups with relatively good prospects for action are inclined to develop postmillenarian battle scenarios.

In Nigeria, it is mainly neo-Pentecostal groups focused on the upper middle class that could fit this bill. However, such tendencies do not appear to be widespread. Given its great power, the RCCG would seem a particularly likely candidate. But it seems to have merely transformed its premillenarianism in such a way as to legitimate its intensive mission work: Before the end comes, the Gos-

Figure 9: Importance of politics as an aspect of life—Nigeria

Not at all   Not very   Moderately   Quite   Very   All data in percent
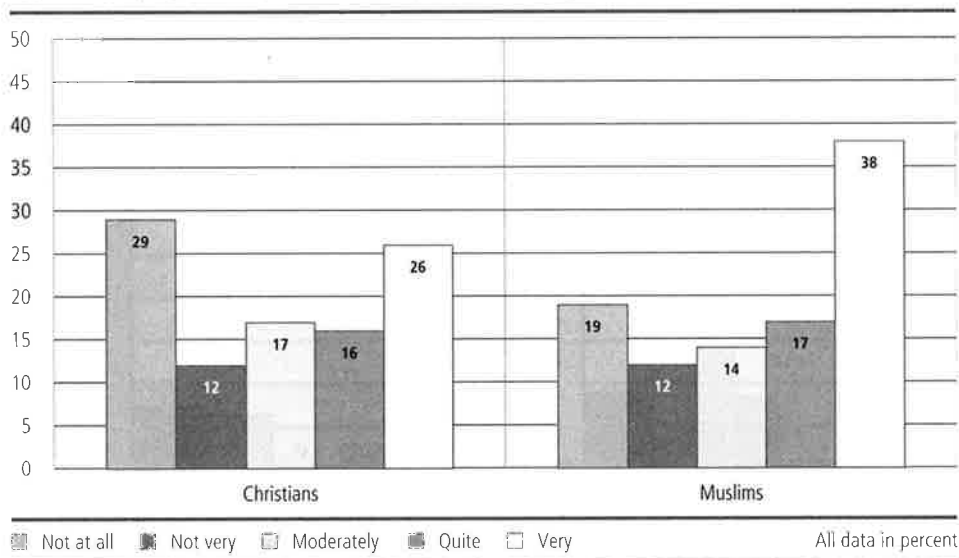
pel (and the church) must be spread everywhere. Its claim to power is thus limited to the religious field for now.

This is where Islam becomes a salient issue in Nigeria. Compared to Christians as a whole, Muslim respondents are significantly (p ≤.000) more likely to expect their religion to influence their political views (Figure 9). But this in itself does not demonstrate strong politicization, because even this significantly stronger "yes" still falls only between "moderately" and "quite a bit" (M = 3.44). But for Muslims, too, scatter (SD ≈ 1.55) and polarization are considerable. A rather large group that considers religion to be highly important to politics (38 %) is pitted against the 19 percent of respondents who reject this decisively. Only the former group is likely to be easily mobilized religiously.

If one scrutinizes the Muslim respondents for their apocalyptic tendencies, Islam appears similarly apocalyptic as Christianity in Nigeria (Figure 8). One should note, however, that Islamic teachings strongly stress the Final Judgment as a disciplinary element without implying apocalyptic (and hence temporal) urgency. Muslims' responses can thus definitely be interpreted as expressing conformity to the traditional content of teachings.

As one might expect, looking at the connection between belief in the end times and politics yields no correlation (r = 0.026). As for Christianity, these data caution against assuming that Nigerian Muslims can be broadly mobilized through eschatology. However, they also contain clear indications of a politically

active minority that is not insignificant. This minority may well be open to the influence of a recent spate of apocalyptic gray literature that has for the past few decades been radicalizing the Islamic belief in the Second Coming with Christian embellishments. Nigeria is thus split between two profoundly eschatological religions. Whether this focus on eschatology turns into a rejection of politics or to political fanaticism depends very much on how much pressure crises place on actors and on their scope of action. However, it seems as though religious attitudes and thus eschatological expectations are much more strongly based on everyday experiences and life crises.

A comparison of the eschatological orientation of American Pentecostals with those in Nigeria and Brazil reveals that the decisive difference is the obvious politicization of Pentecostal apocalyptic thought in the United States. In the early years of the Pentecostal movement—with the poverty of urban slums, racial discrimination, and the impact of the 1906 San Francisco earthquake—a lively hope for the end times still made sense, given the hell that was everyday life. With the increasing embourgeoisement of Pentecostalism, views on end-times scenarios became more a matter of academic disputes and an ecclesiastical test of orthodoxy. Having become uprooted in this way, apocalyptic thought has found a socially relevant place again only in the last 20 years, facilitated by initiatives from the neo-Pentecostal camp: the religious interpretation of a global superpower's situation on various fronts. This has turned apocalyptic attitudes into weapons in a bitter ideological battle in the United States. In Third World countries, the main function of Pentecostal eschatological expectations is to help people survive their everyday lives in dignity. This difference between political and quotidian relevance can also be observed in the religious construction of social space.

Space

Examining the religious organization of space also places us within the terrain of a long-standing religious tradition. The classic religious distinction between the sacred and the profane, which Durkheim emphasized, structures space in a specific way, as does the ethical difference between good and evil. According to the structuralist tradition, establishing difference is the basis for the creation of any sort of social organization, or as Luhmann puts it, "social systems."

This is also true for religiously established differences. Like every other religious system, the Christian tradition works to establish differences that simultaneously classify and value social space: sacred versus profane, priest versus lay-

person, church versus the world, saved versus damned, and so on. Based on these self-evident distinctions, a highly complex, highly differentiated symbolic and social space constitutes itself in every religion, which is shaped by power relations.

The symbolic act of recognizing cognitively perceived differences amounts to the creation of social boundaries. Such differences structure actors' perceptions, judgments, and action, and this, conversely, structures social space. It is thus decisive which terms and symbols a religious community draws on in establishing primary differences.

Their practical connotations determine the validity, range, and impact of differences, with the overall context of how important religion is to the actors. We must thus take note of a number of consequences. The first is immediately evident: the connotative scope of the symbols themselves. The difference "church versus world," for example, tends to connote a relationship of static, institutional delimitation; the difference "spirit versus demon," by contrast, connotes active antagonism; and the difference "priest versus layperson" connotes a relation of hierarchical subordination.

The establishment of symbolic religious difference then results in the actual creation even of religious actors. For example, only where the difference "spirit/ God versus demon" is recognized and thus socially meaningful can the job of an exorcist be invented. This immediately highlights a third consequence: Actors take action in contexts that are marked by competition with other actors, on the one hand, and by various sorts of power relations, on the other. The cognitive and social creation of fields of activity by establishing symbolic religious differences is thus also highly relevant for the construction of believers' "cognitive and affective map," for the religious community's internal organization, and for their social strategies.

To draw out a specifically Pentecostal distinction in the cognitive organization of social space—and one that is highly topical, to boot—one must examine the difference between the Holy Spirit and demons. Since the movement's inception, this difference has played a key role in Pentecostalism. When the Holy Spirit reveals itself in glossolalia, this is not simply a theological version of art for art's sake. In the religious field, glossolalia distinguishes Pentecostalism from the holiness movement and the rest of evangelism and thus helps Pentecostals find their identity. And in the everyday life of marginalized believers, the power of the Spirit experienced in glossolalia and ecstasy helps them confront threatening powers—demons, illness, alcoholism, poverty—just as Jesus did, according to the Gospels.

The motif of exorcism became established early on (much to the annoyance of rationalistic Evangelicalism), particularly in the context of healing the sick. Illness was believed to be caused by demons, and those demons were driven out. With the social advancement of many white Pentecostal churches in the United States, exorcism lost its significance in the middle class for some time. Neo-Pentecostalism has revived the practice, but now it is aimed at politics and the economy and no longer at (mental) illness.

In the Third World, exorcism is widespread in the poor churches in connection with health problems; in the middle class, it is more often coupled with the quest for economic opportunities. As the economic field has grown increasingly individualized and monetized throughout the world, since the 1990s, the trend in Pentecostal churches—especially in neo-Pentecostal ones—has been to increasingly link the promise of prosperity with demonological magic.

The so-called prosperity gospel goes back to 19th century American magical and spiritualist thought (Phineas Quimby). During the 20th century, Kenneth Hagin did more than anyone to spread it in the neo-Pentecostal movement. This word of faith "theology" is based on the belief that one can actually come to possess something simply by laying claim to it. The means to this a belief in God's efficacy that is expressed through donations to religious communities, for which God will reward the donor "one-hundred-fold" in pecuniary terms.

Along with its many other implications, this monetary faith also raises the believer's awareness of another distinction in social space: the economic divide between rich and poor. It thus deals with class contradictions, which are virtually impossible to ignore from above or below in Third World countries. At the same time, it propagates the idea of individual advancement and of the church and God as brokers of upward mobility. The Religion Monitor does emphasize demons and evil, but unfortunately it does not give us access to the problem of the prosperity gospel.

If we now turn to the statistical aspects of the belief in demons, one overarching observation should be made first. The United States seems to have a clearly definable cluster of respondents whose belief in the efficacy of demons is important for the rest of their religious and social praxis, while belief in demons is rather diffusely distributed in Third World countries and seems to have little significance for other attitudes.

An overview of how strongly belief in the efficacy of demons correlates with other attitudes (all other valid variables) among the Christian respondents shows that strong correlations are much more numerous in the United States (ranging up to $r = 0.676$) than in Brazil (maximum $r = 0.226$, with other values much

lower) or Nigeria (basically no correlation). Opinions on the efficacy of demons vary widely among all respondents (and not just due to outliers: U.S.: SD ≈ 1.48; Brazil and Nigeria: SD approximately 1.61), with the mean for belief in demons slightly lower in the United States (M = 2.56; Brazil and Nigeria: M approximately 2.90).

This difference between the United States and the other two countries may be due to a country-specific difference in the interview situation. But if this is not the case, I can only propose a hypothesis that I will further explore when analyzing the individual countries: In the United States, belief in spirits is a (fairly new) peculiarity of neo-Pentecostalism, in particular, and does not have roots in a widespread popular tradition. This makes it more visible and gives it greater specific influence on other attitudes for these believers. In Brazil and especially in Nigeria, belief in the efficacy of spirits is not particular to Pentecostalism but rather widespread. It is so taken for granted by Pentecostals that they do not endow it with any special meaning for other areas of their lives—which does not mean, however, that exorcism is not part of daily life. In addition, it is highly likely that the associations with the notion of "demon" are quite different in the three countries.

First, a glance at the United States. It is likely that the high specific correlation there between belief in demons and believers' other attitudes is because the

Figure 10: Belief in demons—USA

Legend: ▣ Not at all ▩ Not very ☐ Moderately ▩ Quite a bit ☐ Very much so   All data in percent
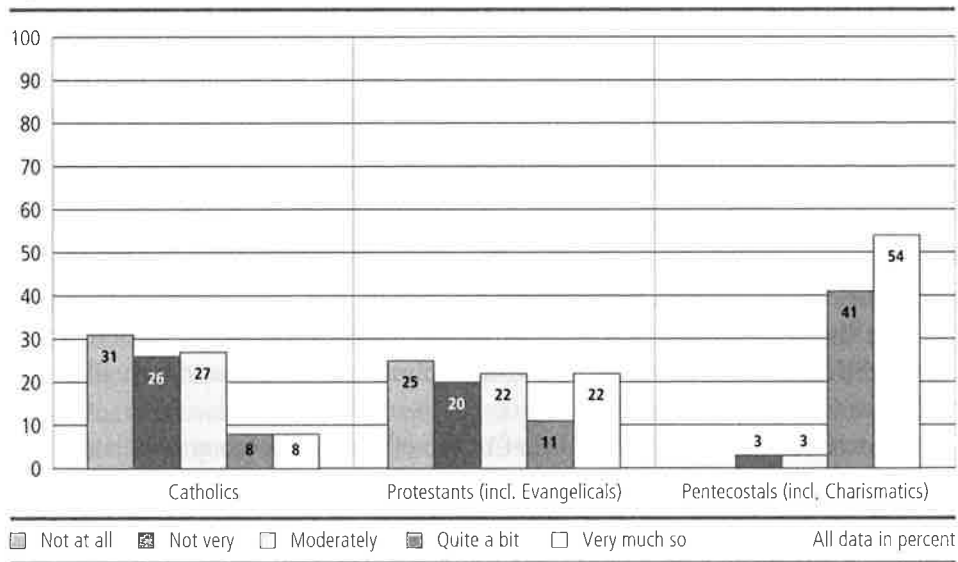
belief in demons and spirits has hardly any cultural roots in the United States and has become visible only through Pentecostal churches. (Spiritualism, which has been present since the 19th century, has been a fringe phenomenon in the middle class.) In line with this, and in terms of the centrality of religion, belief in demons is "very" strong among 26 percent of the highly religious (M = 3.02, SD ≈ 1.50), while the moderately religious have "little" belief (M = 1.89, SD ≈ 1.03), and the non-religious overwhelmingly reject it (M = 1.20, SD ≈ 0.49).

This subgroup of the highly religious almost certainly belongs to neo-Pentecostal communities. This is further supported by the fact that only among U.S.-American Pentecostals is the belief in demons highly homogenous (M = 4.47, SD ≈ 0.67, see Figure 10). A strong correlation is plausible for these believers: The stronger the belief in demons, the more pronounced various other religious beliefs will be, such as the perceived importance of religion for other areas of life (question 14). This clearly sets Pentecostals' opinions apart from those of other Christian and non-Christian Americans.

One finds the same difference between Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals when one asks about the efficacy of "supernatural powers" (Figure 11). The non-Pentecostal respondents are strikingly less likely than Pentecostals to count on the efficacy of supernatural powers; Pentecostals, by contrast, are apparently unable to imagine a world without the supernatural.

Figure 11: Belief in supernatural powers—United States

Not at all   Not very   Moderately   Quite a bit   Very much so   All data in percent
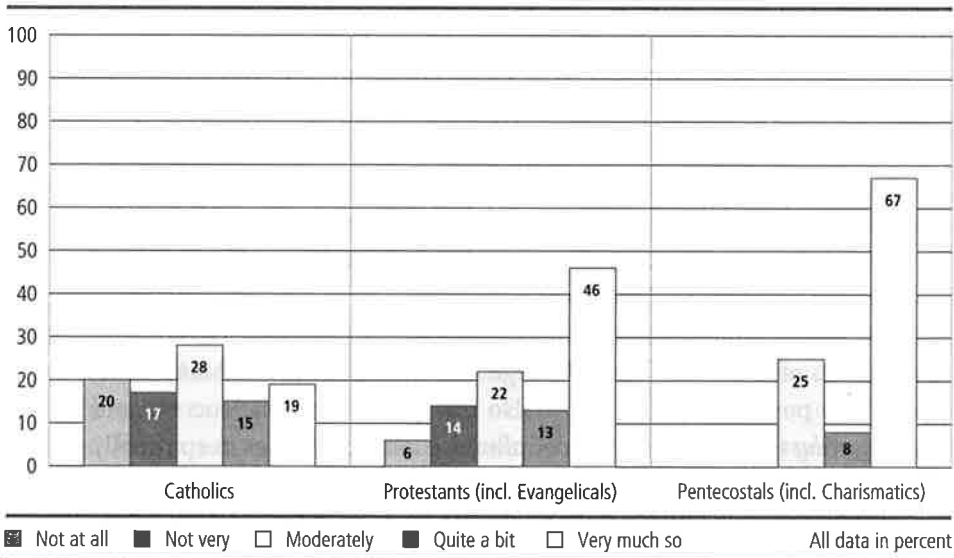
This clear difference between Pentecostals, other Protestants, and Catholics repeats itself on a highly significant level for all variables relevant to our topic: the efficacy of angels and guarding against evil, as well as the battle against evil (questions 13.14, 16.10, and 16.13). Here, Pentecostal responses are consistently quite homogenous (SD ranging from 0.46 to 0.95), while those of the other Christians are definitely more widely distributed (SD ranging from 1.26 to 1.48). This again indicates how strongly (neo-)Pentecostals cultivate their belief in demons as a separate discourse. This, in turns, reflects the clear polarization of respondents on all the relevant questions, as on the question of belief in demons itself (Figure 10).

Underlying this polarization is an important dichotomy in the cognitive construction of social space. The Pentecostal distinction between good and evil metaphysical powers tends not to be shared by the partly secularized, partly rationalist religious public (be they mainstream Protestants or Catholics). This notion is generally specific to (neo-)Pentecostal groups.

Yet is it still surprising, at first glance, that 22 percent of the Protestants surveyed (including Evangelicals) expressed a very strong belief in the efficacy of demons. This is particularly surprisingly because this topic was the stuff of intense controversy between Evangelicals and Pentecostals in the early 20th century. Our findings likely indicate a more or less gradual "charismaticization" of the religious field that has accompanied the third wave. This third wave of Pentecostal activity—following classic Pentecostalism and then the neo-Pentecostal and/or Charismatic movement—has popularized neo-Pentecostal ideas of spiritual warfare among adherents of Evangelical churches, such as Baptists.

The doctrine of spiritual warfare, in particular, defines the terrain of demonology. Since the 1970s, the neo-Pentecostal movement has fleshed out this notion of a cosmic struggle between heavenly and satanic hosts and applied it to a burgeoning number of areas of individual and social life. It places such things as the healing of physical and psychological infirmities—in the tradition of classic Pentecostalism—in an elaborate cosmic context. It contributes to authoritarian structures within the church (for example, in the "discipleship movement") by blaming demonic influence for disobedience toward leaders. It interprets the propagation of one's own faith through missions at home and abroad as a battle against the powers of darkness. It also interprets economic success and failure by attributing the latter to demonic influence and the former to spiritually guided good management.

Finally, an intensified but widespread version of the doctrine has become established—the teaching of "territorial spirits" (C. P. Wagner)—which is a politi-

cal and geostrategic variant. It holds that entire territories (cities, nations, and major geographic regions) may be controlled by demonic princes and can only be liberated through spiritual warfare. The metaphor of "spiritual warfare" takes on a direct political relevance here, yet it retains its ambivalence because it has so many possible connotations (see also the clear correlation of $r = .396$ between belief in demons and the relevance of religion for political attitudes, questions 13.13 and 14.5). It is interpreted to mean either that political conflicts should be carried out *spiritually* and not militarily—or that political opponents are Satan's agents, which justifies all means of exterminating them, including war. Accordingly, this teaching is evoked—implicitly and explicitly—time and again by radicals of the Christian Right in the United States and also in Guatemala. To some extent, this is a genuine contribution of the neo-Pentecostal movement to fundamentalism.

All in all, a politicized religiosity that is highly structured by ideology is evident in the structuring of social space, too, especially for the neo-Pentecostal current. This is unsurprising insofar as one term in this distinction—evil spirits—and the magic associated with it scarcely have a social place in rationalistic, Protestant American culture. Belief in demons is thus something special, on the one hand; on the other, the public consciousness does not anchor it in specific fields of praxis (such as healing, death rituals, agrarian magic, etc.). While this limits such religious conviction to a relatively small circle of believers, at the same time it holds opportunities for activists to extend the demon model to highly varied areas of modern life (such as finance, politics, and war) and to apply it in highly visible ways. The media power of television preachers who do this gradually contributes to the spread of such thinking in the population.

In Brazil, belief in demons relates more strongly to everyday life and to competition in the religious field. First, Brazilian Pentecostals agree significantly less often (0.50 points on the scale) with the relevant questions (on supernatural powers, the efficacy of demons and angels, guarding against evil, and the battle against evil) than their American counterparts, especially on the question on demons. This confirms our previous comparative observation that belief in demons scarcely correlates with other variables in Brazil.

Brazilian Pentecostals (and neo-Pentecostals) thus tend to be less resolute and probably do not have such authoritatively defined concepts as Americans. The first point is evidenced by the lack of a significant difference (on average) between Pentecostal and Evangelical views. In addition, Pentecostals' opinions on every relevant question are quite widely scattered (SD of about 1.30) and are thus far less homogenous than in the United States. The field is in fact polarized here, too (Figure 12), but in a different way.

Figure 12: Belief in demons—Brazil

| | Not at all | Not very | Moderately | Quite a bit | Very much so | All data in percent |
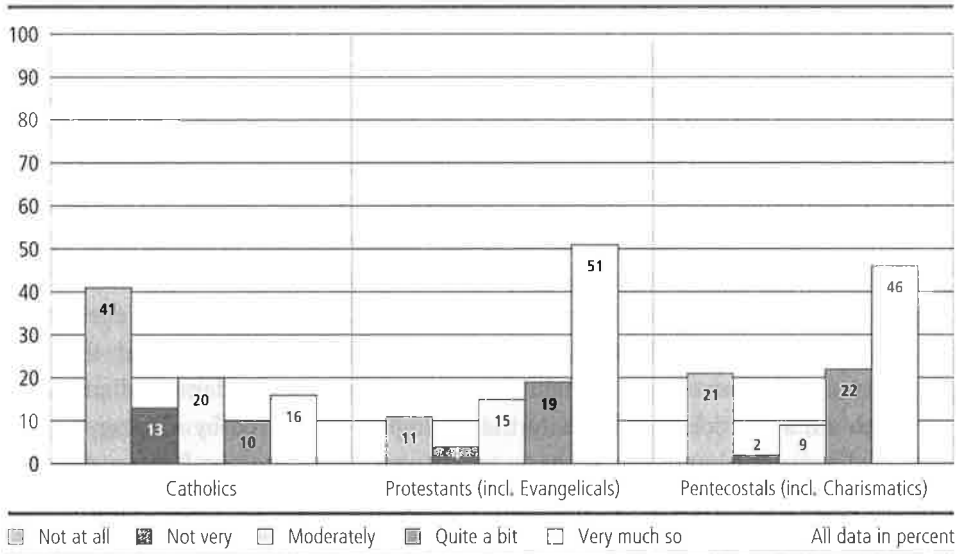
In the United States, Pentecostals cohesively tend to believe in demons, Catholics lean clearly against it, and other Protestants follow a more or less normal distribution. In Brazil, on the other hand, polarization is evident to some degree within every group. Overall, this indicates less homogenization and more internal pluralism within individual clusters of actors in the religious field. In addition, several more-detailed observations can be made: As in the United States, belief in demons is clearly rejected by parts of the Catholic Church (presumably those that are traditional and hierarchical but also marked by Vatican II). The percentage of Catholics who believe in demons is larger than in the United States, however. These are likely members of the Catholic charismatic movement. It is further striking that many Pentecostals reject belief in demons (21 %) and a good many Evangelicals subscribe to it (51 %). The Evangelicals are probably showing the third wave effect already described for the United States. Even Baptists and Methodists practice power evangelism and spiritual warfare.

The Pentecostal skeptics are mostly likely adherents of classic Pentecostal churches (such as Assembléias de Deus, AdD) and small, independent congregations that are involved in social reform and that reject the social and political abuse of belief in demons. Pentecostals who believe in demons are probably mostly adherents of neo-Pentecostal churches. In the IURD and IPDA, for example, noisy exorcisms belong to the daily rituals, and the churches' overall performance is unthinkable without them.
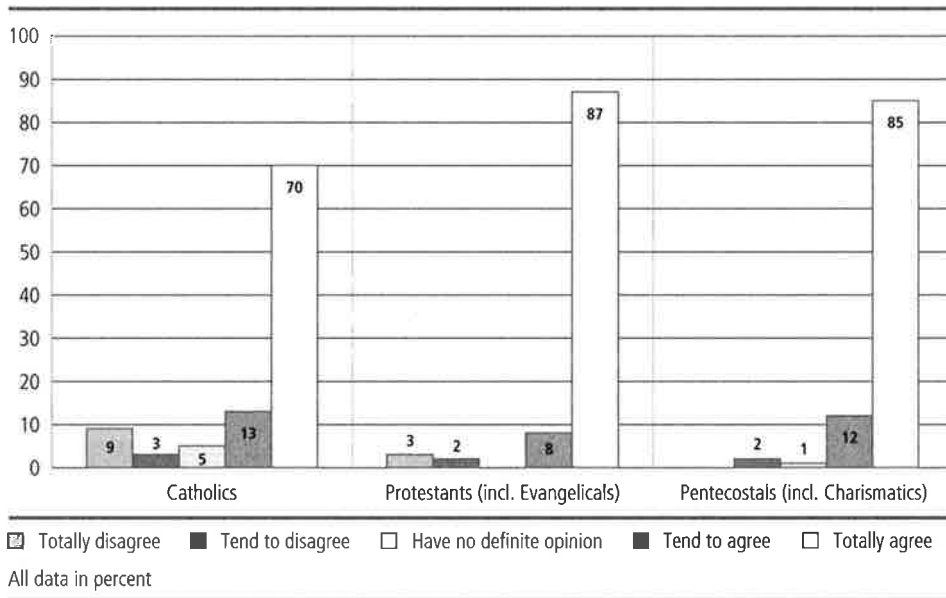
In these churches, the belief in demons and exorcism finds highly visible applications in prosperity magic. Brazil's economic and social development during the past 20 years of neo-liberal structural adjustment has caused grave hardships for the middle class while making advancement to the middle-class status a downright utopian goal for the lower class.

In this context, churches like the IURD or IPDA promote among their adherents the middle class economic trinity as an idealized vision of divine blessing: "carro, casa, loja" (car, house, business). Poverty's persistence is blamed on the effects of (often Afro-American) demons. Preachers promise that with a donation generous enough to avoid offending God—which can easily exceed the traditional tithe, amounting to 10 percent of income—He can be persuaded to give the preachers and their assistants the power they need to drive demons out of worshipers, thus opening the path to prosperity for them.

This has a dual effect of prosperity for the church. First, it receives donations that add up to impressive millions annually. (One sees believers actually putting large bills into the collection envelopes!) Second, believers are kept dependent on the exorcists, for it is the exorcists and not the believers who are empowered by the spirit (and by the donations).

In this way, the separation of social space between an economic top and bottom becomes closely associated with a religious separation between God and demons.

Figure 13: Important to remain on guard against evil—Brazil

Totally disagree ▪ Tend to disagree ☐ Have no definite opinion ▪ Tend to agree ☐ Totally agree

All data in percent

Unlike in many small, independent Pentecostal churches, the practical logic of the neo-Pentecostal megachurches never lets believers cross from the side of demons through the liminal space of doubt over to the side of authoritative individual empowerment by the Holy Spirit. Instead, in this discourse the effects of the Holy Spirit are closely tied to church officials, which further divides institutional church space into a powerful good "top" and a powerless "bottom" suspected of demons. Finally, the operative principle of this praxis is based on the logic of a magically interpreted "do ut des" in the relationship between the believer and God.

In Brazil's everyday life, magic determines the most important context for practicing a belief in demons. Evil and its containment is a commonplace topic. The fact that many Brazilian Christians seem to have only vague notions about demons and the like is probably due to the widespread and thus highly diverse discourse on evil and how to fight it in Brazil's folk Catholicism and its Afro-American religions.

Vigilance against evil (in its many forms) is routine for nearly all religious people in Brazil (Figure 13) and focuses on life's everyday adversities. It is complemented by magical protection from evil, whether through neo-Pentecostal exorcism, consuming the host in Catholic Communion, Umbanda purification rites and the blessing "sarabá," the invisible Exú of Candomblé as a companion on the street, a Macumba fetish under the doorstep—or through Christian fetishes, when for example IURD members are supposed to guard against evil by attaching "holy bread" to the back of their front door and then burning it ritually, and evil along with it, in worship services the next week.

In Nigeria, too, the assumption that demons are active in the world is by no means confined to Pentecostals (Figure 14), as was the case for the United States. Neither belief in demons (question 13m) nor belief in supernatural powers has any appreciable correlation with other attitudes such as the significance of religion for various areas of life (question 14).

In the United States it was clear that the stronger the belief in demons, the more important religion was to many areas of life. This correlation is virtually absent in Nigeria. Accordingly, while over 90 percent of respondents in Nigeria are highly religious and consider religion very meaningful in their lives, most do not believe "very much" in the efficacy of demonic powers (only 31 % with $M = 3.05$ and $SD \approx 1.64$). This result is vexing because it is not consistent with the importance attributed to the actions of evils spirits in African societies, which is backed by much evidence both scholarly and practical.

A distinctly different picture emerges, however, when one asks generally about the effects of supernatural powers (question 13k). This reveals that about

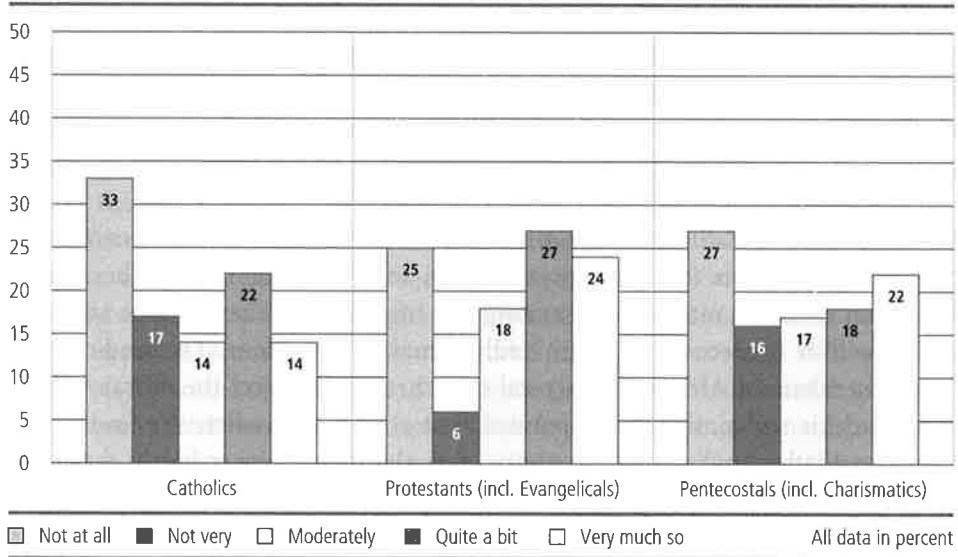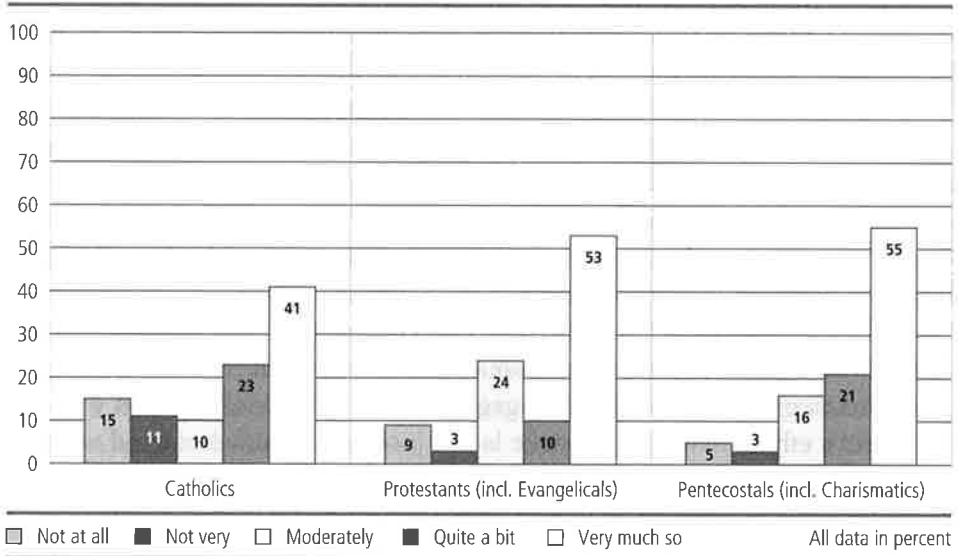Figure 14: Belief in demons—-Nigeria

| | Not at all | Not very | Moderately | Quite a bit | Very much so | All data in percent |

Figure 15: Belief in supernatural powers—Nigeria

| | Not at all | Not very | Moderately | Quite a bit | Very much so | All data in percent |

half of all Evangelical and Pentecostal respondents believe "very" strongly in the action of supernatural powers; the rest of the sample is strongly scattered (M = 3.97, SD ≈ 1.29, see Figure 15. These findings match the situation documented elsewhere for Africa.

How, then, can we explain the distribution of answers to the question on the efficacy of demons (Figure 14)? First, this belief is by no means peculiar to the Pentecostal or neo-Pentecostal movements (as in the United States); it is also common among Catholics, though to a lesser extent. This fits the assumption that belief in spirits is a widespread notion in folk religion that adherents of Christian churches may be perpetuating in a transformed manner. The wide variation within Pentecostalism admittedly remains a problem. The finding that some members of African Pentecostal churches totally reject the efficacy of the devil and his minions (27 % responded "not at all") contradicts the findings of every qualitative study that I am aware of. Perhaps the answer lies in the interpretation of the question itself.

As a rule, Pentecostals do not regard questions about demons as questions about their existence and efficacy as such, which appears self-evident to them. (The question of whether spirits exist tends to be more widespread among the historical Protestant mission churches, which generally deny it.) For Pentecostals, the question of demons is one of their *power*, not their existence. Demons lay claim to power. What limits does the Holy Spirit's countervailing power place on this claim? What power can a Pentecostal concede to demons? How effective is Jesus' protection?

If respondents interpret the demon question through their prior understanding of an acute power struggle and moreover relate it to their own lives, it is definitely possible for them to hear the question as suggesting demons could still have an impact on their lives and then to answer it in the negative. If this is the case, one must put the numbers into perspective. The decisive difference between Pentecostals and other Christians would then consist in the way they *deal* with spirits.[1]

If one compares Pentecostals' strategies against evil with those of other Nigerian Christians, Pentecostals stand out more strongly, as one would expect. More than all other Christians, they see resistance against evil as a battle. Similar to the indigenous Latin American population, though with much greater intensity, Christianity in Africa is still engaged in a complex confrontation with the continent's ethnic religions. At stake is not just the definition of good and evil but also the clashing religions' right to exist.

In the wake of colonialism, nationalism, and modernization, Christianity has achieved the much stronger position overall, to be sure. Nonetheless, older reli-

gious dispositions persist in the collective habitus. Within certain limits, they are also publicly orchestrated and legitimized in regionalist and nationalist politics as tokens of identity. Admittedly, the latent habitual influence of traditional thinking on everyday action is more important to the symbolic structuring of social space than is the open competition of institutional representatives in the religious field.
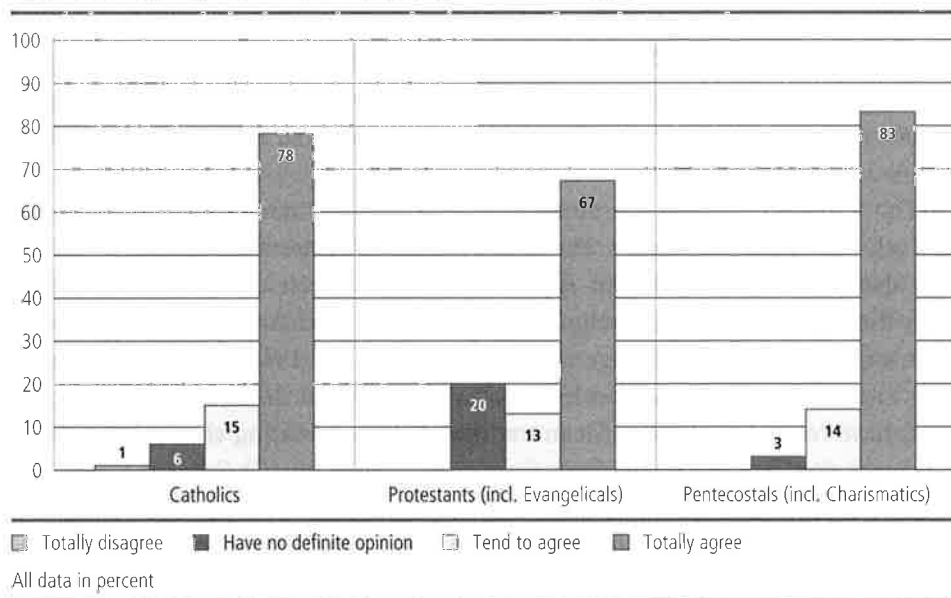
The various Christian currents resort to different strategies in the battle for the valid definition of reality. Particularly the old Protestant mission churches but also orthodox Catholicism represent the exclusivist extreme: They totally deny the existence of the old religion's spirits and supernatural powers and introduce a modern, Western image of the world. Since the 1960s and 1970s, Protestant and Catholic African theologians have developed an inclusivist extreme: They have rehabilitated the African tradition by incorporating elements of it into Christian rites and teaching—for instance, by interpreting Christ as the supreme ancestor. Neither of these two options has been particularly successful.

The African Instituted Churches—such as the Aladura churches in Nigeria, the Zion churches of South Africa, and others—have pursued a third strategy. Since about the 1930s, they have managed to gain remarkable influence with a special amalgam of African and Pentecostal praxis. Many of the Pentecostal churches have adopted a fourth path. Explicitly distancing themselves from the AIC, they have developed their own models of mediating—very successfully—between African tradition and modernity in a dialectical fashion, both denying them and yet incorporating them into a new synthesis (*Aufheben*).

One special advantage of the Pentecostal strategies is that they informally draw on traditional African cosmologies while symbolically transforming and reappraising them. In doing so, they also tackle a dual uncertainty that is widespread in society: cultural and religious ambivalence regarding African culture, coupled with the rapid transformation of economic patterns of production and consumption. This has allowed Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal churches to respond to the multiplicity of challenges brought by neo-liberal structural transformation since the 1980s. Not for nothing have they experienced an exceptional upswing during this time. Unlike the rationalism of the mission churches, their pronounced demonology takes seriously the prevalent vigilance against evil (Figure 16), and specifically *the* evils that the folk religions guard against: ghosts, witches, and fetishes.

The Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal churches fight against evil—with significantly more engagement and resolve than historical Protestants (question 16m, Pentecostals M = 1.21, SD ≈ 0.592; historical Protestants M = 1.73, SD ≈ 1.01).

Figure 16: Important to remain on guard against evil—Nigeria

Totally disagree   Have no definite opinion   Tend to agree   Totally agree

All data in percent

They get the orientation necessary for this fight from the structuring of social space according to the logic of the so-called Biblical worldview.

This includes the notion that the cosmos is populated with spirits, which was already implicitly and unsystematically present in traditional Pentecostalism, and which American neo-Pentecostalism has systematized and rendered explicit. This teaching elaborates a metaphysics of heavenly and satanic hosts who battle each other—which is invisible to most humans but perceptible to exorcists and those endowed with the Spirit. This doctrine combines smoothly with the notion common in many African cultures that an invisible spirit world exists in parallel to the visible human world, and that it influences the human world in uncontrollable ways. While the traditional cultures consider this ambivalent and basically dangerous, requiring containment through periodic rituals, fetishes, and taboos, the Pentecostals acknowledge it as real but unambiguously evil. This is where spiritual warfare comes in, positioning the power of the Holy Spirit against ghosts and demons. The Holy Spirit is regarded as more powerful; it enables exorcism of evil spirits and purification of the humans, social relationship, and objects that they possess.

Ecstatic incorporations of the Holy Spirit, the authority of the local pastor, the congregation, and (to varying degrees) the nuclear family now take the place of traditional techniques of controlling evil—magical activities that are scarcely con-

trollable and generally dangerous, the numinous power of the magicians, and duties to ancestors and kin. Dangerous relationships and things become controllable, because (potentially) every believer can subject them to the power of the Holy Spirit through prayer. This preserves the connection of religious praxis to the traditional, magical "background world" (Weber) of spirits. But this background world now fulfills three functions: First, it enables apt linkages to traditional cognitive and judgmental dispositions; second, it serves as an independent and permanent threat scenario; and third, it is a quasi-magical operating terrain for the Holy Spirit as represented by the pastors.

This religious strategy produces cognitive and emotional security in times of intense socioeconomic upheaval and polarization. It thus facilitates entrance into economic modernity, be it precarious or (in the case of the upwardly mobile) brimming with opportunity. In this, it draws on tradition to construct the modern social space as dualistic through the antagonism of good and evil powers, the Holy Spirit and demons.

One special property of magic definitely does not get lost in this operation: its uncompromising "this-worldliness" (Weber). Spirit-demon dualism is tightly linked to interest in economic security and prosperity. One gets the strong impression that Nigeria's prosperity discourse is at least as closely interconnected with magical and exorcistic elements as Brazil's. Here, too, we see a socially differentiated religious praxis dealing with economic matters, like in Latin America. In the lower strata, special attention is devoted to avoiding the uncertainty and precarious circumstances that arise from transformations in the modes of consumption and production. Not least, personal dignity is at stake in a context where it depends either on traditional kinship and religious affiliations that are no longer very sustainable economically, or on successfully inserting oneself into the new modes of production and consumption. Neither of these works for poor Pentecostals. Their situation is characterized by strange new products, visual worlds beamed into televisions from a numinous distance, the sudden wealth of distant acquaintances, and their own inability to live up to the new ideals. Here it helps to qualify unattainable worlds and things as Satan's places. This allows people to concentrate the power of their imagination and their labor on that which is attainable. Upwardly mobile modern professionals—who might belong to Benson Idahosa's Church of God Mission, the Sword of the Spirit, or one of the many other urban neo-Pentecostal congregations—have the new products and transnational contacts directly within their reach. Here, prosperity theology legitimates economic and social striving, and exorcisms drive out the residues of traditional African bonds.

Comparing the various attitudes on demonology in the three countries again shows that the United States is the most intensely politicized. Since American society lacks a tradition of dispositions to perceive such cosmologies, American Pentecostals cannot build on them socially as Brazilians and—even more so—Nigerians do. With the politicization of the neo-Pentecostal movement, it stands to reason that such ideas get articulated not just in pastoral psychohygiene but also in explicitly political forms.

By contrast, due to different cultural associations, the operational fields of demonological logic in Nigeria and Brazil are mainly health, social and religious relationships, and economic advancement. The doctrine of spiritual warfare functions notably with the genuine ambiguity of religious logic: namely, its ability to associate any and all immanent things with transcendence—irrespective of their social field of praxis—via analogical magic.

First, this logic makes it possible to associate the two poles of symbolically constructed space—good and evil spirits—arbitrarily with any actors in society. Second, it allows the term "spiritual" to be understood both as legitimating physical violence and as demanding the renunciation of force. Actors who stand for the exclusion of others from the political, religious, or cultural fields—such as the American Christian Right or the neo-Pentecostals in the Central American civil wars of the 1980s—seem to prefer the violence option. Those who emphasize their own inclusion in dynamic social development—Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals in Brazil and Nigeria—apparently prefer to fight their battles on a purely spiritual plane.

Political and transnational strategies

The era of a politically neutral Pentecostal movement is long gone. Nonetheless, we cannot say that the movement is uniformly involved in politics. A religious habitus that operates with apocalyptic time concepts and starkly polarized constructions of social space is ambivalent and highly modifiable when it comes to political strategies. Concepts of space and time can either block or encourage actors' political engagement, depending on their positions, interests, and opportunities for action. Consequently, we see important differences for political strategies when we draw comparisons across countries and within the Pentecostal movement. These differences are closely related to specific actors' cultural contexts, social positions, and opportunities for action.

A comparison of these countries echoes the previously observed pattern: The picture in the United States is significantly different than in Brazil and Nigeria.

Figure 17: Importance of politics as an aspect of life—USA

Catholics	Protestants (incl. Evangelicals)	Pentecostals (incl. Charismatics)

▨ Not at all　■ Not very　☐ Moderately　▨ Quite　☐ Very　　　　　All data in percent
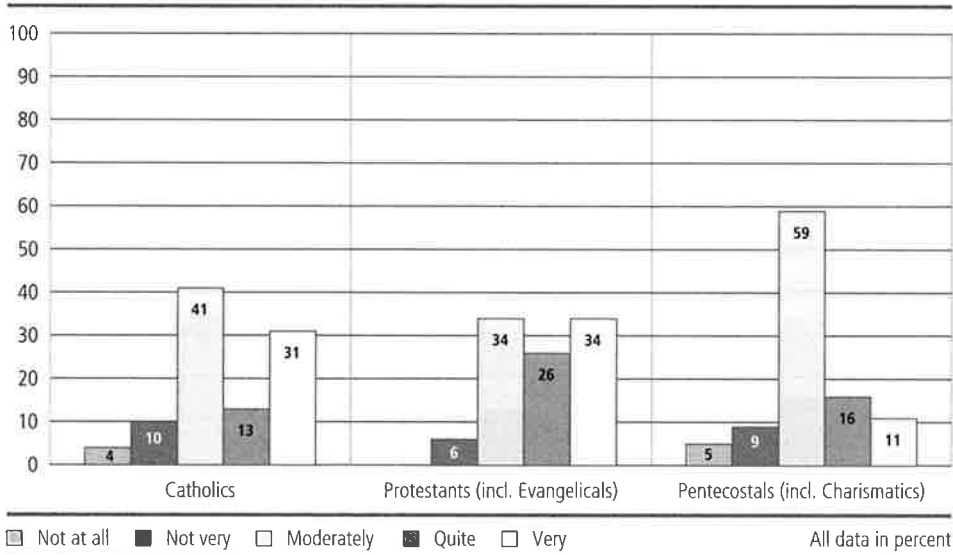
If one asks about the importance of "politics" as an area of life, Pentecostals are moderately politicized, and homogenously so (Figure 17). Only a few activists (11.5 %) consider politics very important and even fewer believers (5 %) attribute no importance to it.

These findings are probably connected to two factors. First, much of the American Pentecostal movement is rooted in the middle class, and from this position it has developed certain interests and possibilities for influencing politics—even if only through voting. In addition, the entire movement has been politicized since the 1970s by the Christian Right and the religiously charged debates under Ronald Reagan and George W. Bush.

The statistical picture quite accurately reflects the current situation for religious conservatives. A small minority composed of upwardly mobile professionals and full-time religious lobbyists—coming mostly from neo-Pentecostal and Charismatic churches—is highly active politically and can draw on a large reservoir of politicized adherents for support (direct-mail campaigns, donations, elections, etc.). A key factor in religious political mobilization is that people must regard religious dispositions as important for their political opinions (Figure 18). That is the case for 60 percent (M = 4.30) of Pentecostals, while only 5 percent of them assume no connection between politics and religion. Pentecostal churches are thus considerably easier to mobilize with religious arguments than are other Christians (and the total population). But this in itself does not express any polit-

Figure 18: Extent to which religiosity affects political opinions—USA
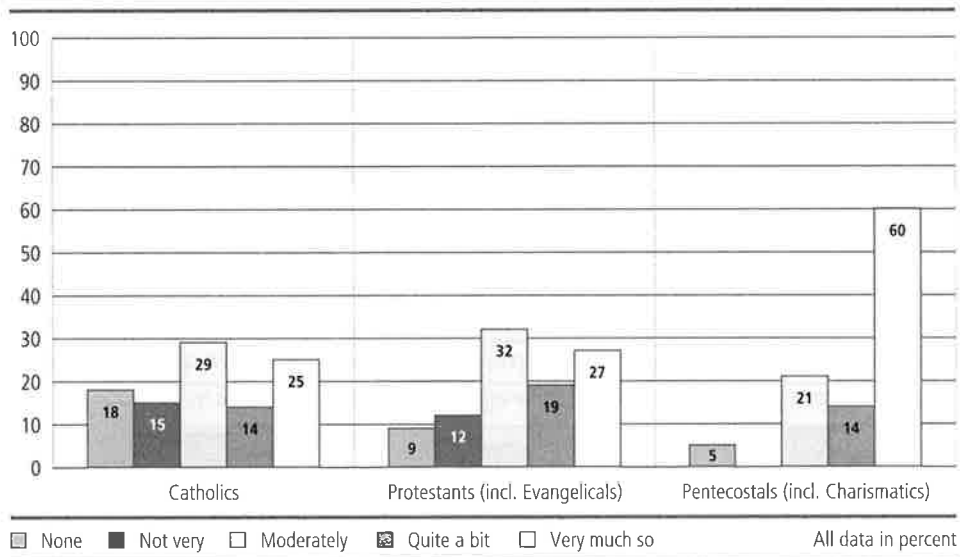
ical bias. Nonetheless, in the United States one can assume that the vast majority of politically mobilized Pentecostals identify with the Religious Right.

There are important overlaps in the leadership of the two movements, and it has been the dedicated groups from the neo-Pentecostal movement that have reshaped the religious dispositions of American fundamentalism over the past 30 years. They made the rhetoric of fighting evil and apocalyptic urgency into a new point of contact between religion and imperial politics.

Statistically, Nigeria forms the strongest contrast to the United States. The area of "politics" is rated very differently by respondents from all groups, be they Catholics, historical Protestants, or Pentecostals (Figure 19). Independent of confession, there is even slight polarization discernible between those who see politics as very important (27 %, average for Catholics, Protestants, and Pentecostals) and those who feel it is unimportant (24 %).

This distribution persists when one asks how religiosity impacts political opinions (Figure 20). Here, too, all combinations are represented in almost identical ways. This result cannot be explained by genuine religious reasons; instead, it indicates the respondents' diverse social and cultural situation.

In Nigeria, these findings most probably are due to conditions that can be observed in many societies that are highly polarized in terms of socioeconomics: The members of the lower classes—whether in Latin America or Africa—use religious strategies to cope with everyday life and only rarely for political involve-

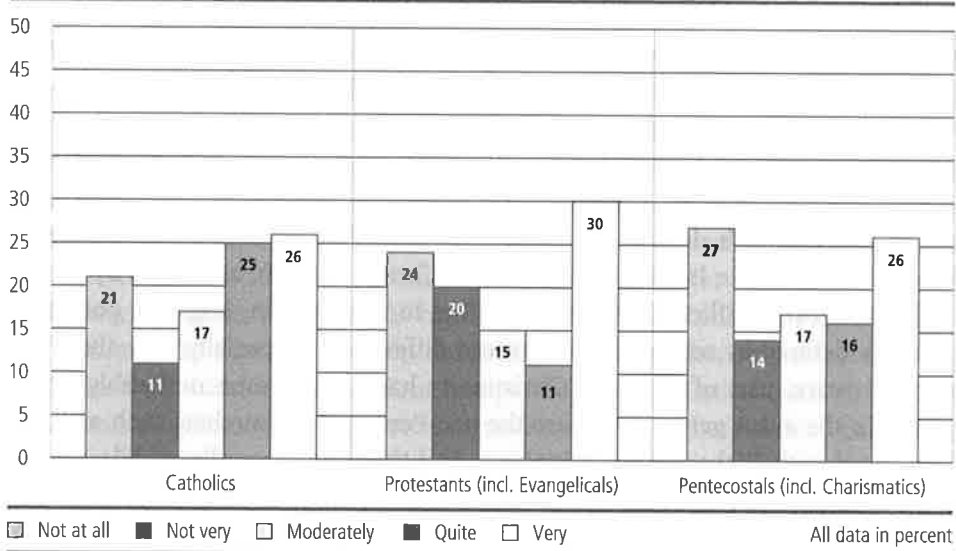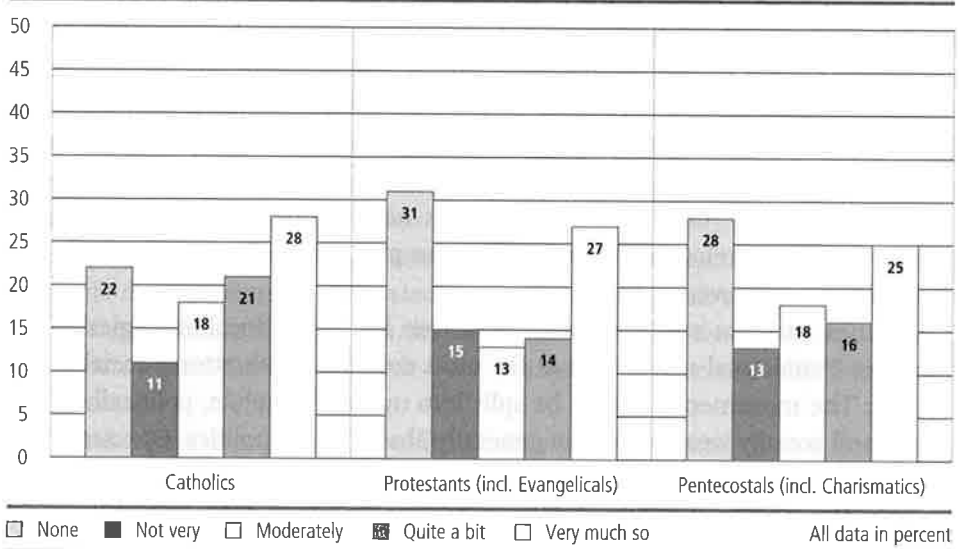Figure 19: Importance of politics as an aspect of life—Nigeria

Figure 20: Extent to which religiosity affects political opinions—Nigeria

ment. They tend to see politics as dangerous, and their activities concentrate on solidarity within the congregation. The middle classes—especially those who are upwardly mobile—show interest in political engagement in proportion to their pace of advancement. Religious strategies thus tend to be applied to the political arena. Through delegations of members, leaders of large neo-Pentecostal churches manage to achieve politically informal yet relevant positions in society.

In Nigeria, such developments have been further fostered by the historical tension between the Islamic north and the Christian south, as well as by the so-called Shari'ah conflict of recent years. Due to this tension, Nigerian politics is strongly defined by religious loyalties and differences. Especially over about the past 15 years, part of Nigerian Christianity has also become noticeably politicized. In the avant garde of this are the neo-Pentecostal churches, such as those associated with Bishop Benson Idahosa, and thus the upwardly mobile middle class.

The Christian umbrella organization Christian Association of Nigeria (CAN), which Idahosa led for many years, and the Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria (PFN), which cooperates with it, have been deeply involved in politics, mobilizing the Christian population, publicly influencing elections, and cultivating tight relationships with political leaders. Their strategies are based on the doctrine of spiritual warfare.

An important position paper from 1989 (cited in Adogame 2005: 131) lays out a paradigm in which Christians must engage in politics lest they cede the field to demons. Instead, born-again Christians empowered by the Holy Spirit must assume leadership of the country. At the same time, though, the actors exploit the ambivalence of religious metaphors for a clever game between religiously defined mobilization within the church and the moderate exercise of political influence. In the 1993 election, CAN and PFN supported a Muslim presidential candidate, Abiola (however, he was not running against a Christian). But in 1999, they welcomed the new Christian president, Obasanjo, as the leader of a "god-fearing government."

In sum, one can say that the same is true for the political strategies of the Nigerian Pentecostal movement as for most countries with strong social polarization: The movement tends to be split into upwardly mobile, politically active actors and socially weak ones who generally abstain from politics. Of course, the Latin American situation gives this picture more nuance.

The data from Brazil strongly resemble the Nigerian data. Politically abstinent Pentecostals contrast noticeably with those who are interested in politics.

Similar reasons account for this as in Nigeria. One factor is the opportunities for action that are connected to social position. The development of the classic Pentecostal AdD shows the importance of this factor. Several decades ago, political involvement was unimaginable for its members. With the socioeconomic advancement of many of its adherents to the middle class, today a growing number of its members are assuming public office, right up to members of parliament. The situation is similar for the IURD. The second factor is position within a given church's internal hierarchy. Leadership positions are linked to social advancement as well as better opportunities for political action.

Finally, religious and political conflict plays a role. Unlike in Nigeria, such conflict in Brazil does not begin in the political field and then transform into the religious field. Instead, the religious competition among Catholicism, Protestantism, and Afro-American religion is transformed into the political field. The churches' political strategies are thus based in no small part on the political parties' religious orientations. This leads to Candomblé and Pentecostals supporting the left-liberal Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT), since the conservatives tend to sympathize with the Catholic Church.

Beyond this partisan structural formation aimed at the middle classes, new political actors are emerging in the Latin American Pentecostal movement from its smaller, independent churches. Unlike in Africa, Christianity in Latin America has traditionally been confronted more with sociopolitical problems than with cultural and ethnic ones.

From this vantage point, Pentecostal churches such as the Unión Evangélica Pentecostal Venezolana and others are beginning to mobilize their members socially and politically in ways similar to those seen in the Catholic base communities. This spawns religious actors who pursue grassroots political strategies and enter into commensurate social, political, and church alliances, including transnational networks such as the Conferencia Evangélica Pentecostal Latinoamericana.

Transnational strategies are nearly as old as the Pentecostal movement itself. From its earliest years, it cultivated an energetic program of missionary work and correspondence. In addition, its key religious dispositions—the apocalyptic time horizon and the cosmic battle—are intrinsically concerned with that which is universal.

The Religion Monitor data confirm a view of Pentecostalism as a worldwide movement, which has long been quite clear to me as one of its observers. The Pentecostal movement is by no means unitary, though it is indisputably global. The diverse transnational fields of praxis, such as media production, mission

work, migration, and local consumption of transnationally distributed media products, indicate how many different ways the transnational can be approached. Forms of participation in transnational relations vary according to where the movement's collective actors are situated in the social structure.

In order to understand these cause-effect relationships, it is helpful to interpret the movement's religious praxis in the context of its actors' position in local and global social structures—thus making the interrelationships among "class, status, and religion" (Weber) comprehensible even in a transnational perspective.

The Religion Monitor data further verify that the Pentecostal movement is very diverse, globally. From a transnational perspective, many American churches and organization take for granted that they will act both locally and globally, in accordance with their economic resources. In Third World countries, by contrast, the Pentecostal movement responds to people's experiences of destabilizing modernization in the local context.

However, even here, organizations with a pan-regional or global reach have sprung up, mostly among the upper and upper-middle classes. Of course, the lower strata are also reached by the transnational flow of goods, images, and texts through migration, consumption, and new relations of production. The decisive thing for Pentecostal groups, however, is the ability to actively use the information society's media and modern transportation and to control their content.

As the movement becomes more socially polarized, the authority to access the capital crucial to the information society is also becoming ever more unequally allocated within the movement. Yet the religious media are (still) able to address something like a pan-global Pentecostal identity and produce multi-faceted communication. This helps cultivate a global network that is indeed structured by power but—unlike the Catholic Church—is not a hierarchy. The basis of identification for participants in this communication consists of a relatively small inventory of easily recognizable symbols—a latent minimalist style, so to speak—that help cognitively and emotionally structure social space and social time, yet are so flexible that even actors with no formal education can easily adapt them to any new situation.

The Pentecostal movement thus combines strong transnational coherence through voluntary identification with tremendous local adaptability by means of specifically modified religious (and yet "Pentecostal") identities. It characteristically differs from Catholicism, which is similarly global, in that its transnational coherence does not rely on the formation of hierarchical institutional structures. Instead, it operates by the logic of networks of more or less reciprocal relationships and (mass-media) communication aimed at creating identification.

This disqualifies the Pentecostal movement—in contrast to the Catholic Church—as an actor in the area of transnational institutions. But it also strengthens the movement's capacity to form flexible transnational networks and operations that can react highly effectively at a short notice to the changing needs and opportunities of wide sections of the population. While this, in turn, promotes the movement's global growth, it does not foster a unified sociopolitical position.

On the local level, the movement's adaptability is distinctly more effective than Catholic strategies of "inculturation of the Gospel." Since Pentecostal praxis is not controlled by clerics, it can connect to the local situation from a lay perspective more or less spontaneously. Unlike Catholic strategies, it does not have to obey externally imposed guidelines for academically trained clerics. Instead, local activists use religious symbolism to directly mediate among local tensions, differences in positions, and their own interests, which lets them much more easily capitalize on them to enlarge their own groups.

In both transnational and local perspective, the Pentecostal movement operates as a social movement in a strong sense; only in exceptional cases does it appear as an institution, and never as a clearly delimited system or apparatus. Its decisive traits are: processes of identity and strategy formation for individual and collective actors geared directly to the need for religious meaning and the opportunities for action in specific social circumstances; and voluntary religious community-building (Weber's *Vergemeinschaftung*).

We can best understand this with a sociological approach that offers suitable methods for examining actors *and* structures as well as practices *and* signs—that is able to describe what is new about the transnational Pentecostal movement: It combines minimal organization and loose definitions of religious symbols with optimal plausibility for actors caught up in combustible processes of social transformation.

Endote

1   I thank Dr. Friede Ngo-Youmba Batana for providing information crucial to assessing these findings.

Acronyms used

AoG = Assemblies of God
AdD = Assembléias de Deus
CAN = Christian Association of Nigeria
IPDA = Igreja Pentecostal Deus é Amor
FGBMFI = Full Gospel Businessmen's Fellowship International
IURD = Igreja Universal do Reino de Deus
PFN = Pentecostal Fellowship of Nigeria
RCCG = Redeemed Christian Church of God

Bibliography

The bibliography does not list all the titles that I have read over the years and which, along with my own fieldwork, have influenced the preceding article. However, I would like to thank those authors—especially scholars of Pentecostalism from Latin America—whose works I have read and/or whose collaboration I have enjoyed over many years, with apologies to anyone whose name I might have forgotten:
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