

**INNOCENT BYSTANDERS TO A DANGEROUS SITUATION:
THE CHRISTIAN CHURCHES AND HUMAN RIGHTS ORGANIZING IN
AHMEDABAD, INDIA, AND LATIN AMERICA**

by

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Abstract

Faith-rights collaboration may represent a viable means of increasing the legitimacy of rights initiatives in the global South. Yet little is known about religious engagement with human rights in practice. This study addresses this gap by inductively analysing Christian church engagement with rights-based work in Ahmedabad, India, and 1960s and 1970s Latin America. Its findings suggest that since rights-based work is a potentially high-risk form of activism, the churches generally avoid it unless their religious cause is directly threatened. This hesitation is further encouraged by dependence on the state for access to the resources on which their operations rely, which heightens the associated risks. Using bystander theory (Bickman 1971; Clark and Wood 1974), this study demonstrates that churches thus respond to rights abuses like an average bystander to a dangerous situation, exhibiting apathy when others can intervene and offering primarily indirect assistance to victims in order to mitigate the risks.

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Table of Contents

ABSTRACT	II
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	III
LIST OF TABLES	VII
INTRODUCTION:	1
HUMAN RIGHTS IN THE GLOBAL SOUTH: UBIQUITOUS RHETORIC, LIMITED CREDIBILITY & THE LEGITIMIZING POTENTIAL OF FAITH-RIGHTS COLLABORATION	1
MAIN ARGUMENTS: HIGH-RISK ACTIVISM AND INSTITUTIONAL VULNERABILITY	7
OVERVIEW OF THE THESIS STRUCTURE.....	9
CHAPTER ONE:	10
CHRISTIANITY AND HUMAN RIGHTS: A LITERATURE WITHOUT A WELL-DEFINED THEORY ..	10
HUMAN RIGHTS & DEMOCRACY: PARSING OUT MY DEPENDENT VARIABLE.....	19
RELIGION, SOCIAL MOVEMENTS AND THE LIMITS OF THE THEORETICAL LITERATURE.....	23
INDUCTIVE AND EMPIRICALLY GROUNDED: RESEARCH SCOPE AND UNIT OF ANALYSIS	25
OPERATIONALISING “ENGAGEMENT WITH HUMAN RIGHTS IN PRACTICE:” TACTICAL CHOICES	27
HEURISTIC CASE STUDIES AND THE LOGIC OF CASE SELECTION.....	31
CASE-SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY: AHMEDABAD, INDIA	33
CASE SPECIFIC METHODOLOGY: LATIN AMERICA	38
CONCLUSION	39
CHAPTER TWO:	41
A RELIGIOUS MINORITY IN THE CITY OF COMMUNAL FAME: CHRISTIANS IN AHMEDABAD, INDIA	41
DESCRIBING THE EMPIRICAL LANDSCAPE: WHO WALKS THE HUMAN RIGHTS WALK, AND HOW?	44
APPEARANCES MAY BE DECEIVING: INITIAL IMPRESSIONS OF HIGH RIGHTS-BASED ENGAGEMENT	47
VOICES IN THE WILDERNESS: THE REALITY OF A VOCAL MINORITY AND A DISINTERESTED MAJORITY	50
“WHEN IT HITS YOU, THEN ONLY IT PAINS:” THE EXCEPTION TO WIDESPREAD DISENGAGEMENT	55
THE LIMITS OF RIGHTS-SUPPORTIVE THEOLOGY: MOVING BEYOND THEOLOGY-BASED EXPLANATIONS	57
A STRATEGIC RESPONSE: EXAMINING THE “MISSION COMPOUND MENTALITY”	59
STATE CONTROL OF THE PURSE STRINGS: THE FCRA AND ACCESS TO FOREIGN FUNDS	64
DIFFUSED RESPONSIBILITY & MITIGATED RISK: INNOCENT BYSTANDERS IN AN ACTIVE CIVIL SOCIETY	68
CONCLUSION	71
CHAPTER THREE:	73
THE LATIN AMERICAN CATHOLIC CHURCHES: SOCIALLY ENGAGED RIGHTS DEFENDERS?....	73
METHODOLOGICAL LIMITATIONS: UNEXPLAINED VARIATION IN CHURCH-RIGHTS ENGAGEMENT	74
DEFINING THE SCOPE OF THE LATIN AMERICAN CASE: THE EPISCOPACIES & RIGHTS-BASED WORK	80

OVERVIEW OF THE LATIN AMERICAN CASE: INSTITUTIONAL VULNERABILITY IN A MAJORITY CONTEXT	82
WALKING THE HUMAN RIGHTS WALK: INITIAL EVIDENCE OF HIGH RIGHTS-BASED ENGAGEMENT	86
CRACKING THE BOOK’S COVER: THE LIMITS OF CHURCH-LED RIGHTS-BASED ENGAGEMENT	91
INSTITUTIONAL STOICISM? CHURCH-TARGETED ATTACKS AND A MORE INCONSISTENT RESPONSE	97
PROTECTING THEIR RELIGIOUS CAUSE: INSTITUTIONAL VULNERABILITY IN A MAJORITY CONTEXT	99
LESSER OF TWO EVILS: EXPLAINING AN INCONSISTENT RESPONSE TO CHURCH-TARGETED ATTACKS	104
PLAYING A SUPPORTIVE ROLE: AUTONOMY, GLOBAL RESOURCES & CHURCH-RIGHTS ENGAGEMENT	108
SUBCONTRACTING HUMAN RIGHTS WORK: RIGHTS-ENGAGED BYSTANDERS & MITIGATED RISK.....	114
CONCLUSION	117
CONCLUSION:	119
THE PRIMACY OF THEIR RELIGIOUS CAUSE: ENGAGED BYSTANDERS & MITIGATED RISK...	119
INDIVIDUAL-LEVEL VARIATION: RELATIVE VULNERABILITY, EXPOSURE & CONVERSION...	123
WHAT NEXT?	129
APPENDIX 1: CONSENT MATERIALS	133
WORKS CITED	136

List of Tables

TABLE 1.1: OPERATIONALISING “ENGAGEMENT WITH HUMAN RIGHTS IN PRACTICE” 30

Introduction:

Human Rights in the Global South: Ubiquitous Rhetoric, Limited Credibility & the Legitimizing Potential of Faith-Rights Collaboration

Once distinct spheres of international practice, the line between human rights activism and development is becoming harder to draw. To begin, development agencies and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) worldwide are increasingly adopting a “rights-based approach” in their work, recasting underdevelopment as a series of rights violations (Bradshaw 2006:1330; Grugel and Piper 2009:83, 83-4; Khan 2009:16). This fundamentally restructures their day-to-day practice, replacing service provision and addressing needs with agent empowerment and demanding rights as the new means of achieving sustainable development (Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi 2004; Grugel and Piper 2009; Sano 2000; Tomalin 2006; Uvin 2007:602). In turn, Amnesty International, flagship of the contemporary rights movement, has concurrently broadened its traditional focus on civil and political liberties and begun to tackle more systemic issues of poverty by likewise embracing the rights-based approach to development (Khan 2009; Hopgood 2010). Given its position of global prominence, Amnesty's new blend of development and human rights work may soon become as popular among human rights organizations as among many of their development counterparts.

Yet despite its at times enthusiastic adoption, the effectiveness of the human rights discourse in the global South remains debatable. Indeed, rights principles often mean little of substance to target populations, making it difficult to solicit their support or to advance their interests beyond highly legalised, elite-driven forums (Grugel and Piper 2009:64-5; Sano 2000:749; Bradshaw 2006; Okafor 2006). Furthermore, scholars have

grown increasingly concerned that widespread Northern funding of Southern NGOs has effectively eliminated the need to meaningfully engage local populations and to earn their trust and financial support, an issue that is acutely problematic for Southern rights-based organizations (RBOs) (Aldaba, et al. 2000:682; Sundstrom 2005:445; Cmiel 2004; An-Na'im 2001). Most poignantly, it perpetuates the belief that human rights are foreign, largely Western impositions, and thus undermines the RBOs' already limited credibility among local stakeholders (An-Na'im 2001:702-3). In turn, their dependence on foreign funds motivates the RBOs to focus on those issues that best reflect donor interests, while avoiding any that are deemed to be overly politicized (Englund 2000:583-4, 2006; Dicklitch and Lwanga 2003; Berkovitch and Gordon 2008). In the process, the RBOs and their Northern donors actively disempower target communities and diminish their value as participants in the fight for their rights, while failing to appreciate, let alone address, the day-to-day needs or interests of the marginalized communities they claim to defend (Englund 2000:583-4, 2006). Consequently, rights-based work in the global South remains suspect, with shallow roots and limited support from local stakeholders (Okafor 2006; Ron n.d.). This only serves to deepen the RBOs' dependence on foreign donors, however, while widening the gap between them and their local constituents.

Recent research indicates that Southern RBOs recognize their limited grassroots credibility and identify religious actors as their prime competitors for both this legitimacy and the corollary funding (Ron n.d.). Indeed, religious actors maintain access to powerful ideological and material resources and extensive networks that can in turn be mobilized either in support of or opposition to any secular social movement, including human rights (Smith 1996:5-22; Kirmani 2008:31; Kurzman 1998; Zald and McCarthy 1987). Yet as in

the development industry at large (Olson 2008:393), RBOs have rarely forged successful partnerships with their religious counterparts (Ron n.d.). This failure has at times resulted in communal backlash against rights initiatives (Tomalin 2006:96; Rafi and Chowdhury 2000). However, when activists have engaged in active dialogue with religious actors, the subsequent collaboration has proven at times to be an effective means of increasing the local legitimacy of the rights paradigm by providing activists with the social capital they often lack (Englund 2000; Klaiber 2009:412; Dipboye 1982:517). Indeed, religious actors can help to translate overly legalistic rights into more locally resonant languages, and by nurturing a “culture of rights” at the grassroots, mobilize the trust in human rights that uncompromisingly secular arguments often fail to produce (Lee 2011:895; Bielefeldt 2000; Bush 2005; Clarke 2006:845; Donnelly 2007; Flanigan 2007; Tomalin 2006). In turn, with their concurrent access to local, national and international networks, they can readily reach and mobilize significant proportions of the world’s population, and solicit their financial and moral support for rights action (Berger 2003:36-7; Clarke 2006:845; Ferris 2011:617; Hanmer 2010). Therefore, in the interests of advancing respect for human rights, scholars and activists alike should consider collaboration with religious actors as a potentially viable means of increasing the legitimacy of the rights paradigm, and thereby strengthening the sustainability of rights initiatives in the global South.

Yet little is known about religious engagement with rights-based work. Indeed, while conventional wisdom dictates that these actors are more often barriers to respect for human rights than facilitators thereof, it is often difficult to discern the actual validity of this perception. First, most scholars are engaged in theological debates over the relative affinity of religious tenets and rights principles, with little consideration of whether their

arguments translate into engagement with rights work. Consequently, their studies fail to offer any theories on when faith-rights engagement will emerge in practice. Second, the rest of the literature is dominated by case studies of religious actors' participation in rights politics, most of which lack a broader theoretical focus. As a result, they similarly fail to provide clearly generalizable insight into what encourages religious involvement with rights-based work.

In order to address this gap, I have conducted an inductive, heuristic study of the Christian churches'¹ engagement with rights in practice in Ahmedabad, India, and that of the Latin American Catholic Churches in the 1960s and 1970s.² My focus on Christianity is deliberate: despite the reported rarity of RBOs' engagement with religious actors, the few reported connections were almost exclusively with Christians (Ron n.d.). Therefore, by studying church-rights engagement, I was able to begin building a theory on faith-rights engagement in practice by analysing this relationship in a most-likely case,³ before then considering its dynamics in less likely cases like Islam or Hinduism, where the affinity between religious and rights principles is more strained, and thus their support in practice is more complicated.⁴

¹ When I refer to "churches" with a lower case "c," I am referring to Protestant and Catholic institutions. When I speak of the "Church," with a capital "C," I am referring specifically to the Catholic Church.

² See Chapter One for an in-depth discussion of both my case selection and my methodology.

³ See Gerring (2007:120-1) and Eckstein (1975:118-9) for a discussion of most-likely case study design.

⁴ Catholic social thought privileges the individual and his/her dignity in its analysis (Curran 2002:67). Protestants similarly embrace the individual as their subject (Traer 1991b:20) and the principle of individual equality and freedom of conscience as the foundation of their religious values (Witte 1998:260; Valliere 1996:280). Thus, while Christians justify their support for human rights on the basis of their religious tenets, their individual-centred paradigm parallels that of secular rights proponents, enabling constructive dialogue between Christians and secular activists (Hornsby-Smith 2006:325). This contrasts sharply with the cultures of both Islam and Hinduism, which alternatively stress collectivism over individualism. Indeed, both traditions are rooted in a relational concept of "we-self," where individuals are inextricably folded into larger wholes like the family, caste or community (Coward 2005:49; Sharma 2003:13; Chapple 2003:179-80; Monshipouri 1994:219; Sachedina 2007:50-1; Carle 2005:127). Any rights that an individual enjoys are then derived from membership in these wholes, rather than reflecting his/her

Specifically, my study offers a preliminary, middle-range theory⁵ of what both facilitates and impedes Southern churches' engagement with human rights in practice. In the process, my research addresses the general neglect of religion in scholarly work on rights-based organizing in particular, and on social movements in general (Smith 1996; Kirmani 2008), while challenging the assumption that religion is a universal barrier to respect for human rights. Clearly, religious doctrine can promote egregious rights abuses, and be used to undermine support for human rights. However, religious actors' political persuasions are never uniform, even within the same institution (Philpott 2007:506-7). Moreover, there have been few attempts to discern whether these actors may also serve as strong rights proponents, or to explore the mobilizing potential of religious communities for Southern human rights activism. This neglect is problematic, since most of the global population continues to self-identify as religious (ARDA 2001g; Philpott 2007:506-7), and religion remains a powerful mobilizing force, capable of stimulating positive as well as negative social change (Bell 2007:440-1; Ferris 2011). My goal, therefore, is to prompt scholarly attention to rectify this neglect, and to underscore "the often pivotal, but as yet

inherent individual worth (Sachedina 2007:50-1, 59; Coward 2005:39, 47). Consequently, the Hindu and Islamic paradigms are at odds with that of the modern rights regime.

Further, while Christians accept the primacy of rights before duties (Curran 2002:218), both Islam and Hinduism reject this premise. First, both the Qur'an and shari'ah law stipulate that human rights derive from obligations, rather than being their antecedent (Traer 1991b:115; Monshipouri 1994:218; Sachedina 2007:55). Therefore, Islamic law, and the human rights declarations this law has informed, codify individual obligations to be fulfilled, rather than individual rights to be safeguarded (Mayer 1991, cited in Price 2002:214). Similarly, the Hindu social system is grounded in a doctrine of social duties rather than individual rights, and human dignity is maintained through the discharge of the former, rather than protection of the latter (Donnelly 1989:135; Coward 2005:39). Moreover, the closest equivalent to "right" in Sanskrit is *adhikara*, or "just claim," which only Brahmins, the highest Hindu caste, enjoy (Traer 1991b:129). Thus, although reformers contend that the unique Hindu conception of duty can support respect for universal rights (Coward 2005:34; Martin 2003:270), the theological emphasis is on individual duties and responsibilities, rather than inalienable rights (Lauren 2003:9-10; Martin 2003:271). Consequently, Hinduism is equally at odds with the secular conceptualization of human rights.

⁵ See George and Bennet (2005:261-85) for a discussion of middle-range theories and their academic and policy value.

under-researched role of religion and religious groups in advancing and constraining the efforts of movements for social change” (Kirmani 2008:45).

Further, I aim to demonstrate the value of unconventional theory in explaining the position of traditionally non-activist actors on contentious politics. Namely, in addition to social movement theory, I draw on bystander theory to explain church engagement with rights in practice. Originally developed by social psychologists to explain individual-level willingness to intervene in at times high-risk situations (Darley and Latané 1968; Bickman 1971; Clark and Wood 1974; Fischer, et al. 2011), I argue that this theory offers valuable insight into the churches’ hesitation in both cases to engage with rights politics. First, it reinforced that in the presence of other actors who are able to respond to a given situation, responsibility for intervening is more diffused, which encourages apathy vis-à-vis intervention. Second, its findings indicate that when faced with a dangerous situation, bystanders will seek to minimize the risks of intervening, typically by providing indirect rather than direct assistance to the victims. Both insights helped to explain the churches’ general tendency to exhibit apathy vis-à-vis rights work in the presence of other rights-engaged actors, and why most Latin American Catholic Churches in particular responded to the pressure to defend human rights by establishing arms-length organizations, rather than committing their institutions to the cause and directly assuming the risks. Thus, my study reinforces the value of looking to related fields like social psychology for insight into the emergence and the development of contentious social movements worldwide.

Finally, I hope to provoke human rights scholars, activists, RBOs and donors into considering the Christian churches as potential allies in the fight for human rights. While generalizations from my study remain highly contingent, my research does illustrate how

certain factors either facilitate or impede church engagement with rights in practice, and clarifies the contexts in which the churches may prove effective partners for rights work. In so doing, I hope to demonstrate the viability of church-rights engagement for building respect for human rights in the global South.

Main Arguments: High-Risk Activism and Institutional Vulnerability

Scholars and activists alike routinely forget that religious actors may suffer costs by engaging in secular politics, and that it is generally easier and safer for them to remain disengaged and focused on internal religious matters (Wald, et al. 2005:130). This was particularly true in the case of church-rights engagement in contemporary Ahmedabad, and 1960s and 1970s Latin America. To begin, both sets of churches were vanguards of a religious social movement, and thus committed to protecting and advancing its interests. Engaging with rights in practice, however, required that they concurrently engage with another, now secular movement, and one whose objectives and high-risk form of activism did not naturally align with or support their religious priorities. Instead, its work carried the potential to readily increase the “costs of religious practice” by inviting opposition from vested social interests (Johnston and Figa 1988:43; Donnelly 2007:283; Livezey 1989:17-8). These risks were then amplified by the churches’ dependence on the state to maintain access to the resources needed to conduct their religious operations.

Since the churches’ primary concern was for their religious movement, and they would have risked its sustainability by engaging with rights in practice, the churches thus generally avoided rights politics unless their religious cause was under attack. Thus, they would engage when their religious authority and values were threatened, their freedoms

and rights were abused, or their adherents, personnel and traditional ministries were targeted in attacks that sought to challenge the sustainability of their religious operations. Otherwise, they remained disengaged. I maintain that these threats generally succeeded in invoking a strong rights-based response, and ultimately proved the necessary catalyst for institutional support, because they established a clear link between defending rights and protecting their religious cause. Absent this connection, the risks of engaging with rights in practice were simply too high for traditionally non-activist actors like the churches to commit themselves to defending human rights (c.f. Goodwin 2001; McAdam 1986).

I argue that in so doing, the churches responded like any bystander to a dangerous situation. First, in the presence of other rights-engaged actors, such as India's active civil society, the churches were encouraged to exhibit bystander apathy vis-à-vis rights work, since others were able and willing to adopt the role of activist, along with the potential risks (Bickman 1971). Second, when they did choose to intervene in cases of rights abuse, they sought to minimize the risks by providing more indirect rather than direct assistance to the victims and maintaining distance between the religious institution and rights-based work (Clark and Wood 1974). In Ahmedabad, this meant that the local churches provided humanitarian relief and social services to rights victims in order to fulfil their rights in the short term, while avoiding the riskier, more direct response of lobbying for rights-based change. In Latin America, where the responsibility for rights-based work instead became increasingly focused under authoritarian regimes, this indirect assistance took the form of Church-sponsored organizations that defended human rights, but were operationally and financially independent of the Catholic Church hierarchy. Both of these approaches were safer than directly committing their institutions to rights work, and therefore enabled the

churches in both cases to intervene in cases of abuse, while mitigating the potential risks to the sustainability of their religious movement.

Overview of the Thesis Structure

I explore the above arguments over the course of three chapters. Chapter One examines the existing literature on Christianity and human rights, and on religion and secular social movements in general, and argues for the need to parse out human rights from democracy, under which its study has often been subsumed. It also outlines my case selection rationale and research scope, case-specific methodology, and operationalisation of my dependent variable, namely, church engagement with human rights in practice.

I begin building my preliminary theory in Chapter Two, which analyses church-rights engagement in the hostile minority context of Ahmedabad, India. In particular, I illustrate how the churches' perceptions of high risk and low need ultimately shaped their response to rights politics. I further refine my theory in Chapter Three by extending my study to the case of the Latin American Catholic Churches and their involvement in rights politics during the 1960s and 1970s. Using this case, I was able to clarify the role played by church-targeted attacks and global resources in shaping rights-based engagement, and to demonstrate how the Churches consistently sought to limit their direct involvement in rights work, even when under significant pressure to engage.

I conclude by summarizing my argument, while briefly examining church-rights engagement at the individual level. I then outline some of the implications of my study, and indicate areas of future research that could help to further refine my theory on church engagement with rights in practice.

Chapter One:

Christianity and Human Rights: A Literature Without a Well-Defined Theory

The literature on Christianity and human rights can be generally divided into 1) theological debates over the affinity of religious tenets and human rights principles; 2) discussions of how rights-in-principle prompted support in practice at a global or a regional level; 3) case studies of Christian engagement with rights-based work, and 4) an analysis of the challenges faced by global faith-based RBOs. Several of these studies offer insight into the process of Christian-rights engagement in practice. Yet as a result of their level of aggregation, empirical and methodological weaknesses, lack of a theoretical focus, or chosen research question, none offer any strong theories on when the Christian churches will engage in and support rights-based work.

First, most scholars assess Christian-rights engagement from a theological perspective. Some participate in ongoing debates over whether the concept of human rights is inherently religious or secular (Hehir 2010). For instance, certain scholars trace their lineage to Biblical precepts and Christian theologies, arguing that human rights are the conceptual offspring of Western Christendom (Elliott 2008; Little, et al. 1996:219-225; Stackhouse 1998). Others disagree, arguing that the concept of human rights is a strictly modern and secular invention (Bielefeldt 1996; Donnelly 2007). In turn, many scholars focus on demonstrating the affinity or complementarity of the two traditions by identifying various Christian tenets, traditions or theologies that could inspire adherents' support for human rights on the basis of their faith (Curran 2002:3, 6, 67, 218-9; Guorian 1998; Hornsby-Smith 2006:119; Langan 1982; Tergel 1997; Smith 2009; Valliere 1996; Witte 1998).

Yet these studies fail to examine, let alone demonstrate, whether their arguments have actually prompted concrete Christian-rights engagement, even though human rights scholars have long since established that support in principle does not invariably translate into support in practice (Landman 2004:907-8, 2002:896). Indeed, as Zald and McCarthy (1987:69) observe, religious precepts and theologies are poor predictors of support for any secular movement, since they are often constant across cases of both engagement and abstention. This is true in the case of Christianity and human rights, as despite clearly and positively contributing to “human rights talk,” many churches, their leaders and their adherents remain disengaged from and at times directly inhibit rights action (Newlands 2006:3). This religious ambivalence is evident, for instance, in debates over sexual and reproductive rights like abortion and contraception, which Christians simultaneously support and actively oppose (Green 2010). Moreover, opposing groups often justify their conflicting positions on a given right by referring to the same religious tenets, thus underscoring how a tradition’s teachings and theologies are ultimately open and subject to interpretation based on an adherent’s personal experiences, interests, and sociopolitical contexts (Green 2010:318; Philpott 2007:505-6; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:22). Consequently, Lernoux (1980:202) observes that theological consensus is often fleeting even in the Catholic Church, the church that is arguably most driven towards institutional unity and centralized theology (Smith 1979:119; Bruneau and Hewitt 1992:48).

Therefore, Christianity in general, and some of its traditions in particular, may appear to actively promote human rights on the basis of its theologies and policies. Yet this support in principle will only translate into rights work if rights-supportive theologies are believed, and this belief invokes action. Accordingly, while it remains important to

understand both the content and the scope of the available theological material, it is more critical that I focus on what encourages the churches and its leaders to act upon rights-supportive theologies. Indeed, it is this juxtaposition of oft-strong support in principle and variable support in practice that religious scholars have failed to adequately explain, and that demands further examination.

Second, other scholars examine Christian engagement with rights-based work at a global level. For instance, scholars argue that the doctrinal shift instigated by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) prompted near-universal Catholic engagement with human rights, as they reportedly became the cornerstone of the Church's social teaching and mission (Casanova 1996:360, 367; Curran 2002:11, 58, 217; Hornsby-Smith 2008:14; Hollenbach 2008:14-5). As proof, they briefly cite examples of Catholic-rights engagement in Chile, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Peru, Brazil, South Africa, Poland, the Philippines, and South Korea, while implying that the change in doctrine caused this engagement (Langan 1998:254; Casanova 1996:363; Hollenbach 2008:15). Yet they offer little empirical data linking the doctrinal shifts with changes in practice. In turn, while the above cases are consistently upheld as examples of strong engagement, cases of the Church's neglect of rights-based work (e.g., Argentina) are largely unexplained. Indeed, rights-supportive teachings have stimulated varying levels of rights-based advocacy both within and across countries, as Church leaders remain internally divided over the proper extent of their involvement (Hehir 2010:132). Yet this variation directly undermines their causal arguments, since the shift in Catholic doctrine was constant across all cases. Given their concurrent neglect of systematic comparative work, one can thus only presume that

there are many omitted variables operating either in combination with or independent of doctrinal reform to produce varying levels of Catholic-rights engagement worldwide.

At the regional level, Latin America has drawn particular attention, principally because of the Catholic Church's reportedly central role in the emergence of rights-based organizing under recent authoritarian regimes.⁶ Most follow the trend described above, outlining the evolution of regional Church doctrine on human rights after Vatican II and the Latin American Bishops' Conference at Medellín in 1968, and evaluating the alleged impact of these changes on Church-rights engagement, with a focus on the same success stories (Crahan 1996, 1999; Dipboye 1982; Garr 2004). In turn, Aldunate (1994) describes how the region's liberation theologians modified human rights concepts to accommodate their preferential option for the poor, while Carozza (2003a, 2003b) argues that the region's human rights tradition can be linked to the efforts of Spanish religious priests and theologians in their opposition to sixteenth-century colonial rule. Collectively, these studies suggest that repression and authoritarianism, in addition to rights-supportive theology, can stimulate Church support for human rights. Yet none adequately examines or explains the Churches' varying responses to doctrinal shifts or repressive rule. When combined with their descriptive nature, neglect of systematic comparative work and lack of theoretical focus, this undermines their potential value to my study.

The exception to many of these critiques is Smith's (1979) comparative study of the Catholic Church's rights work under authoritarian regimes in Brazil, Chile, Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina. He does not seek to develop generalizable theory or situate his analysis in a theoretical framework that would broaden the applicability of his findings.

⁶ In this section, I only consider studies that explicitly focus on the Catholic Church and human rights. Most references to the Churches' rights efforts are made in broader studies of Church opposition to authoritarian rule or of internal Church politics, which will be further critiqued in Chapter Three.

Yet by comparing positive and negative cases of Church-rights engagement, his study uncovers additional variables that shaped these Churches' decisions around rights work, and that could operate similarly in other countries in the global South.

First, Smith argues that their engagement with rights-based work was primarily a reaction to widespread repression and direct attacks against the Church. He maintains that the former increased pressure on the Church to support rights-based mobilizing, since it was often the only civil society actor that retained its rights, and thus the last remaining outlet for political activism. In turn, the latter reportedly sensitized high-ranking officials, with attacks against the bishops or their authority in particular soliciting more widespread institutional participation in rights-based work. This suggests that churches will engage in rights work when their interests or authority are threatened, and that they are more readily mobilized if other actors are unable to effectively defend human rights.

Second, his study reveals how material constraints affected Church-rights efforts. Namely, he argues that Churches abstained or withdrew from human rights work if they depended on the financial support of upper-middle class and conservative Catholics, who often supported the regime and were alienated by denunciations of its actions. Further, he argues that whatever advocacy they did conduct would not have been possible without their ability to mobilize international funds, as both Christian and secular organizations in North America and Western Europe provided most of the budgetary support for their RBOs. Indeed, he maintains that it was heightened state suspicion of foreign funding that ultimately limited the capacity and effectiveness of Argentine Catholic RBOs (1979:113-4). Therefore, a church's administrative and financial relationship with the secular elite,

along with its ability to access global support for rights-based activities, may well shape its willingness and ability to engage in human rights politics.

In contrast to the Catholic Church, there is comparably little written on Protestant-rights engagement at a regional or global level. One exception is Nurser's (2003) study of the Protestant churches' involvement in drafting the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* via the precursor to the World Council of Churches (WCC). Yet his descriptive account fails to scrutinize their prioritisation of religious liberty, which suggests that their promotion of a rights-based global order represented to some extent an effort to preserve their religious interests abroad. In turn, others have occasionally referenced WCC human rights declarations or support for rights work in member churches as evidence of global Protestant-rights engagement (Traer 1991b:21-7, 65; Tergel 1997:310-1). Yet while some statements that result from WCC-sponsored symposiums strongly promote human rights, sometimes in direct contravention of church interests,⁷ the WCC largely separates itself from the views expressed by these bodies (Tippett 1973). More poignantly, these studies offer little information on which churches were involved, how and, most importantly, why, which consequently limits their theoretical and empirical value to my study.

Third, scholars have conducted country-specific case studies of Christian-rights engagement in the United States (Afshar 2006; Castelli 2007; Haeberle 1991; Hertzke 2001; Livezey 1989; Morris 1996), Brazil (Serbin 2000; Freston 2011), Malawi (Englund 2000), Paraguay (Horst 2002), Russia (Caldwell 2009) and South Africa (Borer 1996). Their studies describe Christians' rights-based activities in general, or their mobilization around a given issue. Yet they are primarily descriptive, and do not draw on any broader

⁷ See, for instance, the 1971 "Declaration of Barbados: For the Liberation of the Indians" (Symposium on Inter-Ethnic Conflict in South America 1973:267-269).

theoretical frameworks. Afshar (2006) is the exception, as he uses the concept of cultural framing to analyse the discursive efforts of the Religious Right in promoting the anti-gay rights movement. Yet like the others, he does not seek to test or build theory, and their largely single-case, descriptive nature makes their findings non-generalizable.

These limitations notwithstanding, the studies do suggest several factors that may prove valuable in understanding church-rights engagement in the global South. To begin, Hertzke's (2001) study of American Christian mobilization in defence of Christians abroad again fails to assess the significance of the churches' focus, in which issues of religious persecution were prioritised above all other concerns. Yet his work reveals two factors that may impede church engagement with rights-based advocacy. First, he argues that interdenominational competition is a barrier, as the threat of losing adherents draws attention away from social activism and towards conventional concerns with maintaining the flock.⁸ Second, he notes that the churches' fear of state retribution, particularly among those most reliant on its resources, undermines their willingness to support contentious politics, including human rights work. This supports Smith's (1979) finding that material concerns often figure prominently in church decisions around rights work.

Further, Livezey (1989:80-1) illustrates how religious actors often define human rights differently than do secular actors, particularly around socioeconomic issues, while Castelli (2007) argues that evangelical Christians in the United States prioritise the right to religious freedom and manipulate claims to the latter in order to suppress the rights of others, including women and minorities. Afshar (2006) best demonstrates this tendency in his analysis of the Religious Right's use of biblical teachings to support the anti-gay

⁸ Gill (1998) makes the opposite argument with regards to the Catholic Churches' opposition to authoritarianism more generally in Latin America during the 1960s and 1970s. See Chapter Three.

rights movement. His study also underscores how religious actors will willingly mobilize around human rights when their values are threatened, sometimes in opposition to secular activists. Haerberle's (1991) study of the American churches' responses to gay and lesbian rights further highlights the challenges of soliciting church support on contentious moral issues. Finally, Morris (1996) credits the Black Church's activism in the American Civil Rights Movement to the efforts of an organized group of educated, radicalized clergy. He fails to specify what distinguished these actors from their non-activist colleagues. Yet his argument does suggest that while some churches may appear to be highly engaged, their institutional activism may represent the work of a small cadre of dedicated leaders whose actions do not represent the desires, politics or ambitions of the majority.

In turn, Serbin's (2000) study of the Brazilian Catholic Church's secret dialogues with recent military regimes demonstrates that churches with historically strong state ties will be loath to sever them, and will strive to continue private negotiations alongside their public activism in order to maintain their political privileges while also defending human rights. Further, Freston (2011) argues that Protestant churches in Brazil were less rights-engaged under authoritarian rule and were more apt to support such regimes because they lacked strong international ties, which heightened their vulnerability to state repression, and were also eager to obtain some of the political privileges generally reserved for the Catholic Church. Collectively, these studies suggest that churches will always strive to protect and advance their religious cause, even as they become publicly rights-engaged.

Finally, Englund's (2000) and Borer's (1996) studies highlight different ways in which the churches' political context shapes their engagement with rights-based work. To begin, the former suggests that the focus of the churches' human rights efforts may shift,

depending on whether they are under authoritarian or democratic rule. Namely, mainline Malawian churches actively defended civil and political rights and challenged the state on cases of violation when under repressive rule. Yet in the wake of democratization, most retreated into making abstract statements, while attempting to impose limits on what they felt was excessive freedom (2000:584-5, 587-8). In turn, Borer (1996) describes how the South African churches only rose to the forefront of the anti-apartheid movement after the state began directly attacking the churches and their personnel, and had arrested most of the movement's secular leaders, leaving a void that the churches felt compelled to fill. Collectively, these two studies support Smith's (1979) findings that the churches are most vocally rights-engaged under repressive rule, and particularly when directly threatened or one of the only actors that can challenge the state on rights issues. Yet like Smith (1979), neither adequately specifies how or why these factors stimulated church support for rights politics, or their relationship to one another or to other variables, all of which needs to be further investigated before declaring their applicability to other cases in the global South.

Fifth and finally, Bush (2005) analyses how religious RBOs, including those with Christian roots, gain international credibility as rights activists in spite of their religiosity. While offering insight into religious competition for global acceptance, her study does not elaborate on why these actors initially chose to engage in rights work aside from as an extension of their faith, or what distinguishes them from their religious peers who remain disengaged. Moreover, her unit of analysis is faith-based organizations that operate at an arm's length from their denominational institution. These organizations face different incentive structures and strategic options than do the churches, given the clear separation

of their objectives from the broader evangelical interests of their tradition (Conradson 2008:2123). As a result, her findings are of limited value to my current study.

Human Rights & Democracy: Parsing Out My Dependent Variable

Given the historically positive correlation between Protestantism and democracy, and Huntington's (1991) famous description of democracy's third wave as Catholic, it is unsurprising that academic interest in the churches' political persuasions remains high. Scholars have studied their role in promoting democracy in individual states, such as the Philippines (Moreno 2008), Venezuela (Froehle 1992), or Cameroon (Akoko and Oben 2006), in specific regions like Latin America (Klaiber 1998; Smith 1994), and on a global scale (Casanova 2005). While many are descriptive, some studies strive to theoretically explain the churches' stance. For instance, Mantilla (2010) argues that Catholic Churches' support for recent democratization movements in Latin America was contingent on their institutional size and the electoral competitiveness of pro-Church political parties. Others maintain that no religious institution will support such efforts unless it is independent of the state, and has embraced a theology that promotes liberal democratic values (Philpott 2005; Philpott 2007; Toft, et al. 2011).⁹ Throughout, scholars regularly refer to examples of church-rights engagement as evidence of support for liberal democracy. In the process, they imply that a pro-democratic church is by definition a proponent of human rights, just as a pro-rights church is necessarily pro-democratic, and that the factors that encouraged the one will therefore shape the other in a similar if not identical manner.

⁹ Their argument about the need for a democratic theology is somewhat tautological, and they do not fully explain, for instance, why some Catholic Churches actively adopted the pro-democratic Vatican II changes, while others did not. Since ideas matter only insofar as they are acted upon, this is a notable limitation. However, their argument about the need for autonomy from the state before a church will act on pro-democratic ideals is of value to my study, and is further explored in Chapter Three.

Yet the tendency to conflate human rights with liberal democracy is problematic. Certainly, the link between the two seems commonsensical, and most cross-national quantitative studies have found a positive and statistically significant correlation between institutionalized democracy and state respect for human rights (Beer and Mitchell 2006:997; Davenport and Armstrong 2004; Milner, et al. 1999:413-4; Landman 2002:902-3). However, they have concurrently demonstrated that this relationship is more complex than the linear causation implied by conventional wisdom (Davenport and Armstrong 2004:540-1).¹⁰ This is particularly true during democratic transitions, or if democratic rule is unconsolidated, during which time rights conditions in a country often stagnate or even deteriorate in the short term, with violations exceeding those committed under non-democratic regimes (Davenport and Armstrong 2004; Milner, et al. 1999:413-4, 432, 439).¹¹ Indeed, Davenport and Armstrong's (2004) study indicates that democracy only begins to have a discernible and positive impact on a state's tendency to violate human rights when it has achieved the highest levels of institutionalization and consolidation. Before this point, there is no clear impact on the level of state repression.

Further, a fully consolidated and institutionalized democracy does not invariably lead to universal respect for human rights. One of the most often-cited outliers is India, where democracy has largely failed to curb the number of rights abuses in the country, according to both standards-based and events-based measures (Beer and Mitchell 2006; HRW 1999, 2002, 2007; U.S. Department of State 2010).¹² Likewise, the United States

¹⁰ Moreover, as Landman (2002:903) aptly notes, these cross-national analyses rarely take into account region-specific factors that may affect this relationship.

¹¹ Fein (1995), for instance, is a proponent of the "more murder in the middle" argument, in which rights abuses follow an inverted U-shape, increasing during the transition from autocracy to democracy, but decreasing at either poles of relative political openness.

¹² For instance, when I evaluated the Indian state's compliance with physical integrity rights between 1993 and 2002 using the Political Terror Scale (PTS) and the Cingranelli-Richards Human Rights Data Project

has yet to ratify the *Convention on the Rights of the Child* or the *Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women*, and voted against the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, along with Canada, Australia, and New Zealand, all of which are fully consolidated democracies (UNICEF n.d.; United Nations Treaty Collection 2012; UN News Centre 2007). Moreover, although political authoritarianism clearly violates basic political liberties, it does not always result in the systemic abuse of all human rights. For instance, under General Juan Velasco Alvarado's dictatorship, the Peruvian state initiated a number of progressive reforms that strove to improve living conditions among the poor, and violated few rights in the process (Klaiber 1998:143). Therefore, rather than criticize the state on account of its autocratic structure, the Catholic Church instead lent support to Velasco's pro-poor regime, going so far as to assign some of its priests as policy advisors to the state (Klaiber 1998:143). Collectively, this underscores how even a fully institutionalized democracy does not guarantee state respect for human rights, just as non-democratic rule does not invariably lead to systematic repression. Instead, the need for rights-based advocacy can be just as pressing in either scenario. Therefore, the churches' engagement with rights in practice should be parsed out from their support for a given political system, since the nature of the regime does not directly determine the available opportunities to engage in rights-based work.

Finally, democratization and human rights movements both strive to reform state behaviour. However, the scope of the latter movement is much broader, given that the state does not retain a monopoly on rights violations. Therefore, unlike efforts to achieve

(CIRI) indices, the country was consistently ranked as having no or minimal respect for these rights, and state terror remained high. Both of these indices use nationally aggregated data, and effectively conceal the geographically concentrated nature of state violations in the country's border states (Beer and Mitchell 2006), as well as their concentration among members of particular ethnic, religious or socioeconomic groups, such as the Dalits (Khan 2009:48-9; HRW 2007). Nevertheless, this indicates that the relationship between democracy and human rights is far from straightforward.

democratization, defending rights need not always require open confrontation with the state, or changes in state behaviour. Likewise, there are a host of human rights beyond political liberties that churches may promote, while remaining silent on their preferred form of government. The Argentine Catholic Church, for instance, was never a strong proponent of democracy or of human rights under recent military rule. Yet it was notably worried about the implications of the former, as it had historically advanced its interests by fostering strong relations with the military elite, and there was a dearth of competitive pro-Church parties that could promote its cause in a democracy (Edmonds 2010:184-5; Mantilla 2010:565-6). Thus, while the Church criticized the abuse of physical integrity rights, workers' rights and the rights to health and education, albeit on rare occasion, it remained silent on the topic of regime change (Smith 1979:113, 115). This demonstrates that a church may engage with rights work without necessarily being pro-democratic, and suggests that different factors may shape their response to both liberal ideals.

As Thoms and Ron (2007:699, n. 96) aptly note, the debate over the relationship between democracy and rights is far from resolved, with strong arguments on either side. Yet for the above reasons, and because my chosen cases represented opposing ends of the spectrum in terms of their relative political openness, I consciously decided to parse out human rights from democracy and to focus exclusively on church engagement with the former. Otherwise, I feared that I would inappropriately extend theoretical arguments to cases where their basic premises do not hold,¹³ while perpetuating the assumption that the fight for human rights is a "liberal project whose overriding goal, though not explicitly stated, is the imposition of a Western-style liberal democracy" (Mutua 1996:656).

¹³ This includes applying causal arguments developed in the study of church support for democratization to the study of church-rights engagement in a consolidated democracy like contemporary India.

Religion, Social Movements and the Limits of the Theoretical Literature

As Wald et al. (2005:140) observe, there is no inherent link between religion and secular political action. This includes religious involvement not only in institutionalized electoral politics, but also with secular and oft-contentious social movements like human rights. Therefore, in order to explain religious actors' engagement with secular politics, political scientists and religious studies scholars point to a number of different variables, ranging from their theological, national or ethnic identities to religious competition or the nature of their relationship with secular and political elites (Philpott 2007:505). Yet no systematic pattern has emerged (Philpott 2007:505). Indeed, neither set of scholars can fully explain how, when or why religiously based political action emerges (Wald, et al. 2005:122-3). This is not surprising, given that the literature is dominated by single case studies of religious adherents' involvement in electoral politics, with little cumulative or comparative work or efforts to generate generalizable theory (Wald, et al. 2005:122-3).

In turn, social movement scholars in particular have predominantly neglected the intersection between religion and globally dominant social movements like human rights in both their empirical and theoretical studies (Kirmani 2008:26-7; McVeigh and Sikkink 2001:1426). Some have attempted to fill this gap. They maintain that religious actors and institutions are potentially valuable social movement resources, and that social movement theory (SMT) provides the best framework for understanding religious engagement with secular movements and politics (c.f. Chang and Kim 2007; Johnston and Figa 1988; Mantilla 2010; Wald, et al. 2005; Zald and McCarthy 1987). Presumably, this includes rights-based work. Yet few scholars¹⁴ have applied SMT to the study of church-rights

¹⁴ Afshar (2006) is an exception. However, as noted above, his study is primarily descriptive and does not seek to generate theory on when Christian-rights engagement will emerge. This limits its value to my study.

engagement, although some do reference the churches' rights efforts in their analyses of church support for democratization or opposition to authoritarianism (Chang and Kim 2007; Edmonds 2010; Johnston and Figa 1988; Mantilla 2010; Nepstad 2004; Philpott 2007). Neither political context applies in Ahmedabad, however. Thus, their theories are not directly applicable.

In turn, this theoretical tradition is not without its limitations. Its scholars have often sought to develop universally generalizable theory that can explain the emergence, form and relative success of all social movements in any context, at any time (Goodwin and Jasper 1999:30). Consequently, many advance tautological or trivial theories with limited explanatory power in concrete cases, while espousing the importance of countless causal factors that stimulate mobilization in one instance, but fail to do so in another (Goodwin and Jasper 1999:30; Kurzman 2004:113; Meyer and Minkoff 2004:1459; Schock 1999:356). Moreover, definitions of the same theoretical concepts often widely vary, as scholars stretch each to fit their specific case. For instance, there are myriad opportunity structures¹⁵ that allegedly influence the emergence, form and success of the movements, and scholars regularly operationalise even the same opportunity structures differently, as they strive to account for all exogenous variables within this theoretical framework (Goodwin and Jasper 1999:30-1; Kurzman 2004:113; Meyer and Minkoff 2004:1458). This directly undermines these concepts' explanatory power, however (Goodwin and Jasper 1999:52). Notably, these issues are particularly acute in efforts to explain the emergence of a social movement (Goodwin and Jasper 1999:30).

¹⁵ These include the original political opportunity structures (Eisinger 1973; Tarrow 1999), as well as cultural opportunity structures (Frank and McEneaney 1999; Goldberg 2002; Hallgrimstottir and Benoit 2005), organizational opportunity structures (Brüderl, et al. 1993; Kurzman 1998), and state opportunity structures (Wahlström and Peterson 2006).

Such limitations are to be expected, given the general lack of comparative work and widespread selection bias. Indeed, most theorizing to date is based on single case studies of successful movements in developed, democratic states (Kirmani 2008; Jasper 2004:11; Schock 1999:356). As a result, scholars have tended to emphasize opportunities over threats or constraints, and most overlook the context-specific impact of their factors while failing to specify the causal mechanisms through which each leads to their studied outcome (Jasper 2004:2-3; Goodwin and Jasper 1999:38-9; Kurzman 2004:118; Meyer and Minkoff 2004:1463, 1483). In turn, most have neglected deviant cases, such as those where opportunities to mobilize abound, but limited protests emerge, or opportunities are constrained, and yet engagement is widespread (Kurzman 2004:119). Consequently, they additionally fail to recognize how perceptions of an opportunity are often more influential than “objective” opportunities in structuring a movement, or how the former can change with little change in the latter, and thus stimulate or constrain mobilization (Goodwin and Jasper 1999:33; Kurzman 1996:155, 2004:115-6; Meyer and Minkoff 2004).

Inductive and Empirically Grounded: Research Scope and Unit of Analysis

I took these theoretical limitations and empirical gaps in the literature into account when designing my study. Namely, I chose to develop empirically grounded explanations of church-rights engagement in practice in Ahmedabad and Latin America, rather than risk perpetuating the tendency to redefine existing SMT concepts to fit my cases. This inductive, theory-building design was additionally well suited to my research, given the lack of well-specified theory on Christian engagement with human rights in practice, which made a deductive theory-testing approach inappropriate.

Specifically, I have developed a middle-range theory using heuristic case studies of Ahmedabad and Latin America that ask the following: *When do churches engage with human rights in practice? What facilitates and impedes mobilization?* This structured my scope in three ways. First, my dependent variable is the emergence of church-rights engagement, as operationalised below. My study does not evaluate its effectiveness or its impact on rights outcomes, however. Accordingly, it cannot be used to explain either.

Second, while I hope to offer theoretical insight into Christian-rights engagement in the global South more generally, any causal or descriptive inference will be limited to Ahmedabad and Latin America during the specified time periods. Nevertheless, while it cannot offer generalizable theory, my study does provide a series of hypotheses that can be tested in other cases of church-rights engagement in order to further refine my theory and bolster confidence in its explanatory power.

Finally, I was foremost interested in examining the churches' behaviour as unitary institutional actors, rather than that of semi-autonomous groups or of individual church agents. This focus was facilitated by the fact that all but one church in my study adhered to a hierarchical episcopal governance structure, which generally increases the desire for and extent of institutional unity and coherence in theology and practice (Gill 1998:9).

In operating at this level of aggregation, I follow on the work of other scholars who similarly treat groups as unitary actors, and do so for the same reason of maintaining analytical simplicity (Gill 1998:10). However, this focus had two concrete implications. First, I only considered the behaviour of ordained clergy and excluded that of the laity, even if they held recognized leadership positions in the church. Second, in the Catholic Church in particular, I was primarily interested in the work of secular clergy, rather than

that of religious orders that operate semi-autonomously of the Church hierarchy in terms of their ecclesiologies,¹⁶ authority and finances (Berger 2003:28; Klaiber 1992:91-2; Kurzman 1998:36; Froehle 1992:110-1). In both cases, my decision was informed by the fact that these actors are not as directly responsible for the health of their church, and thus operate under different constraints than their ordained and secular counterparts.

Yet while my primary interest was in the church as institution, I have developed a series of hypotheses regarding the observed variation in church leaders' response to rights in practice at an individual level (see the Conclusion). Their explanatory power is limited by a lack of systematically collected, individual-level data. Nevertheless, they can be similarly tested in other cases in order to determine the extent of their generalizability.

Operationalising "Engagement with Human Rights in Practice:" Tactical Choices

I operationalised my dependent variable, church engagement with human rights in practice, by first dividing it into three broad categories – low, medium, and high – based on the depth and breadth of a church's engagement with rights work. These categories sit on a continuum where the scope and public visibility of the rights-based work increases as one moves from low to high, along with the corresponding risk of inviting retaliation from vested social or political interests who oppose the churches' position.

Second, I argue that the churches can adopt one of two basic tactical approaches to promoting rights: 1) public advocacy; and, 2) development work. These approaches are not mutually exclusive: a church could take a public stand on an issue, while also seeking to build grassroots respect for human rights. Yet many may choose to specialize in one

¹⁶ Ecclesiologies are theologies that speak specifically to a church's nature and function, to its social role and moral responsibilities, and to church leaders' corollary responsibilities as individuals (Smith 1975:12).

approach, to the general neglect of the other. For instance, in order to advance respect for women's rights, some may denounce their abuse and lobby for legislative change. Others may choose instead to educate women on their rights via targeted media campaigns and workshops in an effort to stimulate independent rights-claiming, while providing gender equity and human rights training to lawyers, judges and men in the community in order to strengthen their capacity to fulfil these women's rights in the long term.

This tactical contrast is similar to the differences between Human Rights Watch on the one hand, and Oxfam on the other. Both are RBOs and active in promoting human rights. Yet the latter does so primarily through development initiatives, while the former has principally adopted the tactics of a public advocate. Both are equally valid means of encouraging respect for human rights, and they are not mutually exclusive. Yet like their secular colleagues, churches may support human rights by applying one set of tactics and not the other, and this should be taken into account when evaluating their engagement.

I have thus developed a set of measures for assessing the churches' engagement in the areas of rights-based public advocacy and development work that help to determine the relative category to which they belong. Beginning with public advocacy, those with low engagement do not publicly respond to rights abuses. Further, while they may issue normative statements about the importance of integrating human rights into the church's ministry, their statements remain abstract and their primary audience is fellow Christians.

By contrast, churches or church leaders with medium engagement will publicly denounce violations of human rights and seek to hold state and non-state duty-bearers to account on concrete issues using public pressure and, when applicable, judicial means. However, they will only do so if it will somehow advance their religious cause, speaking

out only when their religious authority or values are threatened, their rights and freedoms are abused, or their adherents, personnel or ministries are targeted in attacks that seek to undermine the sustainability of their religious operations. Most often, this means that the issues they address are limited to those that directly affect the church and its religious activities, or those that are connected to traditional moral concerns, including issues of abortion, contraception and homosexuality.

Finally, churches or church leaders with high engagement will adopt a similarly public stance on rights abuses and challenge state and non-state duty-bearers. However, their spectrum of concern extends beyond those issues of direct concern to the church community. Notably, these church leaders generally work for secular or religious rights organizations, rather than as leader of a parish or congregation, and are rarely responsible for advancing their church's evangelical and pastoral work.

In terms of development work, churches and church leaders with low engagement only conduct needs-based social and charitable outreach. By contrast, those with medium engagement believe that underdeveloped communities should play an active role in their development. Thus, some projects go beyond meeting needs and seek instead to empower marginalized groups so that they can improve their own situation. However, the projects rarely use rights language, and do not provide legal education or support to participants, or encourage them to demand their rights. Further, they do not directly challenge state or non-state actors on rights issues or seek legislative or policy reform.

Finally, churches and church leaders with high engagement have fully integrated a rights-based approach in their work. They explicitly encourage marginalized individuals to demand their rights, offer legal education to rights victims, and support court cases as

required. Further, they seek legislative and policy reform on specific issues, often as part of broader activist networks, and strive to build the capacity of a range of duty-bearers at both the state and community level in order to achieve greater respect for human rights. Finally, while they may provide basic social services, relief or charity, these activities are intended only to complement and not replace their rights-based initiatives. Notably, these church leaders generally work for secular or religious development organizations, rather than as leader of a parish or congregation, and are rarely directly responsible for advancing their church's evangelical and pastoral work.

The table below summarizes the measures for each tactical approach at each level of engagement.

Table 1.1: Operationalising “Engagement with Human Rights in Practice”

	Public Advocacy	Development Work
High Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Publicly denounce rights issues beyond those directly affecting the church, religious activities or Christians, or connected to traditional moral concerns - Regularly seek to hold duty-bearers to account on range of issues using public pressure, judicial means 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Explicitly adopt a rights-based approach in outreach activities - Targets are active participants in program design - Encourage participants' rights-based organizing and rights-claiming - Support court cases, provide legal education/support - Try to build duty-bearer capacity - Seek legislative and policy reform, often as part of broader network
Medium Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Engage in publicly advocacy only when authority or values threatened, rights and freedoms abused, or adherents, personnel or ministries targeted - Seek to hold duty-bearers to account on above issues using public pressure, judicial means 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support empowerment-based projects that go beyond charity or basic service provision (i.e. income-generation initiatives) - Do not encourage participants' rights-based organizing or rights-claiming - Do not take on legal cases or provide legal education/support - Do not seek legislative or policy reform or challenge the state
Low Engagement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do not take public stance on cases of rights violations - May issue normative declarations but statements remain abstract, principally aimed at fellow Christians 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Outreach remains restricted to charity, basic service provision - Do not encourage participants' rights-based organizing or rights-claiming - Do not take on legal cases or provide legal education/support - Do not seek legislative or policy reform or challenge the state

Heuristic Case Studies and the Logic of Case Selection

In heuristic case research, one begins by investigating a single case of a general problem and generating theoretical constructs that are then extended to additional cases to increasingly refine the theory's scope and explanatory power (Eckstein 1975:104-7). This method is well suited to my inductive, theory-building research. It enables me to remain open to the specifics of each case and the emergence of unexpected variables or relations, while concurrently requiring that I focus on those aspects that may prove generalizable, thus keeping me theory-oriented. This combination increases the confidence that crucial variables will not be overlooked, while also avoiding the limitations of overly idiographic studies, which offer detailed descriptive accounts of individual cases, but whose lack of theoretical focus and neglect of systematic cross-case comparison undermines the validity and reliability of any claims about the causal importance of identified variables beyond the particular contexts of each case (Eckstein 1975:96-9; George and Bennet 2005:75).

Heuristic case selection is generally purposeful, with the overarching requirement that the cases prove useful in building the intended theory (Eckstein 1975:106). I have thus selected mine using one of the only systematic quantitative analyses of global rights-based organizing (Ball 2000, 1998). In his comprehensive dataset of RBOs worldwide,¹⁷ Ball identified certain regions with substantially more indigenous RBOs in 1986¹⁸ than elsewhere, most notably, Latin America and South Asia. Yet while RBOs were relatively evenly distributed across countries in the former, indicating a region-wide phenomenon, the South Asian count was driven by India. Indeed, India had the fourth most RBOs of

¹⁷ Based on data collected by *Human Rights Internet*. No systematic biases have been found in HRI data compared to other sources (Ball 1998, 2000; Bush 2005) and regular efforts are made to ensure the accuracy of the reported information (Lizé, conversation with author, 2010).

¹⁸ This date is significant, since Southern RBOs were rare pre-1985 (Cmiel 2004:117).

any country. This count may be attributable to its comparably large population. Yet it was also the sole outlier whose population was not majority Christian (ARDA 2001a, 2001b, 2001c, 2001d, 2001e, 2001f). This made it of particular interest to my study.

The quantitative strength of both the Latin American and the Indian human rights movements is not altogether unexpected. To begin, Latin Americans were reportedly key players in the evolution of the modern human rights regime. For instance, they were the single largest delegation at the founding of the United Nations, where they demanded that human rights standards structure the new global order, and they drafted the first model document upon which the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights* was ultimately based (Carozza 2003a; Carozza 2003b; Glendon 2003). Similarly, the human rights movement in India arguably predates its independence, and is well established and highly diversified (Bhagavan 2010; Gudavarthy 2008; Jha 2003; Rubin 1987). Moreover, it is reportedly unique in the Asian region, being one of only two not historically tied to the actions and activism of the Christian churches (Rubin 1987:372).

Thus, I selected India and Latin America first based on their globally exceptional and strong rights-based organizing. By studying cases with well-established movements, I aimed to minimize the probability that the absence of church-rights engagement could be attributed to the local illegitimacy of the human rights paradigm or a dearth of rights-based actors with whom to collaborate. In turn, I began with India in order to mitigate the potentially confounding impact of Latin America's Christian-majority context on my findings (see Chapter Two). Yet in order to concurrently contain my scope, I focused my Indian study on Ahmedabad, an urban agglomeration of 4 million in the state of Gujarat (GoI 2001b). The reasons behind my selection are further discussed in Chapter Two.

Finally, Ahmedabad and Latin America appeared to be deviant cases according to SMT. Namely, there were more objective opportunities for engagement in the former, as the churches operated under democratic rule and in the context of a vibrant civil society. Yet it was in Latin America during a period of widespread regional authoritarianism that the churches seemed most engaged in support of human rights based on my initial review of the literature. By comparing these theoretically counterintuitive scenarios, I was able to clarify how the churches' perceptions of the risks involved, rather than their objective political contexts *per se*, ultimately shaped their decisions vis-à-vis rights-based work.

Case-Specific Methodology: Ahmedabad, India

In contrast to Latin America, there is little information on Ahmedabad Christians' politics or the city's Christian population overall. Indeed, there is little well-documented research on the development of Christianity in Gujarat post-1970 (Vedhamanickam 2008:131, n. 11), and most contemporary studies focus on the southern Adivasi regions, as this is the principal site of both Christian evangelical activities and contentious Hindu-Christian politics (c.f. Lobo 2010; Vedhamanickam 2008). Therefore, in order to study the Ahmedabad case, I conducted fieldwork in the city between January 25 and April 15, 2011.

The central focus of my fieldwork was semi-structured interviews with church leaders. In addition to facilitating the collection of rich data without prolonged fieldwork (Blee and Taylor 2002:93), this method was well suited to my research design due to its flexibility. Initially, I loosely structured my questions around the theoretical themes that emerged from my initial review of the literature. However, my semi-structured approach

allowed me to probe pertinent issues in greater depth, and to pursue unexpected variables and accommodate them in subsequent interviews, as I refined and restructured my guides based on insights gained in earlier interviews. While the latter implies that my data is not directly comparable, this was acceptable since my goal was to generate increasingly refined theory, not to falsify it or to make generalized descriptive claims about my population.

Further, I focused on the church leadership for three principal reasons. First, they are a far more visible and accessible population than local laity, thus facilitating research limited by time and resources. Second, collecting data on local Christians is controversial given the recent politicization of religious conversion. Indeed, there were reported efforts to gather statistics on Christians in the state using informal censuses, presumably in order to facilitate the targeting of religious converts (Aaron 2002:68; Newton 2003:27). For instance, prior to unveiling the Freedom of Religion Bill in 2003, state police distributed handwritten questionnaires to Christian missionaries across Gujarat (Newton 2003:27). This was their second attempt in five years to solicit detailed information on the Christian population (Newton 2003:27). Interviewing church leaders was thus comparatively less political, as they represent public rather than private religious actors.

Finally, my interviews were designed so that my participants could serve as both respondents and key informants.¹⁹ Arguably, few laypeople could speak knowledgeably about the dynamics of local church-rights engagement. However, I presumed that church leaders could offer insight into both the extent and nature of this engagement based on their institutional positions. Ultimately, this focus enabled me to more readily discern the

¹⁹ Respondents speak only about their personal experiences. Informants speak about broader collectivities, of which they may or may not be part (Babbie and Benaquisto 2002:167).

institutional and societal factors that facilitated and impeded church-rights engagement. In turn, since they were also themselves Christian, I was able to concurrently solicit these leaders' personal experiences as Christians with rights activism, their individual rationales for engaging or abstaining, and their personal conceptualizations of human rights.

To identify participants, I compiled the contact details for Ahmedabad churches, religious orders and faith-based organizations (FBOs). Unfortunately, no city directory exists. However, by using internet-based research and by contacting the local dioceses as well as parachurch and ecumenical organizations, I located data on fifty-two churches and three Catholic orders, as well as four Catholic FBOs and one ecumenical forum whose mandates included social or rights work. The churches were denominationally divided into: Methodist,²⁰ thirteen; Catholic, twelve; Church of North India,²¹ eight; Mar Thoma,²² two; Malankara Syrian Orthodox, one; Pentecostal, one; and, independent churches, fifteen. I fully acknowledge that this sampling frame is incomplete. In some cases, I was only able to uncover a brief web-based reference to a church's name and general location, and was unable to confirm this information with my local contacts.²³ However, my goal was to build a theory, and not to falsify it or to make generalized descriptive claims about local Christians. Therefore, an incomplete sampling frame was

²⁰ The Methodist Church in India has been an "autonomous affiliated" church vis-à-vis the American United Methodist Church since 1981 (WCC 2006). It adheres to an episcopal governance structure and is governed by a General Conference that meets every four years to appoint bishops and make all other significant decisions regarding the direction of the church (Rahator Memorial Methodist Tamil Church 2011).

²¹ Formed in 1970, the Church of North India represents the merger of sixteen Protestant denominations, including the Anglican Church, the Irish Presbyterian Mission, Church Missionary Society and Church of the Brethren (Vedhamanickam 2008:135-6).

²² The Mar Thoma Church traces its roots to the Apostle Thomas, and is an entirely indigenous Indian church. It is closely related to the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church, which also traces its origins to the Apostle Thomas. However, its liturgy is Protestant, while that of the latter is Orthodox (STWM-17-2011).

²³ It proved particularly difficult to contact the independent churches. Their contact details were the least readily available or complete, many of the telephone numbers were out of service, and most of the web-based entries only noted the general neighbourhood where they were located. Moreover, given their independent status, there was no parachurch organization that I could contact.

another acceptable trade-off, as I chose participants based on their presumed theoretical value, not their representativeness.

I began by oversampling Catholics and interviewing them first because they both institutionally dominated the Christian community, and were reportedly most engaged in rights-based work (c.f. Singh 2003; Aaron 2002), thus increasing their theoretical value. However, I also included church leaders from other denominations, since my goal was to understand and explain the general landscape of church engagement with rights work in Ahmedabad, and not just that of the Catholic diocese. Given that a church's theological tradition played a potential role, I sought variation on this factor, while also striving to interview more leaders from those churches with stronger institutional presences.

In selecting my respondents, I employed a combination of purposive and random sampling. Often used with semi-structured interviewing (Blee and Taylor 2002:100), purposive sampling involves selecting respondents based on my study's aim and my prior knowledge of the population (Babbie and Benaquisto 2002:165). Thus, I first contacted those whom I believed had more extensive knowledge of local church-rights engagement based on their institutional or organizational positions, or past history of engagement, and who thus had greater value as key informants. In turn, I used random sampling to select any additional participants from within the same tradition. Namely, I assigned sequential numbers to the remaining churches in the same denomination in my sampling frame, used *random.org* to generate the required number of random integers, and contacted the leaders of those churches associated with the *random.org* results.

Throughout this process, I also took into account English-language skills. Since I speak neither Gujarati nor Hindi, I conducted all interviews in English. However, this

proved not to be an issue. English is widely spoken in Ahmedabad, particularly by those with advanced education and training, including church leaders. This was reflected in the church names, websites and regular English-language worship services. Moreover, this linguistic constraint was preferable to the potential issues with using a local translator. As a Canadian, Christian-raised Caucasian, I am of the same general religious background as my participants and a-caste, which minimized any religious or caste-based tensions. However, a translator would have introduced at least an intercaste dynamic, presuming s/he was of Indian descent. This was undesirable, since caste tensions persist in the Indian churches, despite official rejection (Meneses 2009:376). Combined with the cost and time needed to train the individual, concerns over translation reliability, and the evidence that most church leaders speak English, I therefore chose to linguistically limit my interviews. Notably, this did not eliminate any participants, since all those whom I contacted had sufficient English to conduct an interview and most proved quite articulate.

Finally, I was careful to respect representatives of institutional hierarchies where applicable, who served as informal gatekeepers²⁴ to my population. I was never explicitly told to seek their permission before conducting my research, and at no time did they seek to limit or direct my access to their subordinates.²⁵ However, by speaking to each bishop or metropolitan, explaining my purpose and obtaining his commitment, I demonstrated both my knowledge of and respect for the local chains of authority. Further, it helped to diminish any impression that I was operating covertly, which was important given the community's recent experiences with attempts to unofficially solicit information. Finally,

²⁴ Gatekeepers are those who can restrict researcher access to a given population or situation (Scheyvens, et al. 2003:153).

²⁵ See Scheyvens et al. (2003:153-155) for a discussion of gatekeepers, research access and ethical issues.

it helped to reassure rank-and-file clergy that I could be trusted, and thus facilitated my research by encouraging them to grant me an interview.

Case Specific Methodology: Latin America

When I extended my study to the Christian-majority context of Latin America, I chose to focus exclusively on the Catholic Church in the 1960s and the 1970s for three reasons. First, regional rights-based organizing first emerged as a powerful and coherent movement during this time period, and scholars connect its emergence with progressive Catholicism, not Protestantism. Second, while there are many studies of the politics of the Catholic Church during this time, there is comparably little written on the concurrent activities of Protestant groups. Since this portion of the study was library-based, this lack of material made me cautious about drawing any descriptive let alone causal conclusions about their rights-based politics. Finally, Catholicism remains central to regional politics, society and culture (Philpott 2005:39; Escobar 1997:86). Taken collectively, these factors made the Catholic Church in the 1960s and 1970s an excellent case with which to further refine my theory about church-rights engagement in practice.²⁶

In this study, I was primarily interested in regional trends in Church engagement with rights in practice. Therefore, while I conducted spatial comparisons both within and across countries, I did not perform in-depth studies of each national Church, which would have greatly exceeded the scope and aim of my study. Instead, like Daudelin and Hewitt (1995a), I operated under the assumption that despite the region's social, political and religious diversity, there were discernible trends in Church engagement with rights-based politics. However, since my study relied on the availability of relevant secondary data, it

²⁶ See Chapter Three for a more detailed justification of my chosen scope.

best reflects the experiences of the following countries, on which such material was available: Argentina; Bolivia; Brazil; Chile; El Salvador; Colombia; Guatemala; Nicaragua; Paraguay; Peru; Uruguay; and, Venezuela. Like Mantilla (2010), I explicitly excluded Mexico because of its unique religio-political contexts in the region.

Most of the relevant journal articles were available electronically via the Carleton University Library, while monographs and collected volumes were available at Carleton or at the University of Ottawa Library. Material not available through these two venues was acquired through Interlibrary Loan. Of my many requests, only a few could not be filled. Finally, my study was limited by a reliance on English-language material. This linguistic constraint proved not to be overly problematic, given the abundance of English-language material and that most Spanish- or Portuguese-speaking scholars also publish in English. Nevertheless, I discussed the arguments made in this non-English literature with Ottawa-based scholars to ensure that I did not overlook any crucial work as a result.

Conclusion

The current literature on Christianity and human rights underscores several factors that may shape the churches' position vis-à-vis human rights politics. To begin, churches seem unwilling to compromise their relations with state and secular elite or their financial sustainability for the sake of the human rights cause. Moreover, their rights-based efforts seem to be primarily a response to direct attacks and to the absence of other civil society actors who can defend human rights. Further, their ability to mobilize global resources in support of rights-based activities seems to affect their willingness to engage in sustained advocacy. Finally, other studies suggest that the churches' political contexts may shape

the nature of their involvement, and that their activism may ultimately be attributable to the work of a cadre of church leaders who do not represent the institutional majority.

Yet due to their methodological or theoretical limitations, none of these studies offer any well-defined theory on when churches will support rights in practice. Given the additional limitations of the relevant theoretical literature, this made a deductive research design ill suited to my study. Thus, I instead adopted an inductive approach in an effort to build an empirically grounded, middle-range theory on church-rights engagement in practice in Ahmedabad and Latin America.

Chapter Two:

A Religious Minority in the City of Communal Fame: Christians in Ahmedabad, India

Both Ahmedabad and Gujarat have earned reputations as sites of communal tension and contentious religious politics, and this trend has only increased since the state Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)²⁷ gained political control in 1995 (Aaron 2002; Shani 2005, 2007; HRW 2002; Chandhoke 2009:24-5). Indeed, between 1941 and 2002, Ahmedabad bore witness to approximately twenty riots of varying scales and intensities (Chandhoke 2009:1-2). The most recent were driven by politicised religious tensions, principally between Hindus and Muslims, with the most violent erupting in 2002, an incident in which state officials were allegedly complicit.²⁸ Hindu extremists have also targeted the state's Christian population, largely in rural Adivasi areas where evangelical south Indian Protestants have focused their proselytising efforts (Aaron 2002:2-4; Vedhamanickam 2008; Aleaz 2002:383-6; Clarke 2007:197, 207; HRW 1999). Civil rights activists have described these attacks as politically motivated, since their perpetrators generally target Congress Party strongholds (Aaron 2002:43). Yet Hindu fundamentalists continue to justify the violence and subsequent "reconversion" campaigns by portraying even Indian-born Christians as unpatriotic foreigners who threaten the country's national interest by soliciting forced conversions among vulnerable Hindu populations (Aaron 2002:2; Aleaz 2002:386; Clarke 2002:205; HRW 1999; Vedhamanickam 2008:173, 200-202).²⁹

²⁷ The BJP is the political arm of the *Sangh Parivar*, an umbrella term given to the collection of organizations in the Hindu nationalist movement, *Hindutva* (Chandhoke 2009:24-5; Aleaz 2003:376-8).

²⁸ This incident received substantial attention given the scale and targeted nature of the violence and the alleged complicity of the state government in the attacks (Chandhoke 2009; Aleaz 2002; Clarke 2002; HRW 2002; U.S. Dept of State 2010). The special Supreme Court-monitored court created to hear the cases issued its first verdict on the so-called Godhra incident on February 22, 2011, and its first of nine rulings on the subsequent riots on November 9, 2011.

²⁹ Political concerns around religious conversion can be traced back to Mahatma Gandhi and to early debates around the potential "de-nationalising" implications of Article 25 of the Indian Constitution, which

The actual threat that Christians pose is debatable, given they comprise only 0.6% of the state population and 0.7% of that in Ahmedabad District³⁰ (GoI 2001a, 2001c). Yet the BJP government has responded to the above allegations of fraudulent conversions by enacting anti-conversion legislation. Titled the Gujarat Freedom of Religion Act (2003) and Rules (2008), the law entered into force in April 2008. As with similar legislation enacted in other states, it aims to restrict conversion from “ancestral religions,” namely Hinduism, by fining and imprisoning anyone convicted of soliciting forced or fraudulent conversions, particularly among populations traditionally seen as more impressionable, such as women, children, low caste Hindus, Dalits, and Adivasis (Coleman 2008:261-2, 264; Vedhamanickam 2008:155).³¹ Religious conversion is still permitted. However, one must first apply to one’s District Magistrate and obtain permission before conducting any ceremony, or risk financial penalties and imprisonment.³² A coalition of religious and secular activists is currently challenging the legislation in Gujarat’s High Court on the

grants the freedom to practice and propagate any religion (Aaron 2002:10-8; Vedhamanickam 2008:202; Coleman 2008:261). This issue of foreign ties will be further discussed below.

³⁰ Akin to a county, the Ahmedabad District includes Ahmedabad city and several smaller centres.

³¹ The Act includes the following *Statement of Objects and Reasons* (emphasis added): “Reports have been received by the Government that conversions from one religion to another are made by use of force or allurement or by fraudulent means. *Bringing in a legislation to prohibit such conversions will act as deterrent against anti-social and vested interest groups exploiting the innocent people belonging to depressed classes and will enable people to practice their own religion freely. It will also be useful to maintain public order and to nip in the bud the attempts by certain subversive forces to create social tension.* The Government has, therefore, decided to enact a law to prevent conversion of religion by use of force or allurement or by fraudulent means. This Bill seeks to achieve the aforesaid object.”

³² The Rules (2008) stipulate the following: After receiving the application, the District Magistrate will conduct “such inquiry as he thinks necessary” over the course of a month before granting or denying permission. If denied, any contravention of this ruling will result in fines and/or imprisonment. If granted, the ceremony can occur, after which the converted individual must provide a statement confirming the conversion and repeating all of the information detailed in the original application. Notably, however, some of the details requested in the application, such as the individual’s monthly income, are arguably irrelevant to the topic of religious conversion. The requested information includes the names and addresses of converted individuals, their parents, their spouses, and all participants in the conversion ceremony; the converted individual’s occupation, monthly income, caste and tribe, if applicable; how long they were an adherent of the religion they were renouncing; the location, date, and time of the ceremony; and, their reasons for converting. The District Magistrate compiles all information on applications for conversion in a register, and must submit quarterly reports to the state government.

grounds that it violates Article 25 of the Indian Constitution, which preserves the right to freedom of conscience and religion, including its propagation (Express News Service 2009). However, no court date has been set. In the interim, only one of my interviewees' churches continued to convert non-Christians by adhering to the new legal requirements. All others had stopped, either in protest or because of the bureaucratic hassle it posed.

Yet while attacks against religious minorities are generally politically rather than religiously motivated, there is some merit to the claims about fraudulent conversions. In particular, interviewees both off and on the record complained that the highly evangelical sects did engage in fly-by-night mass conversions, and that mainstream churches suffered the consequences, even though they disapproved of aggressive conversion tactics and did not openly proselytise.³³ For unlike the evangelical sects, many Catholics and mainline Protestants had an established presence in the communities. When combined with the fact that most non-Christians fail to distinguish between denominations, this meant that they were the Christians at hand when Hindu extremists decided to retaliate. Like the Freedom of Religion Act, these extremist attacks against non-proselytising Christians exemplified my respondents' complaint that the actions of a few evangelical sects continued to tarnish the image of the entire church community and to invite attacks against all Christians.³⁴

Therefore, Ahmedabad was of theoretical interest since many of the recent rights abuses in the area implicated religious actors, including Christians. Further, I collected documentary evidence before starting my fieldwork that suggested that church leaders in the city exhibited varying responses to these violations, ranging from public silence and non-politicized relief work, to active denouncements and action in solidarity with secular

³³ The local Methodists whom I interviewed are exceptions (see below).

³⁴ This tendency to judge all Christians by the actions of their most evangelical sects is a commonly cited complaint (c.f. Ferris 2005:323).

rights activists (Singh 2003). Analysing this variation offered further insight into what facilitates and impedes Christian churches' support for rights-based work and advocacy.

Finally, one could readily assume that the probability of engagement increases on the basis of societal prominence and adherence rates alone. The Ahmedabad case allowed me to thus overcome the potentially confounding effects of longstanding social influence and a majority context on my findings. Further, the churches operated under democratic rule. According to conventional social movement theory,³⁵ such contexts should facilitate mobilization by providing ample opportunity to engage. Yet the churches instead proved hesitant to engage in rights action, and I argue that this retreat was directly encouraged by their open civil contexts. This theoretically counterintuitive scenario served to reinforce how the churches' position as traditionally non-activist institutions and their concern for protecting their religious cause first and foremost shaped their response to rights work.

Describing the Empirical Landscape: Who Walks the Human Rights Walk, and How?

In total, I conducted fourteen semi-structured interviews with seventeen Christian leaders and church representatives, including four secular and three religious Catholics; two Church of North India pastors; two Methodist priests; one Mar Thoma priest; one Malankara Syrian Orthodox priest; and, the pastor and three associates of an independent church pursuing deliverance ministry.³⁶ I recorded and transcribed all interviews, which ran between 25 and 75 minutes and were typically preceded or followed by an informal

³⁵ Scholars argue that the level of political openness is a key variable in explaining the relative success of contemporary movements, including those led by religious actors (Wald, et al. 2005:137), by determining whether there are the requisite political opportunities for mobilization. See Tarrow (1994) and Wahlström and Peterson (2006:364-365) for an overview of these political opportunity structures, Kurzman (2004) and Goodwin and Jasper (1999) for critiques of the model's traditionally structuralist paradigm, and Schock (1999) for that of its additive approach to causation and widespread selection bias. See also Chapter One.

³⁶ Deliverance ministry focuses on educating congregants about demons and evil spirits, and liberating the possessed. This church thus conducted regular mass exorcisms in addition to Sunday worship services.

conversation about the individual's day-to-day ministry. Most were one-time, one-on-one interviews. However, I did interview one participant twice because of his high theoretical value, and I conducted two interviews in a group setting, once with two respondents present and once with four. Before beginning each interview, I gave participants a letter of consent to read, and I orally repeated the information it contained and answered any questions before soliciting their oral consent.³⁷ Finally, I told all participants that I would not use their real names or identifying characteristics in my work, and that while others may learn of their participation, none of the information provided would be attributable.³⁸

In order to begin analysing the local churches' engagement with rights in practice, I first evaluated their activities against the measures outlined in Chapter One. In so doing, I only considered the ongoing or recent activities and actions of those leaders, churches or dioceses based in Ahmedabad. I excluded any planned activities, as well as the actions of national-level church bodies or parachurch organizations to which they may belong, or of religious colleagues in other cities, regions or states in India.

Initially, it appeared as though the Ahmedabad churches, and the Catholic Church in particular, were active in human rights politics. They maintained an ecumenical human rights forum, and three Catholic organizations, including the diocese's social services organization, had adopted a rights-based approach in their activities. Yet upon closer inspection, rights-engaged leaders and organizations instead proved to be deviations from a trend of widespread silence and disinterest in rights-based work. The one exception was

³⁷ My first two interviewees gave written consent. However, based on the advice of a prominent local contact and the context of suspicion that surrounded the collection of information on local Christians, the Carleton University Research Ethics Board granted me permission on February 7, 2011, to change to oral consent for all remaining interviews. I used the same letter as for written consent (see Appendix 1).

³⁸ When describing their activities, I purposively do not cite interview codes. I interviewed some prominent leaders in the church community and in society in general. In some cases, an informed reader could deduce to whom I am referring based on my description. If I were to use their codes, they could possibly link their later arguments to these leaders, thus violating assurances that the information would be non-attributable.

on issues of clear religious concern, when most churches would unite and publicly defend their collective interests. These included attacks against church infrastructure, adherents, personnel or religious values, or against their rights to freedom of religion, assembly or speech. Otherwise, however, they generally focused on internal religious matters, and on conducting needs-based social outreach in the city and surrounding area.

I argue that the Ahmedabad churches' reluctance to engage in rights work was a strategic response to their hostile minority context, coupled with a willingness to allow others to assume the risks of being "engaged bystanders." To begin, they represented a numerically inconsequential minority with a limited institutional presence. Further, they had to maintain the goodwill of the state in order to continue their operations and slowly build their institutional presence by establishing more churches and outreach facilities. This heightened the risks of engaging in rights-based work, as it could easily compromise their relations with the state and invite increased repression, including revocation of their access to the foreign funds on which they relied. In short, engaging with rights in practice threatened their ability to fulfil their basic functions as a religious social movement.

Thus, the risks only became widely palatable when Christians fell victim to attack or the state violated their rights, since the churches' interests as religious institutions were then under threat. Otherwise, the risks were treated as too high, motivating most churches to abstain from rights work on issues that failed to clearly implicate their interests. This included the rights to education and healthcare, two issues on which I expected strong church-led advocacy, given their historically active role in both sectors (Aaron 2002:8).

Furthermore, the churches were encouraged to remain rights-disengaged because they operated in an active civil society. As other actors were able and willing to assume

the risks of defending human rights, few church leaders felt compelled to do so. Instead, their open civil contexts fostered classic bystander apathy, encouraging them to respond to abuses not with rights tactics, but with the safer alternatives of needs-based relief work that fulfilled victims' rights in the short term (Bickman 1971; Clark and Wood 1974). This indirect form of assistance enabled them to respond to cases of abuse, while also maintaining distance between themselves and the contentious work of demanding rights-based change, thus protecting their institutions from the risks associated with the latter.

Appearances May Be Deceiving: Initial Impressions of High Rights-Based Engagement

It initially appears as though the Ahmedabad churches, and the Catholic Church in particular, are active participants in the fight for human rights. To begin, the churches maintain a Gujarat branch of the United Christian Forum for Human Rights (GUCFHR), an ecumenical forum that brings together leaders from mainline churches to collectively discuss and respond to human rights issues.³⁹ For instance, the body publicly denounced the 2008 Mumbai terrorist attacks, and organized a peace rally that condemned the 2008 murder of a Hindu priest and his associates, while also demanding justice for the victims of the subsequent anti-Christian attacks in the state of Orissa (Gujarat United Christian Forum for Human Rights 2008; Cole 2008). It also issued a public memorandum to the National Minority Commission in 2000, challenging it to demand state action on the Commission's recommendations following the anti-Christian attacks in Gujarat in the late 1990s, and drawing attention to the increasing "ghettoisation" of state minorities and the inclusion of anti-minority statements in state textbooks (The Hindu 2000). Finally, the Forum is the leading petitioner in the coalition currently challenging the constitutionality

³⁹ The more evangelical Protestant churches have only been granted a form of observer status in this body.

of Gujarat's Freedom of Religion Act in the state's High Court (Express News Service 2009). Collectively, this suggests that the Ahmedabad churches are well-organized and vocal proponents of human rights, if principally on religious matters, and are not afraid to regularly demand accountability at both the state and national levels.

The Catholic Church seems to be at the forefront of this work. In fact, respondents from all denominations repeatedly observed that if any local church could be described as rights-engaged, it was the Catholics. This contention has some merit, given the work of a few organizations and actors. For instance, Prashant, the Jesuit Centre for Human Rights, Justice and Peace, investigates, documents and denounces violations of a broad spectrum of rights. These include women's rights and the rights to information, to fair and equal justice, to food and water, and to freedom of assembly, expression, conscience, and religion. Prashant also engages in rights-based outreach, conducts human rights training and offers legal support to victims of abuse, particularly victims of the 2002 state riots.

Similarly, St. Xavier's Social Service Society, the development arm of the local Society of Jesus, has engaged in rights-based development work since the early 1990s. Its activities include encouraging the creation of both community-based and sector-wide organizations in Ahmedabad slums to facilitate their residents' collective rights-claiming, and organizing otherwise unorganized labourers into collectives and educating them on their rights and entitlements under state and national law. The Society also recently led a public hearing on child labour that prompted a municipal policy response, and helped to facilitate another on the right to food, where representatives from local slums publicly discussed their grievances and issued a collective statement to municipal authorities.⁴⁰

⁴⁰ See the organization's website at sxsss.org for more details on their activities.

Finally, the Catholic diocese was the only church whose official social services branch, Kaira Social Service Society,⁴¹ conducted extensive rights work. Described to me as a faith-based organization pursuing a secular, rights-based approach to development, its core belief was that charity was a tool of last resort, and that church outreach needed to be transformative and empowering. This belief guided its work. For instance, it helped form community-based organizations comprised entirely of local women, who were then educated on their rights and the structural factors that marginalised them, and encouraged to collectively decide how to address the issues. It also supported the election of women and representatives from other marginalized groups to their village governments, so that they could directly ensure its good governance and demand their rights.

Similarly, Kaira had created a Children's Parliament to provide children with their own forum in which to collectively discuss their issues and demand their rights, and had concurrently organized parent-teacher associations in order to hold the adults accountable for their rights-based duties and enhance their capacity to provide quality education. They also ran awareness campaigns designed to reduce the discrimination and stigma suffered by people living with HIV/AIDS, and provided general legal support to victims of rights abuse in concert with other NGOs, citizens' initiatives and faith-based lawyers' groups. Finally, Kaira engaged with national campaigns, state actors and like-minded NGOs on issues of the right to food and to education, and of child trafficking and child labour.⁴²

⁴¹ The organization's complete title is Kaira Social Service Society: The Diocesan Centre for Justice, Peace, Human Dignity and Development.

⁴² See Kaira Social Service Society (2008, n.d.) and the organization's website at kairasociety.org for more details on their activities.

Voices in the Wilderness: The Reality of a Vocal Minority and a Disinterested Majority

The activities of Prashant, St. Xavier's, and Kaira suggests that the human rights movement in the Ahmedabad Catholic diocese was extensive and coherent. The work of the Gujarat United Christian Forum for Human Rights, moreover, implies that most of the mainline churches will publicly defend human rights, if only as part of a coalition and with a focus on religious issues. In reality, however, neither of these claims is accurate.

To begin, two of my respondents, both of whom held key positions in the Gujarat United Christian Forum for Human Rights, informed me that it was a largely ineffective body. They said that its members met infrequently, and that most were loath to speak out publicly, even via the Forum. As a result, the Forum had done little to actually promote human rights in Gujarat, and there was little indication that its effectiveness would soon improve. Moreover, I interviewed several other past and present Forum members who never mentioned its existence or spoke about their involvement, though they did mention the Freedom of Religion Bill, which the Forum is, in theory, actively opposing.

More poignantly, most of the rights-based activism both in the Forum and in the local Catholic diocese reflects the efforts of a single priest. An internationally recognized Jesuit human rights activist, Fr. Cedric Prakash is not only the convenor and official spokesperson of the Forum, but also the founder and current director of Prashant, and the past director of St. Xavier's, where he was responsible for the organization's embrace of the rights-based approach. He has also personally challenged officials on such issues as the use of fake encounter killings by police, the actions of security forces in Manipur and Kashmir under the Armed Forces Special Powers Act (1958), and the accuracy of the Special Investigation's findings in legal cases associated with the 2002 riots. Moreover,

he has sought to bring international pressure to bear on the central and state governments by issuing reports to and testifying before the National Human Rights Commission, the United States Department of State, and United Nations Special Rapporteurs. In sum, just as the activism of the Black Church during the Civil Rights Movement reflected the work of an enclave of dedicated clergy (Morris 1996), a significant portion of the Ahmedabad churches' human rights activism is attributable to the efforts of a single Jesuit priest.

In turn, Prashant and St. Xavier's are both Jesuit organizations. Therefore, like Fr. Cedric, they are officially semi-autonomous of the diocese and fall under the authority of the local Jesuit provincial, rather than the bishop.⁴³ Accordingly, neither their actions nor their chosen political stance could be described as reflecting the official diocesan position on social issues in general, or on human rights in particular.⁴⁴

Moreover, the Catholic Church's diocesan engagement with rights politics did not extend far beyond Kaira's rights-based development efforts, and the organization's staff reportedly experienced at times great difficulty in gaining the support of the local priests. Indeed, few priests were involved in its daily activities, as its staff consisted primarily of laypeople and Catholic sisters. Instead, most shared the hesitation of other church leaders about becoming involved in contentious politics, and ignored the appeals of their rights-engaged colleagues for institution-wide mobilization. This prompted one of my Catholic

⁴³ Like other religious orders, Jesuits pursue a different ecclesiology and maintain a separate structure of authority accountable to but largely independent of the Vatican and its representatives in a given diocese. Thus, most operate semi-autonomously of the local bishop insofar as they are not responsible for a diocesan ministry, such as leading a parish charge or teaching in a diocesan school (Berger 2003:28; Klaiber 1992:91-2; Froehle 1992:110-1; Kurzman 1998:36). This has enabled Jesuits to insulate their activities from members of the hierarchy who may disapprove of their social justice initiatives (Klaiber 1992:90-1; Froehle 1992:110-1). In the case of Ahmedabad, it made it largely impossible for the bishop to act on the state's reported request to silence Fr. Cedric, restrict his international travel, or relocate him to another state, if the bishop had been so inclined (STWM-12&13-2011; STWM-14-2011; STWM-08-2011).

⁴⁴ See the Conclusion for a further discussion of Catholic religious orders and rights-based engagement.

interviewees to compare his situation to that of John the Baptist, left alone to wander in the proverbial wilderness, preaching the gospel of human rights (STWM-18-2011).

Further, Kaira's inability to mobilize strong clerical support underscores its lack of institutional authority, and reinforces how it is ultimately an arms-length organization, and not the official spokesperson of the diocese. Instead, in churches with episcopal governance structures,⁴⁵ this responsibility falls to local representatives of the hierarchy, be it a bishop, archbishop, or metropolitan. Charged with preserving the overall health of their national church, these priests are responsible for promoting church interests in both public forums and private negotiations with secular authorities, and for generally serving as the public face of their church (Mantilla 2010:555; Crahan 1999:72). It was thus the local bishop, and not Kaira, who officially represented the diocese and who carried both the authority and the responsibility for publicly articulating its position on social issues, including human rights. If the bishop had felt a need for greater diocesan engagement in rights-based work, this would have been reflected in the actions of his priests, and Kaira would not have experienced the degree of difficulty in gaining support for its initiatives.

Finally, as with St. Xavier's, Kaira's adoption of a rights-based approach can be credited to the efforts of its director, Fr. Joseph Appavoo. A trained lawyer as well as a secular priest, with training in human rights, my Catholic respondents and local contacts described him as less confrontational than Fr. Cedric, but no less dedicated to the human rights movement. It was he who convinced the local bishop to shift from the traditional charitable approach to a secular rights-based approach, and it has been under his guidance that the latter has taken root. Granted, he would have been unable to instigate this reform without the consent of his bishop, and this did allow for some rights-based engagement in

⁴⁵ This includes all save one of the churches I investigated, namely, the independent church.

the diocese. Nonetheless, the latter was only made possible through the strident efforts of its lawyer-priest director, and Kaira's work remains the responsibility of a rights-engaged few, most of whom are not members of the ordained clergy.

Thus, although all of my Catholic respondents declared that the Church's social mission was to empower marginalized communities and to help them reclaim their rights and dignity, the approach adopted by most priests implied that their chosen means of fulfilling this mission was by engaging in needs-based, service-oriented outreach. Thus, most focused on providing pastoral care to parishioners, conducting charitable outreach in the community, and providing health and education services to marginalized groups, with many becoming involved in local Catholic schools. In comparison, rights-engaged priests thus represented the exception, and not the rule, even in the Catholic Church.

The outreach activities of the Protestant churches ranged from providing similar service-based care to conducting no social outreach at all. The independent church whose pastor and associates I interviewed illustrated the latter position, as it remained focused on its religious work.⁴⁶ Other Protestant churches did conduct social outreach, but were too preoccupied with advancing the faith and with persuading the poor to endure their marginalization to encourage their engagement in rights-based protest. For instance, both Methodist priests whom I interviewed stressed that social action and evangelism were inseparable, and that Christians were duty-bound to pursue both concurrently and without prioritisation.⁴⁷ Thus, while they provided medical services to the poor, administered slum ministries, distributed financial and material donations, and supported the education

⁴⁶ This position is reportedly common among the more evangelical churches in India (Aaron 2002:66-7).

⁴⁷ Their position was unique among my respondents from the other mainline churches, who sought instead to spread the Gospel through service and refrained from openly proselytising.

of several students, their charitable focus and insistence on concurrent proselytism makes it impossible to describe their work as rights-based.

By contrast, the Ahmedabad diocese of the Church of North India (CNI)⁴⁸ and a local Mar Thoma Church sought to go beyond providing charity and social services to the socially marginalized. However, both churches' empowerment projects were small-scale, and never sought to challenge the broader structures that marginalized their communities of concern. Accordingly, neither could be described as fully rights-engaged. For instance, in addition to operating student hostels, a counselling centre and a leprosy rehabilitation clinic, the CNI diocese recently supported two small-scale empowerment-based projects that offered vocational training and support first to Dalit adolescents in tribal regions, and second to women in fifty-five villages affected by the 2001 earthquake. During the latter, they raised issues of women's rights along with those of domestic hygiene and financial management.⁴⁹ Similarly, the Mar Thoma Church ran a tailoring school for twelve non-Christian female dropouts. It also coordinated educational outreach in the local slum, ran an Alcoholics Anonymous program, and had organized a ceremony honouring low-caste sweepers, which was attended by the city's deputy commissioner. Thus, both churches clearly went beyond simple charity in their efforts to empower marginalized groups. Yet their efforts were ultimately limited, and cannot be described as fully rights-based.

Finally, though most churches were engaged in some form of education ministry, be it in administering local schools⁵⁰ or by meeting the education needs of marginalized children and adolescents, they engaged in little public advocacy on the right to education.

⁴⁸ The CNI is the merger of sixteen Protestant denominations (Vedhamanickam 2008:135-6).

⁴⁹ See Church of North India Gujarat Diocese (2008).

⁵⁰ The Catholic Church educated approximately 3,000 students in its local schools, while the Malankara Syrian Orthodox Church educated approximately 4,000 students, offering scholarships and fee concessions to ensure all had an equal opportunity to study. Most students in both sets of schools were non-Christians.

Albeit, one interviewee expressly celebrated the government's enactment of the Right of Children to Free and Compulsory Education Act (2009), and stressed the importance of speaking about issues of education using rights language (STWM-09-2011). Yet neither he nor any other participant cited efforts by any of the local churches to hold state actors to account on this right, and there was little evidence to suggest that such efforts had been made beyond those of Kaira, which only addressed the state as part of a broad coalition. The latter underscores the perceived risks of speaking out against the state, as will be further discussed below. Indeed, Kilby (2011:119-2) observes that most Indian NGOs rely on coalitions or umbrella organizations when lobbying the state, and limit their own efforts to requesting the enforcement of existing laws, rather than demanding legislative change, as this protects them from state retaliation. Nevertheless, given their historically active involvement in the education sector (Aaron 2002:8; Bano and Nair 2007:22, 24), and the existence of legislation on which the state can be held to account, I still expected widespread church advocacy on this issue. To my mind, their silence exemplified their tendency to neglect most opportunities for rights-based activism and engagement.

"When It Hits You, Then Only It Pains:"⁵¹ The Exception to Widespread Disengagement

The common exception to the churches' disinterest in rights-based work was their tendency to respond aggressively to attacks against their adherents, operations, values or rights. If the state or Hindu extremists attacked Christians or their religious activities, or infringed on their religious rights, most churches united under the GUCFHR's banner to defend their collective interests. The most prominent example is in the case of the state's anti-conversion legislation (Express News Service 2009). Moreover, both the Catholic

⁵¹ STWM-10-2011.

and Church of North India dioceses have demonstrated their willingness to independently denounce such abuses. For example, the Ahmedabad Catholic bishop and Gandhinagar archbishop issued a collective statement challenging the constitutionality of the Freedom of Religion Bill (2003) and lack of religious nuance in proposed amendments that were later rejected (Fernandes and Macwan 2006). In turn, the local bishop is an active opponent of female foeticide, and has publicly condemned it as a violation of the right to life (Sar News 2010).⁵² Similarly, his predecessor, in partnership with the local bishop of the Church of North India, released a joint statement condemning anti-Christian attacks in south Gujarat in late 1998 and early 1999 (Fernandes and Malaviya 1999).

In comparison, Singh (2003:213-4) argues that during the 2002 riots, when most victims were Muslim, the churches generally remained silent, and that most only offered humanitarian relief after “the conflict got well underway or had fizzled out completely.” There were exceptions. For instance, Fr. Cedric denounced the attacks and helped found the Mumbai-based Citizens for Justice and Peace, which compiled a detailed report on the violence in its immediate aftermath and continues to monitor the investigation (CJP 2002). Further, a small group of Ahmedabad-based Dominican Catholic sisters sheltered over 6,000 Muslims in their compound during the attacks (Singh 2003:214). Two of my interviewees informed me that these Muslims were eventually granted police protection and taken to a refugee camp due to the strident negotiating efforts of Fr. Appavoo and Fr. Cedric. Yet there is little evidence to suggest that the local Catholic diocese or Protestant churches openly denounced the riots or defended its victims, as it seems that most limited their response instead to offering relief once needs proved particularly dire, and the risks

⁵² While sex selective abortion is an ongoing rights issue in India (Nandi and Deolalikar 2011; Sahni, et al. 2008), this was an extension of his opposition to abortion in general (Kaira Social Service Society 2008:57).

much lower. Collectively, this supports Smith's (1979) finding that the churches' support for human rights is primarily a reaction to threats to their values, rights and operations,⁵³ while other abuses are a far less effective catalyst for their engagement.

The Limits of Rights-Supportive Theology: Moving Beyond Theology-Based Explanations

Fourteen of my seventeen respondents fully acknowledged the churches' limited engagement with human rights work and openly criticized what one interviewee called the "mission compound mentality," wherein church leaders remain singularly concerned with preserving the interests of the religious community (STWM-10-2011). Indeed, my interviewees from across denominations and engagement levels accused the local leaders of becoming overly complacent, self-absorbed and comfortable, and thus unable to see any benefit in defending human rights beyond issues of clear religious concern (STWM-08-2011; STWM-10-2011; STWM-12&13-2011; STWM-14-2011; STWM-17-2011; STWM-18-2011). However, they followed up this criticism by offering explanations for their personal neglect of rights-based work, which ranged from limited time, personnel or institutional capacity, to the presumption of a limited impact and the lack of need, given the advocacy efforts of other priests, minorities or NGOs (STWM-10-2011; STWM-11-2011; STWM-14-2011; STWM-16-2011; STWM-11-2011; STWM-09-2011; STWM-15-2011). The latter exemplifies how the presence of other rights-engaged actors encouraged them to refrain from conducting rights work (Bickman 1971; Clark and Wood 1974).⁵⁴

Since engagement levels varied both within as well as across denominations, the churches' general abstention from rights work cannot be explained by any simple causal

⁵³ The South Korean Council of Churches' Human Rights Committee only began using rights language in its critiques of state policy after the state began attacking its adherents (c.f. Chang and Kim 2007).

⁵⁴ This factor will be discussed in greater detail in the last section of the chapter.

relationship between a given denomination's teachings, and its institutions' willingness to engage. Indeed, all interviewees could find sufficient theological grounds in their specific traditions to support a host of secular rights beyond those of immediate religious concern, even if they were unwilling to fight for these rights in practice. Granted, their definitions of a legitimate rights claim were still informed by their religious beliefs, which imposed conceptual limits particularly around issues of sexual and reproductive rights and gender. For instance, one Methodist priest expressed regret at the excesses that an atheistic interpretation of human rights had promoted, particularly in the area of sexual freedoms, and at the evident neglect of humanity's duty to live "in the way that pleases the Lord," rather than in pursuit of "worldly pleasure." More subtly, one Catholic priest commented that women could not be protected if they "cross their boundaries" and "become like men." This lent credibility to another's argument that his Church's support for women's rights remained "cosmetic," as reflected in the status of Catholic sisters in the Church, many of whom were reportedly harassed and kept in near-servitude vis-à-vis the priests.⁵⁵ Finally, no interviewee supported controversial sexual or reproductive rights. Instead, one Catholic priest openly lamented parishioners' use of contraception, as it not only violated the right to life, but also restricted the Church's natural growth rate in the process.

Yet the lack of support for contentious moral rights is not surprising, since most directly challenge core religious teachings. Therefore, church silence on or opposition to advancing these rights is of limited theoretical interest. Instead, it is their active defence of rights in cases of religious concern, but concurrent neglect of others in which they also

⁵⁵ Several Catholic participants made these allegations outside of the interviews themselves. Reports of gender-based abuse in the Church are not uncommon; indeed, a Catholic nun recently left her order and wrote a memoir detailing incidents of widespread harassment and sexual abuse at the hands of both Church priests and religious superiors (c.f. Singh 2009; STWM-08-2011).

shared the grievances of secular rights activists, such as access to education or healthcare, that commands comparably greater analytical interest and demands further explanation.

A Strategic Response: Examining The “Mission Compound Mentality”

As Wald et al. aptly observed (2005:130), scholars routinely forget that religious actors may suffer costs by engaging in secular politics, and that it is generally far easier for them to remain aloof and focused on internal religious matters. In turn, a religious institution’s mobilization in support of any secular movement is generally contingent on the support of its leaders, which often requires reducing its potential risks, particularly to leaders themselves (Zald and McCarthy 1987:72). I argue that both points have particular merit in the case of Ahmedabad. To begin, the local churches were vanguards of their religious social movement. Engaging in rights-based work required that they concurrently engage with a second, secular social movement whose goals did not naturally align with religious objectives and whose confrontational tactics were contrary to their established, non-politicized approach. Indeed, in theory, human rights work is a form of high-risk activism⁵⁶ with the potential to be highly politicizing, as it challenges the legitimacy of the existing social order, and seeks to reform laws and practices from which elites often benefit (Donnelly 2007:283; Livezey 1989:17-8).⁵⁷ Therefore, it invites opposition from vested social interests, and exposes the church leader and the Christian community as a

⁵⁶ I borrow the distinction between high-risk and low-risk activism from McAdam (1986). Critiquing the dichotomous activism/non-activism approach in previous work, he argues that scholars must distinguish between the tactics social movements employ in order to understand why individuals will support one movement, but not another (1986:67). Accordingly, he draws a basic distinction between high-risk/cost and low-risk/cost activism, defining risks as the anticipated “dangers” associated with a given tactic and costs in the traditional material sense (1986:67).

⁵⁷ I recognize that, in practice, rights work may prove conservative and non-politicizing (c.f. Englund 2006; Dicklitch and Lwanga 2003; Berkovitch and Gordon 2008). However, conventional wisdom dictates that this work is highly contentious, and it was this belief that guided the actions of the Ahmedabad churches and the Latin American Catholic Churches.

whole to possible retaliative attack. This in turn raises the costs of religious practice, and threatens the churches' ability to conduct its basic religious functions, which directly undermines their purpose as a movement (Johnston and Figa 1998:43).

These potential risks were thus only widely acceptable in cases where defending rights overlapped with protecting their religious cause. This included direct and perceived attacks against church infrastructure, adherents, personnel and religious values, or against their rights to freedom of religion, assembly or speech.⁵⁸ In this way, they were not unlike the American Religious Right (Afshar 2006), South African churches under Apartheid (Borer 1996), or the Latin American Catholic Churches in Smith's (1979) study. In fact, the experience of direct repression is reportedly a common catalyst for contentious political activity and for encouraging support for oppositional movements, including the Irish Republican Army (White 1989) and armed national revolutions (Goodwin 2001).

Others have explained this relationship on the basis of its radicalizing potential (White 1989), or its ability to sensitize high-ranking Church officials to the injustices of life at the grassroots (Smith 1979). Both of their arguments have merit. However, I argue that in the case of Ahmedabad, its significance lies in clearly establishing a link between the issue at hand and the churches' primary concern with preserving their basic religious operations. In so doing, I draw on Goodwin's (2001:25-6) argument that people must feel there is a direct connection between the state, its actions and their daily problems before they will support revolutionary action. For like the average citizen, the local churches are traditionally non-activist actors. Therefore, while perceived social injustice may provide a motive for some, I maintain that there must be a clear connection between the churches'

⁵⁸ American Protestants who felt that their religious values were under threat were similarly more apt to support the use of contentious tactics in order to influence secular policy; however, as with any grievance, this belief did not invariably result in concrete action (McVeigh and Sikkink 2001:1435-7).

involvement in rights-based work and their ability to resolve their most pressing day-to-day concerns as religious institutions before they will prove willing to adopt the tactics of an activist and all of the associated risks. I fully appreciate that grievances do not always lead to political action, even as their scope and intensity increases (McVeigh and Sikkink 2001:1426-7; Wald, et al. 2005:130-1). Yet as human rights work represents a form of high-risk activism that could substantially raise the costs of their religious practice, the churches had to be committed to the final objective (McAdams 1986:71). As illustrated above, such commitment was more easily solicited when the issues overlapped with their institutional priorities, namely their religious operations. Therefore, while grievances did not automatically invoke a rights-based response, I maintain that threats to their religious cause increased the probability that the Ahmedabad churches' would engage in rights-based work by establishing a clear connection between the objectives of the human rights movement and those of their religious movement.

Their general neglect of all other rights work then represented a strategic response to a hostile minority context. At less than one percent of the population, Christians were numerically inconsequential in Ahmedabad and Gujarat.⁵⁹ Moreover, they needed at least the tacit consent of the local authorities before they could extend their operations (Jalali 2008:182; STWM-14-2011; STWM-16-2011). As a result, they relied on maintaining the goodwill of state officials in order to ensure their continued access to the permissions and land needed to conduct their religious activities and slowly build their state presence.⁶⁰

⁵⁹ The churches are reportedly major political players in India's contentious northeast states, including Nagaland, Mizoram and Meghalaya, where they comprise an estimated 90%, 87% and 70% of the state populations, respectively (Aaron 2002:7; GoI 2001d, 2001e, 2001f).

⁶⁰ Mantilla (2010) makes a related argument about the influence of institutional size in shaping the South American Catholic Churches' decision to support democratization movements, while Philpott (2007) and Edmonds (2010) both argue that the Latin American Catholic Churches with the greatest financial, legal and administrative autonomy were the most vocal opponents of authoritarian regimes. See Chapter Three.

Yet the Ahmedabad churches operated in a BJP-controlled state where politicians had demonstrated their sympathy if not explicit support for nationalist assertions that the churches were foreigners and a powerful national threat (Singh 2003:213). Consequently, many of the officials with whom the churches routinely engaged were already suspicious of their motives, and subjected their activities and adherents to both explicit and covert surveillance. For instance, immediately prior to unveiling the state's Freedom of Religion Bill, state police distributed handwritten questionnaires to Christian missionaries across Gujarat. This was their second attempt in five years to solicit detailed information on the state's Christian population (Newton 2003:27; Aaron 2002:68). Christians also reportedly experienced regular, unofficial state harassment. For instance, bureaucrats were allegedly stricter in their requirements when registering a Christian-run trust, and demanded such irrelevant documents as a grandparent's baptismal certificate when a Christian applied for postsecondary education (STWM-12&13-2011; STWM-14-2011; STWM-19-2011). In addition, my only foreign-born respondent was barred from applying for citizenship, even though she had lived in Ahmedabad for over fifty years, because as a Catholic sister, she was presumably only interested in evangelism according to state officials. As a result, she had to reapply every few years for a residency visa that could be easily refused, as in the case of another Catholic sister who was reportedly forced to leave India after 54 years.

This unofficial harassment, coupled with the churches' institutional weakness and Gujarat's history of anti-minority violence, increased the churches' sense of vulnerability and informed their perceptions of the risks associated with engaging in rights work.⁶¹ In

⁶¹ Their perceptions of risk were also informed by well-publicized attacks against secular rights activists, particularly those attempting to use the new Right to Information Act (2005) to hold both state and non-state actors to account (c.f. Asian Centre for Human Rights 2011a and 2011b; Human Rights Law Network 2011; Bhalia 2011; Human Rights Defenders Alert India 2011; Asian Forum for Human Rights and

particular, it made them wary of adopting any stance that could invite attacks against the Christian community or compromise their relations with the state and thus threaten their religious operations (STWM-08-2011; STWM-12&13-2011; STWM-14-2011; STWM-15-2011; STWM-16-2011). This supports Hertzke's (2001) and Smith's (1979) findings that state-dependent churches will generally not engage in rights-based work if it invites retaliation, and jeopardizes state relations and their access to material support.⁶²

Instead, the Ahmedabad churches preferred to use diplomacy rather than public advocacy to address most rights concerns, as this was understood as the best means of preserving their rapport with state officials and by extension, their institutional wellbeing (STWM-08-2011; STWM-14-2011). Indeed, three respondents claimed that those who deviated from this norm were treated internally as radicals or as inconvenient liabilities, despite the public praise their activism received. They said their colleagues disapproved of, and at times resented, the efforts of the rights-engaged priests, particularly if the state bureaucrats insinuated that their activism was the reason that those colleagues were being denied state permissions or grants (STWM-08-2011; STWM-14-2011; STWM-18-2011). Moreover, widespread fear of state reprisal at times prompted internal retaliation against these actors. For instance, two of my respondents reported receiving what they described as "threat calls" from their colleagues after they intervened in the 2002 riot. In these calls, their colleagues requested that they halt their involvement because of the potential repercussions not only for my respondents, but also for the rest of the church community.

Development 2011). For instance, one interviewee described the case of Amid Jaytawa, an RTI activist who was shot and killed outside the Gujarat High Court because of his public opposition to illegal mining operations in the state. Others noted how several individuals were killed simply for investigating the petrol mafia, and how even Fr. Cedric had received death threats because of his work. This informed their conviction that rights activism was dangerous and undertaken only by those with great personal courage.

⁶² Yarnold (1991) makes a similar argument about church involvement in the American Sanctuary Movement, and includes the churches' social reputation among those items they are unwilling to forfeit.

This supports Goodwin's argument that people will generally avoid contentious politics if they believe that it raises their vulnerability to state violence, and that they can achieve their objectives via established and lower risk channels that they would otherwise forfeit by supporting such work (2001:26, 46). For even if relations remained tenuous, the churches could still access state officials,⁶³ and if they had repeatedly challenged these officials via rights-based advocacy, they would have jeopardized this established rapport while also raising their vulnerability to attack from both state and covert state-supported actors. Being such a negligible minority, however, this would have only undermined their ability to maintain their operations. Accordingly, churches were motivated to maintain their public silence and to foster at times questionable political and social alliances in the interests of preserving their institutional survival (STWM-08-2011; STWM-17-2011).

State Control of The Purse Strings: The FCRA and Access to Foreign Funds

Moreover, if they had engaged in rights-based advocacy, the churches would have risked their access to the international funds on which most depended. To begin, prior to and throughout Indira Gandhi's infamous State of Emergence (1975-1977), the central government grew increasingly concerned about the subversive potential of foreign funds. This prompted them to enact the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (FCRA) in 1976 in order to control the flow of funds into the country, and deny access to all political parties and any organization engaged in what the state deemed "unfavourable" political activity (Jalali 2008:172-3). Originally, the Act was intended to target fundamentalist or terrorist groups, though it was defined broadly enough to include all NGOs and voluntary

⁶³ This was reportedly true even for the most evangelical of sects, as I was shown several pictures of an evangelical church representative and his wife presenting Chief Minister Narendra Modi with the Bible.

associations. In 1985, the state then explicitly amended it to add all organizations with a “definite cultural, economic, educational, religious, or social programme” to the list of those that must register with the Ministry of Home Affairs⁶⁴ and obtain permission before receiving funds from abroad (HRW 2008:para. 3; Jalali 2008; KPMG 2011).

Their explicit inclusion of religious groups is not surprising. Religion has always been a politically charged subject in India, and with the rise of Hindu nationalism, issues of conversion and funding for religious minorities have only become more contentious (Aaron 2002; Jalali 2008:183-4). Indeed, growing concern that foreign funds were being used to solicit forced conversions, disrupt communal harmony and generally divide India along religious lines prompted the government to replace the original FCRA with even more stringent legislation (Balaji 2010). Also titled the Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Act (2010) and Foreign Contribution (Regulation) Rules (2011), it entered into force on May 1, 2011, and provides the centre with the power to specify not only who receives foreign funds, but also their use, purpose and source (KPMG 2011:4). Moreover, the new Rules (2011) add to the list of prohibited organizations any deemed to be of a “political nature,” as well as all trade unions; all voluntary action groups pursuing “political objectives” or engaged in “political activities;” all mass organizations, such as students’ unions and youth forums; all associations of farmers, workers, students or youth organized on the basis of caste, community, religion, or language that seek to advance their “political interests;” and, all organizations that regularly employ “common methods of political action,” including strikes, work stoppages, or roadblocks.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ Notably, this is the department responsible for maintaining internal law, order and security (Jalali 2008:172).

⁶⁵ The constitutional validity of the FCRA (2010) and FCRR (2011) is currently being challenged in the Supreme Court (Rajagopal 2012).

Since its enactment in 1976, the FCRA has attracted widespread criticism from domestic and international rights activists alike. They argue that since “political activity,” “political nature,” and “national interest” all remain undefined, and the grounds for denial unspecified, it has become a political tool arbitrarily used to harass any organization that opposes the state’s policies or practices (HRW 2008; Jalali 2008:173-5). Minority groups that enjoy historically tense relationships with the state, such as Muslims and Dalits, face notable barriers (Jalali 2008:174). Further, many politicized movements are forced to consciously forego their access to state and foreign funds so as to continue their allegedly political opposition, although most NGOs strive to maintain an at least pragmatic relationship with the state in order to preserve their resource base (Jalali 2008:169, 173).

This politicization of foreign funding, combined with mounting concerns over religious conversion, directly affects the Christian community. To begin, most church missionaries were originally foreigners who combined service provision with religious proselytism and subsisted on foreign funds (Pandey 1984:39-40). The popular belief is that the churches inherited substantial resources from these foreign predecessors, thus creating an impression of power far beyond the churches’ actual means (Singh 2003:213; Pandey 1984:39-40). This illusion of institutional strength and international collusion is bolstered by many churches’ reports to foreign bodies that cite allegedly inflated numbers in order to impress the donors on whose support they depend (Aaron 2002:20; Jalali 2008; Singh 2003:213). As a result, government officials were already suspicious of the churches’ activities in the 1970s and mid-1980s, and this suspicion has only grown with the increasing politicization of issues of conversion and foreign funding, and the rising grassroots success of Hindu nationalism (Jalali 2008:179; Aaron 2002:2-4, 24-9).

Therefore, it is only because they have historically avoided contentious politics, and are thus believed to be less of a threat than other minorities, that Christians continue to dominate the list of foreign donors and recipients in the country (Jalali 2008:176-83; Ministry of Home Affairs 2012). Yet as they face rising state and social scrutiny, there is an even greater risk that the churches' FCRA registration could be revoked if they engage in politicized activities, after which they would lose access to the funding on which many rely to conduct their basic religious functions (Jalali 2008:183-4). This risk is particularly acute in Gujarat, since the BJP is exceptionally concerned about the foreign funding of religious minorities and has a history of tying state opposition to foreign contributions (Jalali 2008:174, 183). Therefore, the FCRA raises the stakes of engaging in rights-based work for any organization dependent on foreign funds, and particularly for the churches, given the concurrent politicization of religious issues in the state.

Thus, the FCRA helps to further explain why the Indian churches have generally focused on addressing the symptoms rather than the causes of underdevelopment, and on providing social services and charity rather than seeking structural change. For once they fell under the purview of the FCRA, their scope of acceptable activity was immediately circumscribed. Indeed, the only permitted religious activities under both the current and past Act are the celebration of religious holidays, the construction and maintenance of religious infrastructure, the education and compensation of priests and preachers, and the distribution of religious literature. In turn, the approved social, educational, or economic activities are limited to supporting basic communal welfare. These legislative constraints thus amplified the risks of engaging in human rights work. As a result, the rights-engaged minority in the local churches remained voices in the wilderness, as the majority ignored

their appeals for greater action and held firm to their mission compound mentality, in which human rights only need defending when their religious interests are at stake.

Diffused Responsibility & Mitigated Risk: Innocent Bystanders in an Active Civil Society

When only one bystander is present in an emergency, if help is to come, it must come from him. Although he may choose to ignore it (out of concern for his personal safety, or desires “not to get involved”), any pressure to intervene focuses uniquely on him. When there are several observers present, however, the pressures to intervene do not focus on any one of the observers; instead the responsibility for intervention is shared among all the onlookers and is not unique to any one. As a result, no one helps. (Darley and Latané 1968:377-8)

Finally, one of the proffered excuses for my interviewees’ neglect of rights-based work was the lack of need given the advocacy efforts of other priests, religious minorities and NGOs, whom they credited with rising public awareness on rights issues. This belief that there was an abundance of other “engaged bystanders” willing to assume the risks of being a rights activist amplified their sense of non-responsibility and thus helps to further explain the churches’ disengagement. For in the context of an open civil society like that in Ahmedabad, responsibility for defending human rights becomes diffused across all the social actors present. Given this lack of focused pressure, the churches were encouraged to exhibit bystander apathy vis-à-vis rights politics, and to limit their intervention in cases of abuse to offering indirect assistance to the victims.

To begin, the central hypothesis of bystander theory is that as the number of witnesses to a situation increases, the likelihood and speed with which any one bystander will respond decreases, particularly if intervention carries potential risks (Darley and

Latané 1968).⁶⁶ Social psychologists have explained this relationship on the basis that the responsibility for doing so becomes increasingly diffused across those present, and that as numbers increase, bystanders are encouraged to assume that someone else will respond. Research into this effect began with efforts to explain bystander apathy in the 1964 rape and murder of Kitty Genovese, in which several of her neighbours chose not to intervene, despite being clearly within earshot (Fischer, et al. 2011:517). It soon became the subject of myriad experiments that have steadily sought to refine the original thesis, and uncover what in addition to the number of witnesses may influence the effect.⁶⁷ The most relevant of these to engaging with rights work emphasize the added importance of others' ability to respond (Bickman 1971), and the "costs of intervention" (Clark and Wood 1974).

First, Bickman (1971) demonstrates that the relative impact of bystander apathy is contingent on not only the number, but also the ability of others to successfully intervene in a given situation. As an illustration, he describes how in the case of a drowning, the lone witness who can swim will experience a "focusing of responsibility," irrespective of the number of witnesses present, as s/he is the only one with the skills needed to stage a successful rescue. His study indicates that bystanders to a situation will thus experience a diffused sense of responsibility if others seem able to successfully resolve it. Only as this ability declines will the responsibility and corresponding pressure become more focused on those bystanders with the skills, knowledge or ability needed to effectively intervene.

Second, Clark and Wood (1974) examine how the costs of intervention shape the bystander effect. The researchers found that the risks associated with intervening did not

⁶⁶ Indeed, Garcia, et al. (2002) found evidence that the other actors need not even be physically present, but can be simply imagined by the individual in order for there to be a loss of personal responsibility.

⁶⁷ A recent meta-analysis of the social psychology literature confirmed that the bystander effect exists, and that its extent varies depending on situational variables, including the perceived danger of the situation, the presence of the perpetrator, and whether the costs of intervention were physical (Fischer, et al. 2011).

affect the probability that a given bystander will do so. Yet their study suggests that these actors clearly consider these risks and factor them into their response, since those subjects who did intervene in potentially dangerous situations did so in ways that they felt were safer and that minimized the potential threats to their person. In practice, this meant that they generally provided indirect as opposed to direct assistance to the victims.

The impact of both of these factors can be clearly seen in the case of Ahmedabad. First, India is a democracy with a longstanding tradition of voluntary social action and a well-established human rights movement that dates back to the country's independence movement (c.f. Jha 2003; Bhagavan 2010; Rubin 1987; Gudavarthy 2008; Pandey 1984). Thus, the churches were operating alongside other social actors, many of whom, like Fr. Cedric, possessed both the ability and willingness to publicly defend human rights. As a result, they were encouraged to exhibit bystander apathy vis-à-vis the latter. In turn, since intervening in cases of abuse was a high-risk activity, they responded by offering indirect rather than direct assistance to victims. Namely, they provided basic social services and humanitarian relief to victims in order to fulfil their rights in the short term, in confidence that others would provide the riskier and more direct form of assistance by lobbying for rights-based change and thus ensuring the fulfilment of their rights in the long term.⁶⁸

As a final note, Olson (2009) argues that rational and self-interested individuals in large groups are generally dissuaded from collective action. Instead, he purports that they are encouraged to “free ride” on the efforts of others, since their individual contributions are seen as negligible, and the common good is by definition common, which means that they will receive the benefits even if they do not contribute. I raise this point because one

⁶⁸ This response is not unique. Secular humanitarian organizations similarly avoid rights tactics in order to preserve access to victims of conflict, and if they feel rights issues need to be addressed, they will engage in “quiet” diplomacy with state officials or members of armed groups, not public advocacy (Ferris 2005:320).

respondent expressly argued that Christians “don’t have to fight for our freedom or rights because...the Muslim people, they fight for human rights. So we [Christians] got [sic] automatically the benefit of it” (STWM-15-2011). His statement suggests that some church leaders were not only disengaged bystanders on non-church-related issues but, more poignantly, free riders on issues of religious concern, allowing others to secure their rights as minorities. I cannot conclude for certain that this was a trend, as he was the only interviewee who openly spoke of free riding on others’ rights efforts. However, the way in which others spoke of Fr. Cedric or even the Catholic Church in general implied that they similarly felt little need to speak out, even when their religious cause was attacked, since they were confident that these other actors would defend their cause. This suggests that the churches’ bystander apathy may at times extend to issues of religious concern, an implication that clearly merits further study and consideration.

Conclusion

Rights-engaged priests and Christian organizations in Ahmedabad represented the exceptions to a trend of general church disengagement, insofar as their religious interests were not at stake. I argue that the churches’ low levels of engagement were the result first of their hostile minority context, where they depended on officials who were suspicious of their activities and regularly if covertly harassed their adherents for no other reason than their professed faith. In turn, if they had engaged in any overly politicized activity, under the FCRA, they risked losing access to the foreign financing on which many relied. This amplified the risks of engaging in regular rights-based advocacy.

As a result, the churches were motivated to adopt a mission compound mentality, in which they remain singularly concerned with protecting the interests of their religious community. Within this paradigm, the risks of engaging with rights politics only become widely palatable when their religious cause is directly threatened, in which case the rights issue clearly overlaps with the churches' most pressing institutional concerns. Otherwise, the churches generally preferred to protect their low-risk access to the state and financial solvency by abstaining from such work, and only raising any rights-based concerns using private diplomacy, if at all. Those who deviated from this norm were treated as liabilities, as colleagues publicly celebrated their work but privately desired and at times explicitly requested their silence, while ignoring their appeals for institution-wide mobilization.

Finally, their vibrant civil society facilitated this retreat from rights-based politics. With other actors able and willing to assume the associated risks, few within the church experienced focused pressure to defend human rights. Instead, they were encouraged to exhibit bystander apathy vis-à-vis rights work, and to respond to cases of abuse not with rights tactics, but with the safer and more indirect approach of offering relief to victims. Finally, in some cases, this apathy seemed to extend even to issues of religious concern, thus making these churches human rights free riders, as they reaped the benefits of other actors' efforts to secure their rights as a religious minority without directly contributing to the cause.

Chapter Three:

The Latin American Catholic Churches: Socially Engaged Rights Defenders?

In Ahmedabad, the churches represented a numerically inconsequential minority that faced regular opposition from a range of state and non-state actors simply because of their professed faith. In sharp contrast, the Catholic Church in most Latin American states was an institution of the social and political establishment. Indeed, their ties with the state were generally stronger than those to Rome (Bruneau 1974:5), a trend that dates back to colonization, when the Churches actively catered to the colonial elite in order to mobilize the financial resources and political power needed to evangelise the New World (Escobar 1997:87; Levine 2009:123; Philpott 2005:34; Toll 2008:16). Through their efforts, the region was soon home to the largest Catholic population worldwide, with the Church playing a key role in governing social affairs (Escobar 1997:86; Philpott 2005:39). Even when they faced national anticlerical movements that sought to restrict their engagement in secular politics, Catholicism still generally retained its position as state religion, and the Church, its monopoly on national religious culture (Vallier 1970:58-9).

Given their position of religious and societal prominence, states in the region have had to closely monitor their relationship with the Church (Bruneau 1974:3). Indeed, the Church represents a valuable political ally, one whose support can confer social and religious legitimacy to a regime's rule (Johnston and Figa 1988:33). This value served to protect most from repression even under authoritarian rule in the mid-twentieth century, as otherwise highly repressive regimes sought to prove their close ties to the Church by consciously preserving the Churches' rights and portraying themselves as the defenders

of Christendom against atheistic Communism (Klaiber 2009:412; McNamara 1979:348; Dipboye 1982:500; Cleary 1997:3-4; Johnston and Figa 1988; Mantilla 2010).

Nonetheless, many Churches seemed willing to forfeit their position of privilege in the 1960s and 1970s in favour of oppositional movements, including those organized around human rights. This apparent about-face from an elite-centric strategy to one in solidarity with the poor seemed to exemplify the new socially engaged position promoted by Vatican II, as the Churches responded to the global doctrinal shift in a context of pervasive poverty and rising state authoritarianism (Aldunate 1994:300; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:11). Thus, the region soon drew the attention of scholars eager to examine this new progressive religious force (Vásquez 1999). Their efforts generated an extensive literature on progressive Church politics and on the Churches' opposition to authoritarian rule and support for democratization in the latter half of the twentieth century. Notably, many of these studies link the emergence of rights-based organizing in the region during this time with the apparent radicalization of Church politics. Therefore, Latin America in the 1960s and 1970s presented an interesting case in which to further refine my theory on church-rights engagement, and to examine how the factors that shaped this relationship in the hostile minority context of Ahmedabad operated at the level of the national Catholic Churches when instead in a position of religious, social and political dominance.

Methodological Limitations: Unexplained Variation in Church-Rights Engagement

Despite their claims about the link between radical Catholicism and rights-based organizing, however, few scholars have expressly studied Church engagement with rights in practice. Instead, most references to their rights-based efforts are subsumed in general

studies of Church support for oppositional or democratization movements. As I argue in Chapter One, the tendency to conflate human rights with democracy is problematic, and this is just as true in the case of Latin America. For instance, there is evidence to suggest that some of the Churches were willing to defend basic human rights without necessarily supporting democracy.⁶⁹ Further, most defended a range of human rights beyond that to political participation (see below). Finally, not all of the states in the region were under authoritarian rule during the 1960s and 1970s; yet, as in Ahmedabad, enclaves of Church leaders still proved rights-engaged. Collectively, this reinforces that supporting rights in practice and promoting democratization are not always mutually congruent activities, and that it is of greater theoretical value to examine both outcomes separately.

Likewise, rights-based work was only one tactic available to the Churches if they chose to oppose the state. For instance, they could have drawn upon their moral authority, chastising state officials on the basis of religious precepts without using rights language. Similarly, they could have also chosen to raise their concerns over rights conditions in the country via diplomacy while shunning public advocacy, as did the Ahmedabad churches (see Chapter Two). Indeed, this would have been easier for them, since unlike the latter, most Latin American Churches were members of the establishment and enjoyed positive relations with elites. Alternatively, they could have chosen an even more radical approach and supported armed revolution, an option famously chosen by many Catholics in Nicaragua and publicly condoned by the hierarchy (Klaiber 1998:193). In sum, it is worth examining what encouraged the Churches to adopt rights tactics in particular, and shaped

⁶⁹ As noted in Chapter One, the Argentine Church spoke out publicly on human rights issues, albeit on very rare occasion (Klaiber 1998:80-3; Lowden 1996:17-8; Smith 1979:113, 115). Yet it was never a vocal proponent of democracy, just as it proved a weak rights activist, because it enjoyed strong relations with the military and there was a dearth of electorally competitive pro-Church political parties that could promote its interests under democratic, rather than military rule (Edmonds 2010:184-5; Mantilla 2010:565-6).

their decisions about whose rights to defend, when and how, rather than simply applying the existing theories on their oppositional politics in general to the specific case of rights-based work.

In addition to a lack of material focused on Church-rights politics, the literature is also dominated by generalized accounts of regional Church politics and individual case studies of progressive Churches. Many speculate about what initially instigated Church support for contentious politics; however, few have conducted the systematic cross-case comparisons needed to test their proffered theories (Edmonds 2010:4-5; Gill 1998:7, 11-2). Instead, most follow one of two approaches. The first is to offer an overview of regional Church politics, and then to emphasize the causal impact of such variables as the shifts in religious doctrine, religious competition among the poorest segments of the population, or a rise in social repression by pointing to cases where the Churches proved to be socially progressive. In the process, they imply that these Churches' engagement exemplified a regional trend, without fully explaining the concurrent cases of continued conservatism. The second dominant approach is to conduct case studies of these same progressive Churches, to the continued neglect of the negative cases in the region. As a result, the literature remains methodologically weak, and advances causal arguments that are not supported by the empirical data.

To begin, the most common theory credits the emergence of radical Catholicism in the 1960s and 1970s to the combined effect of authoritarian rule and doctrinal changes instigated by the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965) and the Latin American Bishops' Conference (CELAM) at Medellín, Colombia, in 1968 (Aldunate 1994:300; Cleary 2007:57; Dipboye 1982:497; Holden and Jacobson 2009:148; Levine 1995:6). They

maintain that rising sociopolitical repression infused the CELAM debates with an added sense of urgency, enabling progressive bishops to secure the support needed to officially realign the Church from ally of the state to active participant in the fight for social justice (Aldunate 1994:300; Daudelin and Hewitt 1995b:187; Dipboye 1982:498; McNamara 1979:331, 336-7). In turn, most argue that this change in doctrine, combined with the rise in sociopolitical repression, prompted Catholic clergy and laity alike to engage in rights-based work (Aldunate 1994:300; Castaneda 1993:207; Daudelin and Hewitt 1995b:187; Dipboye 1982:498-500; Gooren 2002:29; Huntington 1991:33; Klaiber 2009:412-4; Levine 2009:124, 127, 135; McNamara 1979:336-7, 348; Traer 1991a:249, 246). Indeed, some argue that the Churches' support for human rights succeeded in re-legitimizing the rights framework, which had grown increasingly tarnished by its association with leftist movements (Klaiber 2009:412; Dipboye 1982:517). In the process, most scholars imply a nearly universal Church acceptance of this pro-rights stance across Latin America.

Yet this argument is flawed for two main reasons. First, progressive Catholicism predated both Vatican II and Medellín, beginning with the sixteenth-century Dominican-led defence of indigenous communities' natural rights, and continuing up to the decades preceding both conferences, particularly in Brazil, Chile and Peru (Aldunate 1994:297-9; Bruneau and Hewitt 1992:45; Carozza 2003a, 2003b; Crahan 1996:262; Dipboye 1982:49; Edmonds 2010:6; Levine 1995:6; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:13, 18-9; Stewart-Gambino 1992:21). Second, as had been the case in Ahmedabad, appearances of universal institutional support for rights work are deceiving. Indeed, Church involvement in rights politics was more chequered across and within the countries than most studies would suggest (see below), as many scholars conflated the perspectives of a progressive

few with those of all Catholics in their enthusiasm at the prospect of a newly progressive Church (Burdick 1994:187; Drogus 1995:467). This variation, however, directly challenges their linear causal theories, as both the change in Church doctrine and rise in social repression were constant across many engaged and disengaged cases in the region.

Their mistaken causal inference is not unexpected, given most scholars' neglect of systematic comparative work that could uncover additional variables or causal pathways to Church engagement with contentious politics, including human rights work. This lack of theoretically oriented comparative work makes it difficult to discern the relative causal importance of their identified variables or the extent of their theories' generalizability (Gill 1998:7, 11-2; Edmonds 2010:4-5). In addition, negative cases where the Churches remained concurrently silent on issues of social justice are both understudied and under-analysed. Consequently, Smith (1979:4) argues that most scholars have overlooked how ongoing tensions between Church factions, combined with other institutional and societal factors, produced varying responses to contentious politics and human rights work.

Some have attempted to address these methodological limitations and thus explain variation in the institutional responses to progressive politics. For instance, Levine (2010) argues that Church commitment to social justice in Brazil, Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala, Peru, and Paraguay was a rational response to these Churches' experiences of repression and subsequent identification with victims of the regime. By contrast, Gill (1998) argues that the opposition to political authoritarianism emerged largely out of concerns for their religious monopoly. Namely, he argues that the Churches hoped to avoid losing adherents to their Protestant competition by demonstrating their solidarity with the poor and openly

opposing the regimes that repressed them.⁷⁰ Others argue that Church support for democratization and opposition to authoritarian rule were contingent on institutional size (Mantilla 2010), and a Church's relationship with the state (Philpott 2007; Edmonds 2010). Specifically, those Churches with the most clergy and the greatest administrative, legal and financial autonomy from the state were allegedly the most vocal. The latter ensured that challenging the state's policies or practices did not directly undermine their interests (Edmonds 2010:16-7). Indeed, Smith (1975) maintains that any confrontation between Church and State will ultimately prove unsustainable if the Church depends on state finances, although Edmonds (2010:17) argues that this will only temper a Church's politics insofar as the state protects its religious freedoms. In turn, Mantilla (2010) claims that the Churches' institutional size determined their ability to withstand repression, and thus to sustain their efforts in the long term.

Smith (1979) is the only scholar, however, who studies Church-rights engagement in particular,⁷¹ and as I have already argued, it would be inappropriate to presume that the institutions' relationship with rights politics was shaped by the same factors that affected their willingness to oppose the state or support democracy. Nonetheless, like Smith, their studies suggest that the national Catholic Churches were motivated by similar concerns as the churches in Ahmedabad, and that their relationship with contentious politics followed a similar trend: namely, that their involvement was primarily a response to threats to their religious cause; that state dependence undermined their willingness to engage as long as

⁷⁰ Philpott (2007:512-3) maintains that Gill's argument about the grassroots desire for an oppositional Church is empirically invalid, since Protestant adherence levels often rose sharply only *after* the Catholic Churches adopted an oppositional stance. Nevertheless, his argument reinforces the primacy of Church concerns for protecting their religious status, which can in turn shape their response to contentious politics.

⁷¹ See Chapter One for a detailed examination of his findings.

their interests were secure; and, that they were apt to withdraw their support if it jeopardized their institutional survival.

Defining the Scope of the Latin American Case: The Episcopacies & Rights-Based Work

As with Ahmedabad, I began by evaluating the actions and statements of the Latin American Catholic Churches in the 1960s and 1970s against my measures of rights-based engagement, outlined in Chapter One. In so doing, I was again primarily interested in the behaviour of the Church as a unitary actor, rather than that of individual clergy or semi-autonomous groups within the institution. Since the Roman Catholic Church adheres to a bureaucratic episcopal governance structure, this focused my attention on members of the Church hierarchy. As noted in Chapter Two, these actors are responsible for serving as spokespeople for their national Church, for promoting its interests in public forums and private negotiations, and for generally preserving its ability to fulfil its religious functions and advance the faith (Mantilla 2010:555; Crahan 1999:72). Because of these conferred responsibilities for the national body, they operate within different constraints than rank-and-file priests (Mantilla 2010:555). Moreover, in their capacity as Church spokespeople, they are responsible for publicly articulating its official position on social affairs, within the confines of global doctrine (Bruneau 1974:3-5). Thus, I agree with Bruneau (1974:73, 224) that their position on such issues is among the most important, particularly as they are generally the most conservative actors, and thus if they endorse a progressive position such as a rights-engaged Church, one can typically assume that the rank-and-file have already embraced this stance. In sum, given their responsibility for and close association with the Church as a national institution, their role in dictating its position on social

issues, and their expected conservatism, I am primarily interested in these actors' engagement with rights in practice. I refer to them interchangeably as the "Church," the "hierarchy," the "episcopal conference," the "episcopacy" and the "bishops."⁷²

This analytical focus was facilitated by the fact that the Latin American Catholic Churches had begun modernizing their organizational structure in the decades prior to Vatican II. As a result, they were among the first national Churches to establish national bishops' or episcopal conferences, as well as a regional equivalent, CELAM (Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:11). While no national or regional body enjoys recognized status in the traditional legal framework of the Church, their standing has steadily increased in the post-Vatican II era (Bruneau 1974:110). For instance, CELAM is now generally accepted as the voice of the Latin American Church, and has convened every decade since 1955 to determine its pastoral focus for the subsequent decade (Dipboye 1982:523; Peerman 1993:180). In this capacity, its constitution stipulates that it enjoys considerable independence from Rome (MacEoin 1994:6). In turn, its national counterparts coordinate ministerial efforts at the state level, and serve as the voice of each national Church (Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:11). Thus, I was highly interested in the rights efforts of these conferences, as they are generally recognized as the official voice both of the bishops, and of the national and regional institutions overall.

Finally, I recognize that additional factors may have shaped Church responses to rights politics in both individual country-cases and region-wide. These would include, for instance, Cold War politics and fear of the Communist threat, the political persuasions or charisma of Church primates,⁷³ the relative power of socially progressive bishops in their

⁷² This includes the archbishops and cardinals.

⁷³ The primate is the highest-ranked Catholic Church leader of a given province, typically a country.

Church, or even the familial ties that bonded Church leaders and members of the political elite. Moreover, just as a Church is never autonomous vis-à-vis the state, it is also limited by its relationship with Rome (Bruneau 1974:2-4). Therefore, the bishops must weigh the internal as well as external risks when determining whether to engage with rights politics.

Nonetheless, Bruneau (1974:5) observes that the relationship between Church and State in Latin America is of particular import and has historically been stronger even than that between the Church and the Vatican. This meant that the national Churches were heavily state-dependent when it came to mobilizing the resources needed to achieve their religious goals. Indeed, having embraced a “Neo-Christendom model of influence,” in which the Church asserts its influence through its access to state power, they have largely neglected other avenues to building influence in society, including fostering strong commitments to the faith among adherents (Bruneau 1974:5, 229). Therefore, whatever their jeopardized relations with the state was a direct threat to their means of asserting religious influence in society and thus to their central purpose as a movement (Bruneau 1974:238, 3-4; Johnston and Figa 1988). As a result, maintaining positive state relations was again central to their perceived survival, if for slightly different reasons than in Ahmedabad. Therefore, while exploring the impact of intra-Church politics in particular is a necessary avenue of future research, I believe that I am justified in continuing to focus on Church-State relations when refining my theory in the Latin American case.

Overview of the Latin American Case: Institutional Vulnerability in a Majority Context

The Latin American Catholic Churches initially seemed at the forefront of human rights organizing, particularly in the 1970s. Indeed, the scope and intensity of their efforts

seemed to far exceed that of the Ahmedabad churches. Yet once again, these appearances of strong institutional support were in a way misleading. Indeed, most of the rights-based work represented the efforts of arms-length or fully autonomous Catholic and ecumenical agencies, or the independent initiatives of individual clergy or religious men and women, many of whom were also foreign, thus compounding their independence from the national Churches. None of these actors spoke for the hierarchies and many acted without their support, as the latter were instead wary of directly committing their institutions to publicly defending human rights, and generally remained silent and disengaged.

As in Ahmedabad, this abstention was encouraged by a vulnerability to repression that derived from their dependence on state resources and power to advance their cause. To have actively defended human rights would have risked access to these resources, invited repression, and generally raised the costs of religious practice (Smith 1975:16-7; Johnston and Figa 1988). Moreover, even repressive regimes continued to support the Churches' religious activities in the hopes of gaining their political support (Johnston and Figa 1988:33). Therefore, the Churches were highly motivated to avoid contentious work, as they could address their concerns through established channels, and risked losing access to the resources on which their religious operations relied by publicly promoting and participating in social activism (Goodwin 2001:26, 46; Johnston and Figa 1988:43).

In turn, even Church-targeted attacks seemed a far less effective catalyst for their engagement, as many Churches remained silent when their leaders fell victim to attack. Yet this apparent discrepancy between the Ahmedabad and Latin American cases instead clarified that it is threats to their religious cause, and not simply to their unconventional activism, that will more consistently prompt a rights-based response from the institution.

Since most attacks in Latin America were in response to Church activism, and targeted only dissident clergy while their religious ministries remained protected and supported by the state, the Churches were wary of risking the latter by defending their rights-engaged clergy. Instead, these anti-dissident attacks on Church leaders served to reinforce the risks of being involved in human rights work, and thus encouraged institutional retreat.

Yet if their traditional ministries, religious authority, or institutional rights became targets, the hierarchies proved more willing to support and engage in rights work. For in these cases, as in Ahmedabad, the threat was to their religious cause, and there was thus a clear link between the issue at hand and the Churches' institutional concerns (Goodwin 2001:25-6). This ensured their commitment to the goal of any rights action and thus made adopting the role of activist and assuming the risks more palatable (McAdam 1986:71).

Further, the Latin American case helped to clarify the role played by autonomy from the state and global resources in promoting church-rights engagement. The only two cases that approximated the former ideal were Chile and Brazil. In both cases, it became increasingly that the Churches had lost state respect, and could not reliably depend on its support. Neither Church was fully independent. Yet as the Church-targeted attacks began to affect the institution as a whole, this increasingly separated Church from State interests and encouraged the institutions to look beyond the state for alternative means of asserting their influence in society (Bruneau 1974:69-72).

At that point, the availability of foreign support for rights efforts encouraged the Churches to adopt the human rights cause long-term by demonstrating that this would be a well-supported means of asserting influence in society, and thus mitigating the potential risks. This was particularly true around civil and political issues, which had the greatest

traction abroad, especially with North American and Western European donors on whom the Churches came to rely. This reinforces how donor interests can shape the rights focus of religious as well as secular rights activists in the global South, and thus the importance of considering their sources of financial support when seeking to explain their behaviour (c.f. Berkovitch and Gordon 2008; Englund 2000; Dicklitch and Lwanga 2003).

Finally, the Churches continued to respond to rights work as a bystander responds to a dangerous situation (Bickman 1971; Clark and Wood 1974). To begin, the absence of generalized repression was correlated with low institutional activism, since responsibility was diffuse and thus the Churches were instead encouraged to exhibit apathy vis-à-vis rights work. By contrast, when many Churches became the lone bystanders who could intervene in cases of rights abuse under authoritarian regimes, this focused the sense of responsibility for defending human rights. Yet since doing so was a high-risk venture, the Churches still generally responded by providing indirect rather than direct assistance to victims (Clark and Wood 1974). In practice, this meant that they established agencies that were operationally and financially independent of the hierarchy, and enjoyed official but indirect ties to the national Church. In so doing, they maintained distance between their religious operations and rights-based work, and thus protected the former from the risks associated with supporting the latter. Moreover, once they were established, the work of these agencies, along with that of independently rights-engaged clergy, autonomous faith-based groups and emerging secular movements, re-diffused the sense of responsibility for defending human rights in the long term. Thus, these Churches were motivated to retreat from further involvement, so long as their religious cause was secure.

Walking the Human Rights Walk: Initial Evidence of High Rights-Based Engagement

Evidence suggests that the Latin American Catholic Churches were widely rights-engaged in the 1960s and particularly the 1970s, with many adopting the cause of nascent human rights movements amidst rising repression. Indeed, their involvement seemed to far exceed that of the Ahmedabad churches in both intensity and scope, as they generally spoke to issues beyond those of direct religious concern, and defended the rights of most members of society (Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:13).

They were undeniably well poised theologically to become rights proponents. To begin, Vatican II had transformed the global Church from opponent to, into participant in the secular modern world, and declared official support for all internationally recognized rights (Casanova 1996:360, 366-7; Curran 2002:58, 11, 217, 234-5; Holden and Jacobson 2009:148; Hornsby-Smith 2006:63, 61, 14; Hollenbach 2008:14-5). The 1968 CELAM meeting at Medellín built on these changes by concluding that oppression resulted from institutionalized violence, Catholics had a duty and a right to transform unjust structures in the name of social justice, and thus the Church must abandon its post as handmaiden to the elite and participate in the struggle for liberation over the course of the next decade (Gooren 2002:29; Levine 2009:124, 135; Aldunate 1994:300; McNamara 1979:383; Levine 2009:135; Dipboye 1982:498; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:7-8). This helped to inspire a new theology of liberation that emerged first in Peru in 1971 before spreading region-wide⁷⁴ (Dipboye 1982:499; Aldunate 1994:299-300; Engler 2009:341-2; Mujica

⁷⁴ Liberation theology frequently encouraged use of Marxist, class-based tools of social analysis, though none ever used Marxism as their base framework. This theoretical and at times practical alignment with leftist discourses and movements drew criticism from the Vatican, leading to Rome's censorship of or ban on the writings of many liberation theologians in an effort to discredit them and their work regionally (Molineaux 1995:12; Crahan 1999:61, 65, 71). Nevertheless, liberation theology has had a permanent mark on the Church, as evidenced in the writings of Vatican conservatives, which reflect the widespread acceptance of many progressive Catholic principles (Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:32).

and Meza 2009:499, 503; Traer 1988:837). While not a universal rights doctrine,⁷⁵ its emphasis on direct clerical participation in challenging inequities, defending rights and fostering empowerment and rights-claiming through education parallels that underwriting the rights-based approach to development⁷⁶ (Aldunate 1994:299-300; Flora and Bello 1989:532; Cleary 2007:57; Curran 2002:66, 185; Dipboye 1982:498; Drogus 1995:465; Holden and Jacobson 2009:148; Klaiber 2009:408; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:7; Mujica and Meza 2009:498). The Churches thus had ample material with which to justify engaging in rights-based work (Mantilla 2010). Indeed, Medellín declared that doing so was a necessary component of the Catholic faith (Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:7).

In turn, most Churches seemed willing to act on these new policies and publicly denounce the violations of socioeconomic, political and physical integrity rights⁷⁷ by both state and non-state actors. First, the Brazilian Bishops' National Conference (CNBB), and the Chilean, Peruvian, Paraguayan, and Nicaraguan hierarchies, defended a wide range of human rights in their official documents and public statements. This included promoting the rights to political participation, assembly and protest, to freedom of speech and of the press, and criticizing the use of torture, political detention, disappearances or extrajudicial killings and of targeted state attacks against peasant or indigenous communities (Bruneau and Hewitt 1992:45, 49; Dipboye 1982:501-3, 504-5; Fleet and Smith 1997:60-5, 89, 198-9, 202, 207; Klaiber 1998:96; Pasara 1989:285; Smith 1979:103; Mainwaring and

⁷⁵ Liberation theologians only accepted rights language in the late 1970s, after they reformulated rights principles so that they were unequivocally partial to the most socially marginal and thus aligned with their "preferential option for the poor" (Engler 2009:339, 344, 346, 349).

⁷⁶ See Cornwall and Nyamu-Musembi (2004), Grugel and Piper (2009), Sano (2000), Khan (2009), Bradshaw (2006), and Uvin (2007).

⁷⁷ A "special subset" of civil and political rights, physical integrity rights enjoy strong international support, both normatively and legally (Cardenas 2007:4, 32; Milner, et al. 1999:408, 419-21; Ron, et al. 2005:562). They include the rights to life and personal security; to freedom from torture and political imprisonment; to freedom of thought, conscience, religious and opinion; to association and peaceful assembly; to political participation; and, to freedom from forced exile or disappearances.

Wilde 1989:10-1; Horst 2002:725-8). Moreover, as primate, Archbishop Oscar Romero seemed to speak for all Salvadoran bishops as he defended the rights to peaceful protest and assembly, denounced abuses in his weekly sermons and national radio program, and boycotted the presidential inauguration after the state refused to release political prisoners or allow exiles to return (Dipboye 1983:505-6, 511-2, 516; Klaiber 1998:173-4). The Paraguayan Church similarly defended physical integrity and democratic rights, while its primate threatened to excommunicate key state officials following violent crackdowns on peaceful protests and refused to assume his seat on the state council due to ongoing rights abuses (Klaiber 1998:96-7; Horst 2002:725-6). Even the Churches in Argentina, Bolivia, and Uruguay, none of which were strong rights proponents, issued the rare statement in defence of physical integrity rights, workers' rights, or those to health and education, and denounced attacks against vulnerable groups, economic injustices or the indiscriminate use of state violence (Klaiber 1998:114; Smith 1979:113, 115, 109). Therefore, evidence suggests that most national Churches would officially and publicly defend a range of human rights, if only on rare occasions.

In turn, the Brazilian CNBB was the first to begin collecting accurate information on rights conditions in the country and distributing their reports nation-wide, as well as to religious and human rights groups abroad, which used the information to shame the state regime (Cleary 1997:128-30; Dipboye 1982:501-2; McNamara 1979:342; Smith 1979:95; Traer 1991a:246; Vallier 1971:492-3). The Chilean Church soon followed suit via the Vicariate of Solidarity, the Catholic successor to the ecumenical Cooperative Committee for the Peace in Chile (COPACHI). Alongside its documentation and advocacy efforts, it offered both legal aid and basic services to the unemployed, as well as to political

detainees and their families in sixteen of twenty-five dioceses (Cleary 1997:3, 8; Dipboye 1982:503-4; Fleet and Smith 1997:61, 66-7; Lernoux 1980:204; Levine 2009:137; Smith 1979:93-5). The ecumenical Committee of Churches for Emergency Assistance played a similar role in Paraguay. Operating out of the offices of the episcopal conference, and with the public support of the hierarchy, it offered relief and legal aid to prisoners, ex-prisoners and families of the disappeared, and investigated, documented and disseminated reports on rights abuses to both national and international audiences (Smith 1979:102-4; Lowden 1996:18).

In addition to the CNBB's efforts, the Brazilian Church also established a range of national agencies that focused on specific human rights issues. For instance, the Justice and Peace Commission focused on civil and socioeconomic rights and offered relief to political detainees and their families, while others defended the rights of indigenous communities, or of small landholders or workers, and encouraged grassroots rights-based mobilization by distributing reports on rights conditions in the country (Hewitt 1990:842-3; Lowden 1996:18). Many had diocesan offices, while several dioceses established their own independent commissions to document rights abuses and support rights-based work at the local level (Hewitt 1990:843-4; Smith 1979:99). Other Churches soon followed the Brazilian example (c.f. Klaiber 1998). Even the Bolivian Church sponsored a Justice and Peace Commission, and the Guatemalan Church, which was even more disengaged than its Bolivian counterpart, helped to establish the ecumenical Committee Pro-Justice and Peace. Both organizations monitored rights abuses in the country and provided legal aid to their victims (Klaiber 1998:127-8; Mantilla 2010:562; Smith 1979:107-8; Houghton 2007:117).

Moreover, CELAM had called for the creation of grassroots lay groups that could gather regularly to pray, discuss Scripture and concurrently encourage mobilization “for the redress and consolidation of their rights” (CELAM 1970:Vol. II, 81, cited in Cleary 1997:65; Dipboye 1982:518). The result was *comunidades eclesiales de base* (CEBs) or base ecclesial communities. Again, the Brazilian Church was the forerunner,⁷⁸ but the groups quickly emerged in other states in the 1970s (Klaiber 2009:41; Gooren 2009:29, 40). Their inspiration remained religious, and the main intention was for these groups to pray, and read and discuss Scripture under the guidance of Church officials. Yet in more progressive CEBs, the hope was that they would also help to stimulate grassroots rights-based action (Klaiber 2009:411; Gooren 2002:29-30; Levine 1992:45, cited in VonDoepp 2002:281; Holden and Jacobson 2009:148; Gooren 2002:30; Boff 1986:42; Hewitt 1990:845-6). Thus, CEB participation allegedly provided many Catholics with their first exposure to human rights and democratic organizing (Levine 1995:4; Drogus 1995:471). Indeed, many joined secular RBOs after the fall of repressive regimes, and many present-day rights activists reportedly cite CEB experiences as the foundation for their current activism (Drogus 1995:471; Cleary 1997:5; Levine 2009:129; Toll 2008:23).

Finally, individual clergy, parishes, dioceses and conferences of priests, religious men and women actively engaged in grassroots and nation-wide human rights advocacy and development work in Argentina,⁷⁹ Bolivia,⁸⁰ Colombia,⁸¹ El Salvador,⁸² Guatemala,⁸³

⁷⁸ The Church initially began establishing these groups in the 1950s as a possible solution to the chronic shortage of Church personnel in remote, rural regions, by developing effective lay leaders who could serve in lieu of a priest (Klaiber 2009:41; Gooren 2002:29; Boff 1986:3).

⁷⁹ See Klaiber (1998:83-6), and Smith (1979:113-4).

⁸⁰ See Smith (1979:110).

⁸¹ See Castaneda (1993:213) and Lernoux (1980:206-7).

⁸² See Dipboye (1982:505-6) and Klaiber (1998:173-4)

⁸³ See Klaiber (1998:228).

Nicaragua,⁸⁴ Paraguay,⁸⁵ Peru,⁸⁶ Uruguay,⁸⁷ and Venezuela.⁸⁸ As with the hierarchies, the issues they addressed went beyond those of clear religious concern, including workers' rights, rights of indigenous communities, and physical integrity rights. Taken alongside the advocacy efforts of their episcopal conferences and the work of the various Church-sponsored organizations, their efforts seem to only further establish that the Catholic Churches were active participants in the fight for human rights in the 1960s and 1970s.

Cracking the Book's Cover: The Limits of Church-Led Rights-Based Engagement

Clearly, in terms of absolute numbers, more clergy were rights-engaged in Latin America than in Ahmedabad. Yet most were among the rank-and-file, and many of those were foreign-born missionaries and members of religious orders, who operated semi-autonomously of the hierarchy and were notoriously difficult to control (Klaiber 1992:90-2; Froehle 1992:110-1). This is important, since as in Ahmedabad, their involvement generally did not reflect the politics or desires of their Church superiors. Indeed, while Medellín may suggest otherwise, most bishops remained politically moderate, and many staunchly conservative (McNamara 1979:346; Cousineau 1997:572; Daudelin and Hewitt 1995b:187; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:25-6). Consequently, their support for radical action was fleeting, and the progressive bishops soon found their hold on regional power waning, facilitated by Rome's censorship and replacement of the most outspoken clergy and theologians (Cousineau 1997:573; Daudelin and Hewitt 1995b:179; Dipboye 1982:417-8, 467; Drogus 1995:467; Gooren 2002:39, 31; Hebblethwaite and Wirpsa

⁸⁴ See Dipboye (1982:504-5).

⁸⁵ See Lernoux (1980:204), Mantilla (2010:561-2), and Smith (1979:102).

⁸⁶ See Fleet and Smith (1997:88-9, 97-9, 104, 198-200, 202-3), Klaiber (1992:100-1), Romero (1989:262-3), and Pasara (1989:290).

⁸⁷ See Klaiber (1998:114-5), Mantilla (2010:561-2), and Smith (1979:121, n. 5).

⁸⁸ See Froehle (1992), and Levine (1979).

1993; MacEoin 1996:4; Molineaux 1995:12; Peerman 1993:180, 182, 185). This resulted in CELAM's 1979 retreat from the more radical aspects of the Medellín approach, which the bishops declared to be overly politicized and too closely aligned with Marxist thought (Dipboye 1982:517-8). Instead, most agreed that the Church should focus on stimulating lay activism, rather than directly involve itself in contentious politics (Crahan 1999:70).

More poignantly, the bishops' support at Medellín for rights in principle did not necessarily translate into support in practice, even in its immediate aftermath. As a result, faith-based RBOs and rights-engaged pastoral agents of all ranks in Argentina, Bolivia, Colombia, Guatemala, Uruguay and Venezuela largely failed to win the support of their respective hierarchies (Froehle 1992; Klaiber 1998:79-90, 110-5, 123-30, 122-30, 223-8; Levine 1979; Lowden 1996:17-8; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:13-4, 25-6). The Bolivian Church even publicly criticized several of its priests when they responded to Medellín by confronting the state on issues of workers' rights (Smith 1975:10-2). The Venezuelan Church similarly disapproved of direct clerical participation in contentious politics, and repressed those who challenged the state (Froehle 1992). In turn, the Argentine Church largely refrained from publicly denouncing rights abuses, even when clergy were killed by state-supported paramilitaries, and kept its few rights-supportive statements abstract, without referring to specific cases of violation (Klaiber 1998:80-3; Lowden 1996:17-8; Smith 1979:113, 115).⁸⁹ Rights-engaged leaders in these six cases could thus be more accurately described as progressive enclaves, rather than reflecting the aspirations of their hierarchies.

⁸⁹ The Church's unwillingness to publicly defend human rights, and its condonation of many of the state's actions, prompted some human rights activists to publicly leave the Church in protest. The most famous group to sever ties was the Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo (Klaiber 1998:80-3).

Likewise, much of the Catholic human rights activism at the time was the work of organizations in which individual clergy participated, but which were operationally and financially independent of the Church. Sometimes, the hierarchy or an individual diocese initially established these agencies and maintained official if indirect ties.⁹⁰ Yet they just as often represented the independent initiatives of individual priests, religious men and women, or lay Catholics.⁹¹ Moreover, irrespective of the role that the Church played in their establishment, they all operated at a distance from the national hierarchy, since the responsibility for their day-to-day management fell to laypeople, rank-and-file pastoral agents, most of whom were religious and foreign, and the rare high-ranking official, such as Cardinal Silva in Chile or Cardinal Evaristo Arns in Brazil⁹² (Klaiber 1998; Lowden 1996; Smith 1979). They were also financially independent, relying on foreign funding rather than Church coffers to finance their efforts (Smith 1979; Klaiber 1998; Lowden 1996). Thus, Catholic human rights action was often the work of priests or lay Catholics who were acting independently of the Church, or of Church-sponsored agencies that were autonomous of the hierarchy in terms of their day-to-day operations and finances.

Moreover, it is notoriously difficult to obtain accurate estimates for the number of CEBs operating in the region in the 1970s, which some convincingly argue were largely exaggerated or in decline during the 1960s and 1970s (Daudelin and Hewitt 1995b:184;

⁹⁰ This included, for example, the Chilean Vicariate and COPACHI, the various national and diocesan Justice and Peace and other related rights-based commissions, the Paraguayan Committee of Churches for Emergency Assistance, and the ecumenical Committee Pro-Justice and Peace in Guatemala.

⁹¹ This included, for instance, ONIS in Peru, CONFREGUA in Guatemala, the Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights in Argentina, and the Permanent Assemblies for Human Rights in Bolivia and Argentina.

⁹² The diocesan-level Justice and Peace Commissions in Brazil were generally ineffective. Yet under the leadership of Cardinal Evaristo Arns, the Sao Paulo Commission established active human rights programs, and encouraged the development of similar Commissions in other dioceses (Smith 1979:99). The Cardinal also supported demonstrations against the regime's abuses (Dipboye 1982:501-2), and sponsored the *Brazil: Nunca Mais* (Brazil: Never Again) project that secretly produced a 7,000-page report on rights abuses under Brazil's military regimes using the official records of military court proceedings (Archdiocese of Sao Paulo 1986).

Gooren 2002:30; Levine 2009:129). Yet even using generous estimates for Brazil, CEB participants would have only represented between two and four percent of the population (Daudelin and Hewitt 1995b:184). In turn, there is limited consensus on the extent of the CEBs' politicization, as their ability to mobilize rights action varied considerably, with many focused instead on spiritual growth and worship or on non-politicized community building (Gooren 2002:30; Drogus 1995:468; McNamara 1979:346; Toll 2008:30; Dipboye 1982:518; Valle and Pitta 1994:56, cited in Cousineau 1997:568; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:27; Hewitt 1990:845-6). Thus, where priests encouraged their activism, evidence suggests that the CEBs did help to foster empowerment and a grassroots human rights consciousness, and lay the foundation for future rights claiming. Yet it is difficult to determine the number that succeeded in this regard, and the evidence indicates that it was far fewer than previously believed.

Finally, as with the Black Church during the American Civil Rights Movement (Morris 1996), and the Catholic Church and Gujarat United Christian Forum for Human Rights in Ahmedabad, what appeared to be strong activism on the part of the hierarchy was instead the work of well-positioned leaders in some of the more celebrated cases. For instance, the Peruvian Episcopal Conference's Commission for Social Action spoke with the official voice of the Church as it publicly defended workers' rights, freedom of the press, and the right to political participation, and denounced the state's increasing use of torture, political detention and disappearances in the latter half of the 1970s⁹³ (Fleet and Smith 1997:89, 198-9, 202, 207; Pasara 1989:285). Yet few bishops beyond those in the South Andean dioceses fully supported its critical position on social issues, and many

⁹³ Before the mid-1970s, "human rights" was neither a popular nor an intellectual movement in Peru. It was only after the Carter administration began using human rights as a guiding principle for American foreign policy that Peruvians began using them to criticize an increasingly repressive regime (Cleary 1997:87).

only acquiesced to its involvement in rights activism because it relieved them of the responsibility to speak out and buffered them from the risks (Klaiber 1992:101; Fleet and Smith 1997:89, 201-2). Instead, the Commission's vocally supportive position on rights issues more accurately reflected the politics of its director, Msgr. Luis Bambarén, and of his liberation-theology-inspired advisors, including Fr. Ricardo Antoncich, the Jesuit theologian who penned most of its statements (Fleet and Smith 1997:89, 104, 202, 207).

Likewise, as primate, Archbishop Romero was a key leader in the relatively small Salvadoran Church.⁹⁴ Yet he was an exception among the national bishops in his support for rights action, as only his successor Bishop Rivera y Damas supported his work and continued it after Romero's assassination in 1980 (Dipboye 1982: 505-6, 516; Klaiber 1998:173-4). By contrast, the episcopacy remained largely silent, and evidence indicates that they issued only two pastoral letters during the 1970s that publicly condemned rights abuses in the country (Dipboye 1982:505; Klaiber 1998:174). Thus, as in Ahmedabad, what appeared to be strong rights activism on the part of the Peruvian and Salvadoran hierarchies was instead primarily the work of a few well-placed Church leaders.

Even the Chilean and Brazilian cases were initially set to follow a similar trend. For instance, the former Church's involvement in rights politics from the start of military rule can be primarily attributed to the efforts of its de facto primate, Cardinal Raul Silva Henriquez. To begin, it was through his leadership that the Church participated in the ecumenical COPACHI, which operated under his archdiocese's legal jurisdiction (Fleet and Smith 1997:61; Lowden 1996:32-3). He also led the efforts to roll its operations into the Vicariate of Solidarity once it was forced to close, which he then declared an official

⁹⁴ The San Salvador archdiocese, with its location in the capital city and its high concentration of clergy and religious women, is a very important centre in the Church, and its archbishop retains considerable power vis-à-vis other representatives of the episcopacy (Klaiber 1998:173; Lowden 1996:17).

ministry of his archdiocese (Fleet and Smith 1997:61-3; Lowden 1996:53-5). Thus, while Cardinal Silva was de facto leader for the national Church, the Vicariate always spoke for his archdiocese, not for the national episcopacy (Cleary 1997:7-8; Lowden 1996:165, n. 5). Instead, the latter was far more hesitant than Cardinal Silva's actions would suggest, and did not openly support rights-based action in the first years of military rule, including that of COPACHI and the Vicariate (Smith 1979: 92, 96; Fleet and Smith 1997:63-5; Lowden 1996:53-4). In turn, it tempered its early statements on state rights violations by keeping them very general and not referring to specific cases of abuse, and combining their criticism with thanks for the military for saving Chile from communist rule (Fleet and Smith 1997:60-1; Lowden 1996:30-1).

Likewise, the driving force behind the Brazilian CNBB and its activism was Dom Helder Camara and a core of bishops who had been actively engaged in promoting social change in their dioceses, but who traditionally held little power in the Church (Bruneau 1974:107-8). Given the particularly contentious nature of the work after the 1964 military coup, however, their colleagues initially sought to constrain the CNBB's authority and ability to operate, and strove to continue openly cooperating with the regime up until the early 1970s (Bruneau 1974:107-122, 240). During this period, most bishops publicly held their silence, refusing to denounce increasing repression, even as Catholics fell victim to attack (Serbin 2000:38). Thus, even in Chile and Brazil, where many bishops supported a rights-engaged Church, their episcopacies as unitary actors were at least initially hesitant to involve the Church in the fight for human rights.

Institutional Stoicism? Church-Targeted Attacks and a More Inconsistent Response

As in Ahmedabad, the common exception to the neglect of rights-based work was in cases of attacks against the Churches' operations or abuse of their rights and freedoms. Such violations still generally succeeded in radicalizing the Church's position on rights politics,⁹⁵ and served as the most common catalyst for episcopal engagement, even if they were otherwise disengaged. For instance, the Salvadoran hierarchy issued its first rights-supportive public statement after its clergy fell victim to state violence, and the Argentine Church was more apt to draw attention to a case if the victim was officially linked to the Church (Dipboye 1982:505; Smith 1979:113; Klaiber 1998:81). Moreover, it was attacks against their religious operations and authority that eventually won the allegiance of the Chilean and Brazilian Churches to the human rights cause in the long term (see below) (Bruneau 1974:122; Fleet and Smith 1997:62-5; Smith 1979:95-7, 100; Hewitt 1990:841-2; Dipboye 1982:508-9; Lowden 1996:18-9; Bruneau and Hewitt 1992:42).

Yet the relationship between Church-targeted attacks and a rights-based response was less consistent in Latin America than in Ahmedabad, which suggests that they were a far less effective catalyst. For instance, as already observed, the Argentine Church was not always willing to come to the public defence of its clergy or parishioners, even when they were openly attacked. Likewise, Pinochet and his supporters harassed, detained and expelled rights-engaged clergy and laypeople as soon as he seized control of state power. Yet the Chilean hierarchy generally held its silence in the first few years, and allowed rights-engaged enclaves to respond to these abuses (Fleet and Smith 1997:62).

⁹⁵ In Nicaragua, increasing attacks against Catholics who supported the Sandinista revolution encouraged the hierarchy to move beyond simply defending physical integrity rights, and to instead declare its official support for armed rebellion (Klaiber 1998:193-200; Dipboye 1982:515-6; Williams 1992:130).

Further, an increase in Church-targeted attacks seemed to weaken the Churches' resolve, rather than encourage more active involvement. For instance, attacks against dissident and rights-engaged clergy served as the initial catalyst behind the Paraguayan Church's decision to establish the ecumenical Committee of Churches for Emergency Assistance, and to become itself involved in the fight for human rights (Smith 1979:102-4; Klaiber 1998:95-7; Horst 2002:725-6). Yet when the state responded by killing more priests, deporting foreign missionaries and repressing peaceful protests, the Church retreated, rather than hardening its position as rights activist (Horst 2002:725-6; Mantilla 2010:561-2). Its Committee continued its work unabated (Smith 1979:102-4). Yet the hierarchy itself rarely engaged in public advocacy, and instead began responding to rights abuses with pastoral care and relief work (Klaiber 1998:99-100; Lowden 1996:18).

In turn, the Bolivian Church's willingness to condemn attacks against its property, personnel or even its religious amnesty had always been inconsistent. However, when the state began to deport foreign clergy in response to Church-led activism, the Church grew increasingly silent, rather than respond to these abuses with rights tactics. Indeed, it went so far as to publicly condemn rights-engaged clergy and the politicization of the Church, and to declare its Justice and Peace Commission in temporary recess at the state's behest⁹⁶ (Klaiber 1998:127-8; Mantilla 2010:562; Smith 1975:11-2, 1979:110, 107-8). Likewise, the Uruguayan and Guatemalan Churches were never strong rights proponents. Yet in the face of Church-targeted repression, both grew even more reserved, rather than

⁹⁶ It was reorganized in 1977 amidst pressure from the laity, and continued its work alongside the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, which was fully autonomous of the Church (Klaiber 1998:128).

staunchly rights-engaged⁹⁷ (Klaiber 1998:226-7; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:3, 14; Mantilla 2010:562; Smith 1979:121, n. 5).

The clear exceptions were the Brazilian CNBB from late 1970 onwards, and the Chilean hierarchy after 1975, as both became increasingly vocal in their condemnation of rights abuses in the face of mounting repression⁹⁸ (Bruneau 1974:107; Bruneau and Hewitt 1992:42; Lowden 1996:18-9; Fleet and Smith 1997:62-5; Smith 1979:95-7, 100; Dipboye 1982:508-9). Yet as noted above, this relationship was similarly inconsistent, as both Churches initially maintained widespread silence when its dissident clergy were harassed. Collectively, this suggests that Latin American Churches were even less willing than the Ahmedabad churches to engage in rights politics. Since they were comparably much stronger institutions, this apparently greater hesitation demands further explanation.

Protecting Their Religious Cause: Institutional Vulnerability in a Majority Context

In beginning to explain the behaviour of the Latin American episcopacies, it bears repeating that the Catholic Church's primary allegiance is to its religious movement and to its goal of spreading its religious message, as it had been for the Ahmedabad churches (Bruneau 1974:3-4; Daudelin and Hewitt 1995b:179-81; Fleet and Smith 1997:73, 215; Levine 1979:57-8; Pasara 1989:286). Supporting the human rights movement, however, meant allying their institutions with a secular movement whose approach and objectives were potentially high-risk and directly opposed to their traditional means of securing their interests, namely, by supporting the status quo (Donnelly 2007:283; Livezey 1989:17-8).

⁹⁷ For instance, several members of the Guatemalan Ecumenical Committee Pro-Justice and Peace were forced into exile, and those that remained took its work underground (Houghton 2007:117). In turn, the Uruguayan Church, like that in Argentina, shied away even from lending its voice to CELAM's joint condemnation of rights abuses in El Salvador and Nicaragua (Dipboye 1982:521).

⁹⁸ The Brazilian Church tempered its public rights-based criticisms, however, during secret dialogues with the military as part of the Bipartite Commission (1970-1974) (Serbin 2000, see below).

Indeed, to challenge the latter was to invite censorship, surveillance, harassment and even imprisonment, torture or murder under authoritarian regimes (Smith 1975:16-7). Thus, engaging with rights in practice had the potential to readily increase the costs of religious practice, and in the process, directly threaten their capacity as a movement and institution (Johnston and Figa 1988:43; Smith 1975:25).

Therefore, I argue that supporting rights activism was a high-risk venture for the Latin American Catholic Churches, and that as in Ahmedabad, these risks were amplified by their dependence on the state to maintain and advance their religious interests. Clearly, their level of vulnerability is not directly comparable to that of the Ahmedabad churches, which often faced opposition for no other reason than their professed faith. Nor can their neglect of rights work be described as a response to a hostile minority context, since they represented the religious majority and willing members of the established social order in most cases. However, most Churches had trusted in a Neo-Christendom model to achieve their religious dominance (Bruneau 1974:3-5). This meant that the Churches were heavily invested in maintaining the status quo that rights activists were challenging, particularly as most continued to rely on state resources, power, and support to fulfil their religious functions (Smith 1979; Klaiber 1998; Levine 1979; Fleet and Smith 1997:74). Moreover, while the Ahmedabad churches depended on foreign funding to support their operations, the Latin American Churches relied on foreign priests to staff their parishes, and their continued access to these foreign personnel similarly depended on state consent (Nepstad 2004:120; Cleary 1997:143-5; Fleet and Smith 1997:74; Klaiber 1998; Levine 1979; Smith 1979). This thus heightened their vulnerability to repression, as they would have concurrently risked their resource base as well as the deportation of their staff if they had

engaged in any activity of which the state disapproved, leaving their ministries both underfinanced and understaffed⁹⁹ (Smith 1975:19-20, 1979:18-9; Fleet and Smith 1997:74). Consequently, like their Ahmedabad counterparts, they were highly motivated to remain disengaged from contentious politics, since to do otherwise would have risked their secular alliances and financial solvency, and thus the sustainability of their religious operations (Smith 1975:16-7, 1979:119-20, 95, 100-1, 103, 111).

Further, maintaining strong state relations was a priority not only for the resources it ensured, but because the Churches typically wielded limited social power beyond their ability to influence state policy and practice (Bruneau 1974:5, 239; Pasara 1989:286). Thus, to risk their alliance with the state was to risk being unable to assert any authority at all, and to thus achieve their religious objectives (Bruneau 1974:3-4; Johnston and Figa 1988:33). When combined with their dependence on the state for material support and access to international personnel, this meant that their interests seemed better served by staying the course of catering to the elite and supporting only those reforms that the state itself introduced, as this minimized the number of open confrontations and protected their privileged status (Daudelin and Hewitt 1995b:179-81; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:23). This was acutely true for those Churches that were institutionally very weak or the most tightly integrated with state structures and reliant on its support, including those in Argentina,¹⁰⁰ Colombia,¹⁰¹ Venezuela,¹⁰² Guatemala,¹⁰³ and Uruguay.¹⁰⁴ Thus, it should

⁹⁹ Estimates for the number of foreign clergy range from 81% in Guatemala (1969); to 70% in Bolivia (1981); 60% in both Nicaragua (1988) and Peru (1984); 50% in Paraguay (1990); 50% of religious priests and 30% of secular clergy in Chile (1965); 61% of religious and 15% of secular clergy in Uruguay (1981); and at least 25% of secular clergy in Argentina (1961) (Klaiber 1998:43, 76, 94, 113, 122, 151, 196, 223). In Brazil, this number rose from 33% in 1946 to nearly 50% of all Brazilian clergy in 1964 (Della Cava 1976:38). Finally, estimates from the early 1990s posit that in 17 of 20 Latin American countries, approximately 20% of parishes were under the control of foreign clergy (Froehle 1992:110).

¹⁰⁰ The Argentine Church was heavily reliant on state funding and tightly integrated with state structures. Moreover, since pro-Church political parties were not electorally competitive, it had fostered close relations

not be altogether surprising that these same Churches were also among the least rights-engaged. Collectively, this lends further support to Hertzke's (2001) and Smith's (1975, 1979) findings that fear of state retribution and loss of material resources, particularly for those most dependent on the state, limits church willingness to engage in rights work.

Moreover, most Churches maintained low-risk channels through which they could advance their interests and otherwise influence secular politics (Bruneau 1974:5). This was true even under repressive rule, since most regimes sought to win their political support by maintaining strong ties with the Churches and protecting their rights (Johnston and Figa 1988:33; Klaiber 2009:412; McNamara 1979:348; Dipboye 1982:500; Cleary 1997:3-4). As I argue in Chapter Two, however, the ability to address concerns through established channels generally undermines support for contentious politics for perceived lack of need, and for fear of risking continued access to the state and the benefits that this affords (Goodwin 2001:26, 46; Johnston and Figa 1988:43). As in Ahmedabad, this latter fear was well warranted, since most states signalled via retaliative attack that the Church would lose its protected status and invite the same treatment as any other opposition group if it regularly and publicly challenged the status quo (Bruneau 1974:226; Johnston and Figa 1988:33; Klaiber 2009:412; McNamara 1979:348; Dipboye 1982:500; Cleary

with state and military officials to preserve its influence, and these ties only strengthened in the 1960s (Smith 1975:14, 1979:115; Vallier 1970:128; Edmonds 2010:175-6, 183-5; Mantilla 2010:565-6).

¹⁰¹ The Colombian Church was a relatively strong institution, but was closely integrated with state structures (Levine 1979:53-6). This meant that its primary concern was for maintaining the status quo, rather than encouraging radical rights-based change. Indeed, Colombian bishops interviewed during this time argued that the Church's role in society was to engage in charitable outreach and activate the laity, without engaging in activism itself, since this would be too politically partisan as well as risky, given their dependence on state funds and structures (Levine 1979:58-63, 73).

¹⁰² The Venezuelan Church was among the weakest in the region, having faced aggressive anti-clerical movements that left it with little property, few personnel, and a highly secular state (Froehle 1992:105-8; Levine 1979:53).

¹⁰³ The Guatemalan Church was severely weakened by anticlerical movements (Klaiber 1998:217, 222-3).

¹⁰⁴ The Uruguayan Church had never attained a position of social, political or religious dominance in its highly secularized state (Klaiber 1998:110-5; Smith 1979:121, n. 5).

1997:3-4). This would have significantly raised the costs of continued religious practice, and thus inspired caution vis-à-vis rights-based work.

Indeed, in order to avoid completely sacrificing its state access and thus its means of asserting political influence and raising institutional concerns, the Brazilian bishops began to secretly meet with the military as part of the Bipartite Commission at the same time that the CNBB grew more vocal in publicly denouncing state rights abuses. In these meetings, the bishops tempered their public criticism, and strove to resolve Church-state conflicts in order to avoid an irreconcilable rift and to protect their political privileges and religious and moral dominance, even as they publicly criticised the state's human rights record (Serbin 2000:113, 222-5, 234). Though they never compromised their position on human rights, this demonstrates that the Brazilian bishops were far more pragmatic than it seemed, as they both publicly opposed and secretly accommodated the regime in order to defend their institutional interests as well as human rights (Serbin 2000:224-5, 5-6).

Finally, since they were part of the establishment, the ties between Church and State were generally stronger than in Ahmedabad, where the churches had been at best a tolerated minority. Thus, the Churches were better poised than the latter to influence state policy via these channels. When combined with the risks of engaging in public advocacy, evidence suggests that this motivated otherwise disengaged Churches to raise their rights concerns primarily through quiet diplomacy. For instance, the Argentine Church, which exhibited little public concern over rights conditions in the country, released a series of letters written to officials between 1970 and 1972 and the records of at least 20 private visits with the regime, in which it expressed frustration at continued violations of basic rights and raised specific cases of abuse (Klaiber 1998:79-80). The Uruguayan Church

similarly raised objections in private messages, even while supporting attacks against its dissident clergy (Klaiber 1998:115). Thus, as in Ahmedabad, quiet diplomacy presented a lower-risk alternative to public advocacy that motivated the Churches to maintain public silence on rights issues, and to nurture at times questionable alliances in the interests of preserving their survival as a religious movement and social power.

Lesser of Two Evils: Explaining an Inconsistent Response to Church-Targeted Attacks

Indeed, the Latin American Catholic Churches seemed even less willing to break their silence than the Ahmedabad churches, as the hierarchies did not always come to the defence of their clergy and often retreated from rights advocacy, even as Church-targeted attacks increased. Initially, this suggested that attacks against the Church were a far less effective catalyst than the Ahmedabad case indicated. Yet this apparent inconsistency instead served to clarify two important and related points. First, it was not attacks against the clergy, but efforts to hinder the sustainability of their religious cause that consistently invoked a strong institutional response and proved the more effective catalyst for church-rights engagement in both cases. Second, when it became clear that publicly defending their dissident clergy would only further jeopardize the sustainability of their religious operations, letting these attacks go publicly unanswered proved a lesser of two evils, as long as their religious activities were secure and they continued to receive state support.

To begin, the Ahmedabad churches operated in a hostile context where the Hindu extremists had painted them as threats to the national interest. Consequently, their actions attracted suspicion and opposition, and Christians were often harassed for no other reason than their professed faith, since most churches abstained from contentious politics. In this

environment, most attacks against the churches' rights, freedoms, personnel or adherents, such as the Freedom of Religion Bill or reconversion campaigns in south Gujarat, sought to weaken their resolve as a religious movement and limit their evangelical growth. In short, their religious cause was under threat. As I argue in Chapter Two, this prompted the churches to engage in rights-based advocacy, since there was a clear link between the issue at hand and their most pressing institutional concerns (Goodwin 2001:25-6).

In direct contrast, the Latin American Catholic Churches were largely protected from repression, with their religious presence accepted and their operations supported by the state. As such, most Church-targeted attacks were not part of an overarching effort to undermine their capacity as a religious movement, but instead a response to clerical involvement in contentious politics. Moreover, unlike attacks in Ahmedabad, they were generally limited to dissident actors, rather than indiscriminately affecting their religious operations, adherents or clergy. Clearly, many ultimately hindered their capacity as a religious actor, particularly if priests were expelled. Yet unlike in Ahmedabad, this was not the intent. Indeed, the Brazilian state actually claimed to be defending the Church's religious integrity by eliminating its subversive actors (Bruneau 1974:180-1). Instead, the goal was to reinforce the risks of engaging with rights in practice,¹⁰⁵ weaken Church resolve, and encourage them to retreat into their role as disengaged institutions that simply conducted the religious rites and supported the status quo (Bruneau 1974:180-1). For it was Church as social activist, and not as religious actor, that the state vehemently opposed, and the latter would be protected, so long as it abandoned the former.

¹⁰⁵ For instance, Klaiber (1998:82-3) argues that the murder of two rights-engaged bishops in Argentina fostered a "climate of fear in the Church." This was not dissimilar to the case in Ahmedabad, where several of my interviewees pointed to well-publicized attacks against social activists and to threats against Fr. Cedric, all of which informed their conviction that rights-based activism was dangerous (see Chapter Two).

This helps to explain why the Church in Paraguay, for instance, initially defended rights-engaged clergy, but retreated almost as quickly in the face of retaliative attack. The same can be said of Bolivia, Uruguay, Guatemala and even Argentina, where the activism of the hierarchy and independently rights-engaged clergy was consistently answered with repression, and thus the greater threat to their operations was in publicly participating in contentious politics and forfeiting their status as a protected social actor. Thus, while the frequency of Church-targeted attacks rose over time, unlike in Ahmedabad, it was their social activism and not their religious activities that was the target. Further, as it became clear that to continue the former would threaten the latter, Churches were motivated to withdraw and to treat rights-engaged clergy as liabilities, whose actions were not to be openly condoned.¹⁰⁶ In this way, they were not unlike the churches in Ahmedabad, where rights-engaged clergy were treated similarly, and for the same reason that they invited repression and risked the churches' ability to advance their religious cause (STWM-08-2011; STWM-14-2011; STWM-18-2011). The implications of this position were simply clearer in Latin America, since more Church leaders were involved in rights politics, and thus there were more opportunities for the Churches to deny them public support.

Yet if the repression began to affect the Churches' traditional ministries as well as dissident clergy, or the elite challenged their religious integrity, the hierarchies were more willing to engage in rights work, since it was no longer just their unconventional activism that was under attack. Instead, there was now a clear link between the issue at hand and their religious interests, as in the case of most attacks against the Christian community in Ahmedabad, which invoked a more consistent rights-based response (Goodwin 2001:25-

¹⁰⁶ There is evidence to suggest that the Honduran Church similarly withdrew from radical rural-based politics after it prompted attacks against its religious interests (c.f. Shepherd 1995).

6). For instance, when the Paraguayan bishops were accused of being Communists, they penned a letter read nation-wide during Sunday Mass that not only denounced the slander but also the violation of physical integrity rights, while calling for judicial reform (Smith 1979:103). Similarly, when Pinochet dissolved the Christian Democratic Party and closed its radio station, the Chilean Church responded by demanding an end to military rule and state accountability on political disappearances (Fleet and Smith 1997:64). In turn, rising attacks against even moderate bishops like Dom Waldir Calheiros and CNBB secretary-general Dom Alóisio Lorscheider, and the state's increasing harassment, surveillance and censorship of rural-based pastoral programs, radio stations and publications, established that the state was not longer limiting its attacks to dissident clergy and helped to convince the CNBB to involve itself in the fight for human rights (Smith 1997:97, 100-1; Bruneau 1974:188-209; Dipboye 1982:508-9; Serbin 2000:85, 88, 92). Indeed, scholars argue that in Chile and Brazil, the necessary catalyst for what proved to be strong Church support in the long term was the rising number of threats to their religious cause (Smith 1979:95-7, 100-1; Fleet and Smith 1997:63-5; Hewitt 1990:841-2; Dipboye 1982:508-9; Lowden 1996:18-9). Therefore, as in Ahmedabad, the most consistent catalyst for church-rights engagement was threats to the Churches' integrity and capacity as religious institutions, as there was a clear link between the issue at hand and their core institutional interests.

Yet unlike in Ahmedabad, the Church was a valuable ally and actively supported by the state. Consequently, such attacks proved rare, which helps to further explain why the hierarchies were largely rights-disengaged. For as traditionally non-activist actors that faced substantial risks both in principle and in practice by engaging with rights politics, the Churches had to be fully committed to the final outcome before they were generally

willing to assume the risks (McAdam 1986:71). Since their allegiance to issues of human rights and social justice will rarely if ever rival that to their religious cause (Daudelin and Hewitt 1995b:179-81; Fleet and Smith 1997:73), this commitment was more readily won when defending the former overlapped with advancing the latter. In the contrasting socio-religious contexts, however, such cases were far more rare than in Ahmedabad, giving the Churches little occasion as well as motivation to engage. Therefore, while grievances will not always invoke political action (Wald, et al. 2005:130-1; McVeigh and Sikkink 2001:1426-7), I maintain that the Latin American case reinforces that in their absence, the risks of engaging with rights in practice for state-dependent institutions like the Churches remain too high, and the benefits of doing so unclear. As a result, their interests continue to seem better served by trading silence, even in the face of attacks against their dissident elements, for access to the resources on which their operations depend.

Playing a Supportive Role: Autonomy, Global Resources & Church-Rights Engagement

In turn, while threats to their religious cause remained the necessary catalyst, their increasing autonomy from the state and access to rights-supportive donors facilitated the Churches' sustained engagement in rights politics by mitigating the associated risks. However, I maintain that the impact of the latter factor ultimately depended on the former, and that this relationship reinforces how concern for their religious cause first and foremost shaped the Latin American Churches' response to rights work.

Others have explained the value of autonomy in encouraging religious support for contentious politics by arguing that it helps to separate Church from State interests and to motivate the former to seek a regime that supports its rights (Edmonds 2007; Philpott

2007; Toft, et al. 2011). Both points have merit in the case of church-rights engagement, particularly the former. Indeed, if autonomous, challenging state policies or engaging in state-forbidden rights activism does not as directly threaten Church interests as in cases of state-dependence (Edmonds 2010:16-7). Even more poignantly, Bruneau (1974:69-72) argues that since the Latin American Churches in particular have for so long successfully depended on their access to state power to achieve their religious goals, it was only if this was no longer a reliable approach that they would even begin to consider looking beyond the state for alternative means of asserting influence in society.

The two Churches that thus best approximated this ideal of institutional autonomy were those in Chile and Brazil, although neither was fully independent. For instance, the Chilean Church had historically enjoyed greater autonomy from the state than most in the region (Edmonds 2010:189-90). Yet even when the country fell to repressive rule, it still depended on some state subsidies and approximately 50% of priests were foreigners who remained in the country at the state's "good graces," two vulnerabilities that Pinochet did not hesitate to exploit in order to constrain Church activism (Fleet and Smith 1997:74). In turn, while earlier authors argued that the Brazilian Church had largely lost its position of privilege and state funding by 1971 (Hewitt 1990:839-40, 849; Bruneau 1974:225-9), the operations of the Bipartite Commission from late 1970 until late 1974 demonstrate that the Church had not completely lost its access to established channels of influence through which it could raise institutional concerns with the state, be they abortion, state subsidies and religious competition, or human rights and social justice (Serbin 2000).

Nevertheless, the mounting attacks against their religious authority, high-ranking officials, and traditional ministries increasingly signalled that the trend of Church-

targeted attacks now extended beyond their dissident elements, and that in both cases, they could no longer reliably depend on state support (Serbin 2000:2, 88; Fleet and Smith 1997:63-5).¹⁰⁷ This was perhaps clearest in Chile, where Pinochet increasingly courted the Church's Pentecostal competition in an effort to undermine its influence and status, offering them the political space once reserved for the Church in exchange for their moral and political support (Cleary 1997:13; De Kadt 2009:783). Yet even with the efforts of the Bipartite Commission to resolve Church-state tensions, the Brazilian Church was not immune to state abuse, which extended to the censorship of official CNBB communiqués and closure of Church radio stations (Serbin 2000:173-4, 180-4). Indeed, while it could still dialogue with a small cadre of dedicated Catholic military leaders, the Church far from enjoyed the full public support of the state and political elite (Serbin 2000:221-2, 4).

As predicted by Bruneau (1974:69-72), the two Churches' position of increasing autonomy motivated them to consider other means of asserting their religious influence beyond the state. At this time, access to foreign donors willing to support rights efforts encouraged them to embrace rights politics in particular, by indicating that this would be a well-supported means of asserting their influence in society and thus mitigating the associated risks. Yet without the catalyst of threats to their religious operations, as well as the increasing separation of Church and State interests, the Latin American case suggests that such funds will prove insufficient catalysts for strong church-rights engagement.

¹⁰⁷ Serbin (2000:2, 85-8) argues that the turning point for the Brazilian Church was the late 1970 attacks against the Catholic Youth Workers (JOC) and the Jesuit study centre (IBRADES), during which security agents harassed key Church leaders, including the "provincial head of the Jesuit order and the president of Rio's Catholic university," and most importantly, detained the CNBB secretary-general and moderate bishop Dom Alóisio Lorscheider. In turn, Fleet and Smith (1997:63-5) note that the Chilean Church's position shifted in 1976 in the face of public challenges to the bishops' religious authority, attacks against labour union participants in Church-sponsored workshops, the dissolution of the Christian Democratic Party, and physical public attacks against dissident but high-ranking Church officials.

To begin, the evidence indicates that most of the Churches could have mobilized global financing and support if they had chosen to engage with rights work. For instance, Cleary (1997:130) notes that Catholics were sending more financial support than foreign states to encourage human rights organizing in the region, and Protestants were similarly strong in their support. Thus, it is unsurprising that both the Paraguayan Committee of Churches for Emergency Assistance and Bolivian Justice and Peace Commission relied on budgetary and advocacy support from abroad (Smith 1979:102-4, 107-8). COPACHI and the Vicariate in Chile similarly depended on North American and Western European donors, who responded to Pinochet's abuses by funnelling increasing resources to support Church-led activism (Cleary 1997:3; Smith 1979:92-3; Green 2003:87-9, 111). In turn, the Brazilian Church reportedly received more support from Catholics abroad than any other Church, not only because of its size and thus importance in the global Church community, but also to support its activism (Della Cava 2011:562-3). Indeed, global support for the Chilean and Brazilian Churches was arguably unrivalled in the 1960s and 1970s, as their political exiles helped lay the groundwork for future solidarity movements with citizens of other Latin American states in subsequent decades (Green 2003:87-90, 111). Nevertheless, Fleet and Smith (1997:209) argue that the Peruvian hierarchy could have mobilized international funds if it had chosen to challenge the state on rights abuses. Indeed, the only clear exception was in Argentina, where the state suspected all those in receipt of substantial foreign funds of colluding with insurgents. Accordingly, both the Church and Catholic RBOs were hesitant to solicit global financing (Smith 1979:113-4).

Yet I argue that the Argentine Church's inability to mobilize international funds proved unimportant, since like most Churches in the region, its religious cause remained

secure and it continued to enjoy and fully depend on state support. Therefore, even if well supported globally, the risks of defending human rights remained high and there was no incentive to look to other means of asserting influence beyond the state. Indeed, Klaiber (1992:98) maintains that the Peruvian Church's hesitation to seek support for rights work can be explained in no small part by its protection from repression, which it was loathe to compromise. This also helps to explain why the Paraguayan and Bolivian Churches chose to disengage from rights work over time, even as foreign donors were willing to support their efforts, and offers insight into the Chilean Church's decision to remain silent in the first years of military rule, even though COPACHI and the Vicariate received substantial international support for their rights efforts (Smith 1979:92-3; Cleary 1997:3). For it was only when its religious cause was threatened *and* it found itself in a position of increasing autonomy from the state that the Church had the incentive to look beyond the latter for its means of asserting influence, and thus access to these rights-supportive donors could play a role in facilitating its rights-based engagement by mitigating the associated risks.¹⁰⁸

Finally, as noted in my Introduction, donor interests often play a disproportionate role in shaping the activities of RBOs in the global South, as the latter avoid politicized issues and focus on those that receive the greatest donor support, which do not always correspond with actual needs on the ground (Englund 2000:583-4, 2006; Berkovitch and Gordon 2008; Dicklitch and Lwanga 2003). Smith (1975:20-1, 1979:117) argues that the Latin American Churches' attention to civil and political rights stemmed from a similar relationship. To begin, these rights have enjoyed strong normative and legal support since

¹⁰⁸ Shepherd (1995:128-9) argues that a crucial factor in enabling the Honduran Church's involvement in radical rural politics was its access to international resources and to the solidarity of strong external actors, which succeeded in encouraging its official participation up until it began to invite increased repression and to thus compromise the Church's evangelical operations.

the beginning of the post-war movement (Smith 1975:20-1, 1979:117; Cardenas 2007:4, 32; Milner, et al. 1999:408, 419-21; Ron, et al. 2005:562;). By contrast, the international community generally exhibits ambivalence towards violations of social, economic and cultural rights, and are demonstrably slower to come to their defence (Leckie 1998). Thus, Smith (1975, 1979) argues that by focusing on civil and political issues, the Churches helped to ensure the support of the foreign donors on whom they came to rely. Clearly, these were also some of the most pressing concerns at the time, as state use of torture, illegal detention, disappearances and forced exile was widespread. Nevertheless, the Latin American case underscores the continued relevance of determining the sources of financial support when examining the rights work of religious as well as secular actors.

In sum, the Latin American case demonstrates that increasing autonomy from the state and access to rights-supportive donors can promote church-rights engagement. Yet neither proved sufficient without the initial catalyst of threats to their religious cause. In turn, the evidence suggests that if they continued to receive and depend on strong state support, the risks of defending rights remained high and the Churches were not motivated to develop alternative means of asserting influence beyond their access to state power and influence. Thus, even if they could access global funds to support rights initiatives, this was not sufficient to prompt the Churches to assume the role of rights activists along with the associated risks. Collectively, this supports my argument that the churches' commitment to and concern for preserving their religious cause will foremost shape their willingness to engage with rights in practice.¹⁰⁹

¹⁰⁹ The Ahmedabad churches remained heavily dependent on the state for access to the primarily foreign resources on which their operations relied. Therefore, the churches were in a similar position to most of their Latin American counterparts, in that the risks of mobilizing foreign funds in support of rights initiatives remained too high. Indeed, evidence suggests that so long as they fall under the purview of the

Subcontracting Human Rights Work: Rights-Engaged Bystanders & Mitigated Risk

Finally, as in Ahmedabad, bystander theory offers valuable insight into the Latin American Catholic Churches' response to rights work. First, the absence of generalized repression was correlated with low rights-based activism, as responsibility for defending rights was diffuse and the Churches' were encouraged to exhibit bystander apathy vis-à-vis this work (Bickman 1971). For instance, the Venezuelan and Colombian Churches operated under democratic and less repressive rule during the 1960s and 1970s than their regional counterparts (Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:13-4). This was correlated with conservative, rights-disengaged hierarchies that discouraged direct clerical involvement in contentious politics, although progressive enclaves persisted in challenging the state on rights issues (Mainwaring and Wilde 1989; Froehle 1992; Levine 1979).¹¹⁰

Continued democratic rule was rare, however, as most Churches operated under authoritarian regimes by the 1970s, where they were the only actor that retained its rights, and one of the last remaining outlets for social or political activism (Klaiber 2009:412; McNamara 1979:348; Dipboye 1982:500; Cleary 1997:3-4). As predicted by bystander theory (Bickman 1971), when it became clear that others could not successfully intervene in cases of abuse, this focused the sense of responsibility for defending human rights on the Churches (Johnston and Figa 1988; Mainwaring and Wilde 1989; Smith 1979). Even the Peruvian episcopacy, which was never an enthusiastic rights activist, recognized that

FCRA, they will only engage in non-politicized work in order to maintain their financial solvency. Thus, while the Ahmedabad churches clearly lacked strong state support, they were far from autonomous.

¹¹⁰ The Colombian bishops were reportedly opposed to any clerical participation in the fight for social justice, as this was seen as too politically partisan and thus of too great a risk to their political alliances (Levine 1979:58-63, 73). In turn, the Venezuelan Church chose to actively repress the clerical minority who criticized the state's human rights record out of fear that they would compromise the Church's recent political gains (Froehle 1992:113).

the Church had to play a surrogate political role and defend the rights of those who could not defend themselves (Fleet and Smith 1997:201-2, 209, 212, 215-6).

Yet as already demonstrated, engaging in rights work was a high-risk venture for the Churches. Therefore, as in bystander theory in general (Clark and Wood 1974), and in Ahmedabad in particular, they rarely responded by committing their Churches to the role of activist. Instead, most established arms-length organizations that maintained official but indirect ties to the Church,¹¹¹ as their day-to-day management was the responsibility of the laity and of the independently rights-engaged clergy, and they depended on foreign donors for their budgetary support (Smith 1979; Klaiber 1998; Lowden 1996). In turn, even these organizations were fully intended to be temporary, since any and all Church involvement in rights politics was treated as neither necessary nor appropriate as secular movements began to emerge and strengthen (Mainwaring and Wilde 1989:29; Klaiber 2009:414; McNamara 1979:344-5). Thus, these agencies ceded ever more responsibility for defending rights to secular groups as time progressed (Cleary 1997:8-13, 47; Levine 2009:127, 137; Klaiber 2009:414; Flora and Bello 1989:528-9).¹¹²

I lack sufficient information to conclude for certain that establishing such groups represented a deliberate attempt on the part of the Churches to support rights efforts while insulating themselves from state censure. Yet the available evidence clearly suggests that these organizations served as a means of indirectly helping victims and responding to the focused pressure, while mitigating the risks of intervening. In this way, the Churches' response is not unlike that of the Ahmedabad churches, which offered immediate relief to

¹¹¹ This included the various national and diocesan Justice and Peace Commissions, the Paraguayan Committee of Churches for Emergency Assistance, COPACHI and the Vicariate in Chile, and the Guatemalan Committee Pro-Justice and Peace.

¹¹² Individual pastoral agents, however, many of whom were inspired by liberation theology, continue to pursue rights-based work on issues of racial, cultural and secular oppression and ecological exploitation, as well as those of social and economic injustice (c.f. Holden and Jacobson 2009:149; Molineaux 1995:13).

victims, but likewise avoided direct involvement in the fight for rights-based change. For both approaches maintained distance between the religious institutions and rights-based work, and thus protected the former from the risks associated with the latter. In fact, the Bolivian Church apparently stressed that the Justice and Peace Commission was not an “official organ of the Church” (Smith 1979:107). In turn, the added benefit of this distance for rights activists was that these agencies enjoyed greater freedom of operation and could more aggressively pursue rights issues than the hierarchy, since they were not concurrently responsible for the Churches’ religious interests (Conradson 2008:2123).

Finally, once established, these organizations’ efforts, in combination with those of emerging secular movements, independently rights-engaged pastoral agents, and faith-based groups, re-diffused the sense of pressure to involve the Church in the ongoing fight for human rights. As in Ahmedabad, this encouraged the Churches to abstain from further involvement in human rights work, as long as their religious cause was secure. Indeed, if the Chilean Church had not found its religious operations the target of direct attack, there is reason to suspect that it would have been content to allow its rights-engaged clergy to defend human rights without direct institutional support (Fleet and Smith 1997:68, 73-4).

In sum, I maintain that as in Ahmedabad, the Latin American Churches responded to rights-based work like the average bystander to a dangerous situation. Thus, while the focused pressure that came with being the lone bystanders invoked a response from many hierarchies, they continued to seek a means of intervening that would minimize the risks. According to bystander theory, this often means that bystanders will offer indirect rather than direct assistance to victims. In Ahmedabad, this had translated into providing relief to victims, and allowing others to assume the risks of offering the more direct assistance

of demanding rights-based change. In contrast, responsibility was more focused in Latin America, since few others could successfully intervene in cases of abuse. Therefore, most Churches responded by sponsoring RBOs that could more aggressively defend rights than they, in light of the institutional risks. In the process, they helped to rebuild civil society and re-diffuse responsibility for rights work, thus motivating them to exhibit apathy vis-à-vis further rights-based work, so long as their religious cause remained protected.

Conclusion

While there were clearly more rights-engaged leaders in Latin America than in Ahmedabad, the hierarchies were constrained by similar issues of vulnerability and state dependence that limited their engagement. Again, the most common exception was when their religious cause was threatened, as this established a clear link between the issue at hand and their most pressing institutional concerns. Yet unlike in Ahmedabad, the Churches were generally treated as a valuable political ally. Therefore, their religious operations were largely protected from repression, even as the state answered Church-led activism with targeted attacks. Accordingly, most Churches chose to maintain their public silence, even when dissident clergy fell victim to repression, in order to preserve their protected status and maintain the sustainability of their religious movement.

Further, my study lends support to the argument that autonomy from the state is a precursor to religious involvement in contentious politics (Edmonds 2007; Philpott 2007; Toft, et al. 2011). Indeed, it indicates that until there is an increasingly clear separation of Church from State interests, even foreign donors will be unable to financially persuade the Church to engage in rights politics, since the risks are too high. Yet if their religious

cause was the target of attack, and state support was also waning, they were motivated to develop other means of asserting social and religious influence beyond the state. At that time, access to foreign donors who were willing to support rights efforts helped to foster commitment to human rights work by signalling that Church efforts in this area would be well supported and thus mitigating the associated risks. This was particularly true around issues of civil and political rights, and the Churches' subsequent focus on defending these rights indicates that religious actors are not immune to the influence of donor interests in shaping their rights-based activities.

Finally, as in Ahmedabad, an open civil society was correlated with apathy vis-à-vis rights-based work. Yet most Churches were under authoritarian rule by the 1970s and most often the only social actor with its rights intact. While this focused the responsibility for defending rights, doing so remained a high-risk venture. Therefore, they sought out an indirect means of offering assistance that would reduce the potential risks of intervening. In practice, this meant that most Churches avoided committing their institution to the role of rights activist, and instead established arms-length organizations that were financially and operationally independent of the hierarchy. In so doing, they successfully maintained distance between their religious institution and the risks associated with supporting rights work. Once established, moreover, the combined efforts of these RBOs, rights-engaged clergy and secular groups re-diffused the sense of further responsibility for defending human rights. As a result, the national Churches generally exhibited bystander apathy vis-à-vis rights-based work in the long term, since others were able to adopt the role of rights activist, their religious cause was generally secure, and their state dependence, ongoing.

Conclusion:

The Primacy of Their Religious Cause: Engaged Bystanders & Mitigated Risk

While initial appearances suggested otherwise, the churches in Ahmedabad and Catholic Churches in Latin America generally remained disengaged from human rights in practice until their religious cause was directly threatened. In this way, they were not unlike the American Religious Right (Afshar 2006) or their South African counterparts under Apartheid (Borer 1996), or even the churches and church leaders who promote the right to religious freedom (Hertzke 2001; Nurser 2003). Namely, they would engage in rights activism when their religious authority and values were threatened, their rights and freedoms abused, and their adherents, personnel or traditional social ministries targeted in attacks that sought to undermine the long-term sustainability of their religious operations. This latter point is of particular consequence, since churches were not as eager to defend those clergy or adherents who engaged on issues that were not of clear religious concern. Threats against these actors instead served to underscore the risk of being involved in the human rights movement, and to thus encourage institutional retreat.

Others have explained this relationship between the experience of repression and engagement in contentious politics based on the radicalizing and sensitizing potential of the former (White 1989; Smith 1979; Levine 2010). While this clearly played a role, I maintain that church-targeted attacks and threats to their religious cause proved a more effective stimulus for rights-based work primarily because they established a crucial link between defending rights and resolving the churches' most pressing concerns as religious institutions (Goodwin 2001:25-6). For while even intense grievances do not directly lead to political engagement (McVeigh and Sikkink 2001:1426-7; Wald, et al. 2005:130-1),

human rights work had the potential to be highly politicizing and to invite attack from vested social interests, which threatened to raise the costs of religious practice (Johnston and Figa 1988:43; Donnelly 2007:283; Livezey 1989:17-8; Smith 1975:16-7). Thus, like McAdam (1986:71), I argue that the churches had to be strongly committed to the final objective before they were willing to adopt the role of rights activist and the associated risks. Since their commitment to such issues as social justice and human rights will rarely if ever rival that to their religious cause (Daudelin and Hewitt 1995b:179-81; Fleet and Smith 1997:73), such allegiance was more easily won when promoting human rights also helped to preserve their religious influence and operations. Therefore, like those of the American Religious Right, South African churches, or church efforts to defend the right to religious freedom, my study suggests that the churches' decisions to engage with rights in practice are most often driven by a form of rational self-interest, namely, their concern for the sustainability of their operations and of their religious cause more generally.

In turn, the churches' abstention from rights-based work was encouraged by their dependence on the state and access to established channels of political influence. The first made them wary of any action that could compromise state relations and thus their access to the resources needed to fulfil their religious functions. The second provided a low-risk means of raising concerns and advancing their interests. As both Goodwin (2001:26) and Johnston and Figa (1988) have observed, this generally limits enthusiasm for contentious politics for both perceived lack of need, and for fear of risking their established means of asserting influence and mobilizing support. Collectively, both factors raised the churches' vulnerability to repression, and encouraged them to raise their rights concerns via quiet

diplomacy rather than public activism, and to maintain at times questionable alliances in order to maintain access to the resources on which their operations depended.

This lends support to the argument that autonomy from the state is a precursor to religious involvement in contentious politics (Edmonds 2007; Philpott 2007; Toft, et al. 2011). In fact, while attacks against their religious cause remained the necessary catalyst, I argue that once the Latin American Churches were rights-engaged, they only considered continuing their involvement if state support was waning. Otherwise, the risks remained too high, and they were not motivated to look beyond the state for a means of asserting influence in society. Indeed, if the Churches continued to enjoy strong state support, even their access to rights-supportive foreign donors was not sufficient to prompt engagement in human rights work on non-Church-related issues. Yet with increasing autonomy from the state, the evidence suggests that Church access to donors who were willing to support rights initiatives helped foster long-term institutional commitment by signalling that their efforts would be supported, and mitigating the associated risks. Therefore, my research suggests that increasing autonomy from the state and access to rights-supportive foreign donors can promote church-rights engagement by affecting the level of risk. However, it also indicates that neither will prove sufficient without the catalyst of attacks against their religious cause, and that the impact of the latter ultimately depends on the former. This reinforces my argument that because the churches were primarily concerned about their religious operations, they had to believe they were advancing their religious cause as well as not risking its long-term survival before they would engage with rights in practice.

Finally, I argue that the churches responded to rights-based work in the same way a bystander responds to a dangerous situation. First, when others were able and willing to

intervene in cases of rights abuses and to adopt the associated risks, the churches did not experience any focused pressure to defend human rights. Instead, the responsibility was diffuse, which encouraged the churches to exhibit bystander apathy vis-à-vis rights-based intervention (Bickman 1971). This helps to explain why an active civil society promoted their neglect of rights-based work in Ahmedabad. Second, since engaging with rights in practice was a potentially high-risk venture, the churches sought to minimize the risks of intervening by offering indirect rather than direct assistance (Clark and Wood 1974). In Ahmedabad, this took the form of meeting victims' rights in the short term by providing humanitarian relief and needs-based services, while allowing other actors to provide the more direct and riskier assistance of lobbying for rights-based change. In Latin America, the Churches were likewise apt to avoid directly committing themselves to rights work, even as bystander pressure grew highly focused. Instead, most responded by establishing rights-based organizations that were operationally and financially independent of the national hierarchy. Both approaches were comparably safer than directly involving their institutions in the fight for human rights, and enabled the churches to offer support to rights victims while mitigating the risks to their religious movement. Moreover, the Latin American response in particular helped to repopulate society with rights-engaged actors, which re-diffused responsibility for defending human rights. Accordingly, most Churches proceeded to adopt the approach of their Ahmedabad counterparts, and exhibit bystander apathy vis-à-vis further rights-based work as long as their religious cause was secure.

Wald et al. (2001:130) remind scholars that religious actors may suffer costs by engaging in secular politics, and that it is generally far easier and safer for them to remain disengaged and focused on religious matters. My research demonstrates that this is

particularly true when it comes to secular social movements like human rights, where risks in principle are high, and often prove higher in practice. Indeed, in both cases, engaging with rights in practice could have jeopardized the sustainability of the churches' religious operations by compromising state relations and risking access to the resources they needed to fulfil their most basic religious functions. Since their ultimate allegiance is to their religious cause, and not to that of human rights, it was thus only when there was a clear link between advancing the former and defending the latter that the risks of doing so proved more palatable. Once engaged, factors like the churches' autonomy from the state or access to international resources could help to encourage more long-term commitment by reducing the associated risks. Yet without the initial catalyst of direct threats to their religious cause, the churches were motivated to provide only indirect assistance to rights victims and to otherwise remain disengaged bystanders in the fight for human rights.

Individual-Level Variation: Relative Vulnerability, Exposure & Conversion

Despite this trend of institutional disengagement, individual church leaders were clearly willing to participate in the fight for human rights, even if their institutions did not directly participate. This seemed particularly true in the Catholic Church, as the most rights-engaged actors in Ahmedabad were Catholic. However, in both cases, individual engagement levels varied within as well as across denominations. Therefore, these actors' exceptional level of participation cannot be ascribed to religious doctrine alone.

Nevertheless, rights-engaged actors did share other common characteristics. First, many were members of religious orders or congregations. The Jesuits seemed particularly rights-engaged, but Latin American scholars also refer to the involvement of Dominicans,

Capuchins, Oblates and Maryknolls in support of rights-based politics (Klaiber 1998:95, 97, 116-7, 123, 126-8, 173-4, 187-9, 223, 228; Lernoux 1980:204, 205; Dipboye 1982:504-5, 510-1; Smith 1979; Nepstad 1996:108-117; Kurzman 1998:35-6, 42). In Latin America, many of these men and women were then foreign-born, being originally from countries like the United States, Canada, Italy, Spain, France and Ireland (Froehle 1992:110; Klaiber 1992:91, 1998; Fleet and Smith 1997:198-200; Einaudi, et al. 1969:33-4, cited in Crahan 1996:276, n. 7; Nepstad 2004:56-7). Finally, the majority were among the rank-and-file, rather than members of the ecclesial hierarchy.

The religious status of many rights-engaged leaders is of particular interest, since this seems to suggest that my theory about the impact of relative vulnerability may prove generalizable at the individual as well as at the institutional level. For instance, Kurzman (1998:24-6) and Johnston and Figa (1988:43) argue that clergy can more readily mobilize their church in support of a social movement and are more apt to participate themselves in contentious politics if they are at an administrative or geographic distance from their superiors, since this means that they cannot be as readily disciplined and thus lowers the internal risks of engagement. Religious orders enjoy such administrative distance, as they operate semi-autonomously of the traditional Church structure in terms of their ecclesiology,¹¹³ authority and finances (Berger 2003:28; Klaiber 1992:91-2; Froehle 1992:110-1; Kurzman 1998:36). As such, religious men and women are often protected

¹¹³ Ecclesiologies are theologies that speak to the Church's nature and function, as well as to its social role and moral responsibilities and to Church leaders' corollary responsibilities as individuals (Smith 1975:12). Different ecclesiologies will often promote contradictory positions on the proper relationship between the Church and secular society. For instance, the Jesuits preach the indivisibility of religious faith and action in the face of injustice, with an emphasis on the preferential option for the poor first introduced by liberation theologians (The Thirty-Fifth General Congregation of the Society of Jesus 2008a, 2008b). However, as I argue in Chapter One, the existence of a politically, socially and ecclesiastically progressive theology does not mean that all adherents ascribe to and then act on these ideas. For instance, it is not uncommon for a Jesuit to be quite orthodox in his social and religious views (c.f. Lernoux 1980:205; Klaiber 1998:113).

from sanction even if they participate in activities of which the hierarchy disapproves, and can mobilize financing and support for their initiatives that bypass its control.¹¹⁴ Accordingly, Jesuits in Peru and Venezuela were reportedly able to insulate themselves and their activities from the interference of conservative bishops who disapproved of their social justice activities (Klaiber 1992:90-2; Froehle 1992:110-1). Likewise, it would have been more difficult for the bishop in Ahmedabad to act on the state's request to silence Fr. Cedric or to relocate him to another state, since he reported to the Jesuit provincial through a separate chain of authority (STWM-12&13-2011; STWM-14-2011; STWM-08-2011). The same cannot be said for the secular priests, however, and thus the risks of internal sanction were higher and their access to financing more restricted. Their comparably lower engagement suggests that their willingness and ability to participate may have been shaped by both this fear of reprisal and these financial constraints.

In comparison, the impact of foreign birth on rights-based engagement is more ambiguous. On the one hand, foreign-born pastoral agents in Latin America seemed to enjoy strong international support. For instance, when two French religious women were “disappeared” for their work with the Argentine RBO Mothers of the Plaza de Mayo, this invoked a direct response from the French president (Klaiber 1998:82). There was similar international outcry when Salvadoran security forces raped and murdered four American women, three of whom were religious sisters (Klaiber 1998:187-9). Yet there is little evidence of a comparable outcry when national-born clergy were harmed. Since most of

¹¹⁴ This autonomy is likely greatest for ordained religious priests, since religious women and unordained religious men occupy the lowest run of the Catholic hierarchy (Libreria Editrice Vaticana 2003:Part 1, Section 2, Ch. 3, Para. 4). In turn, as noted in Chapter Two, issues of gender continue to plague the Catholic Church. This suggests that religious women may find their actions more constrained than their male counterparts, although I was also informed that Catholic sisters were more active in rights-based work than were the Catholic priests in the case of Ahmedabad (STWM-18-2011), and the evidence indicates that they were similarly active in Latin America during the 1960s and 1970s. Further research is thus needed to determine the relative impact of gender and religious status on church-rights engagement.

these priests were also secular, this lack of support likely only exacerbated the risks of engaging, since they could not rely on foreign allies to come to their defence if attacked.

On the other hand, being foreign also increased an individual's vulnerability to deportation. For instance, many repressive Latin American states expelled foreign clergy when they spoke up in defence of human rights, while foreign-born pastoral agents in Ahmedabad were often threatened with deportation and kept in a state of administrative limbo, even if they never engaged in contentious politics. As I note in Chapter Two, this heightened the sense of risk for my foreign-born participant. In sum, both religious status and foreign birth may play a role in shaping an actor's willingness to engage in rights-based work, and may potentially do so by affecting the relative level of risk involved. Yet further research is needed to clarify the actual impact of these two factors on engagement with rights in practice, and to conclude for certain whether my argument may offer insight into this relationship at the individual as well as at the institutional level.

Finally, there initially appeared to be a negative correlation between Church rank and rights-based work that suggested the former played a direct role in shaping levels of engagement. This aligns with my theory, since senior Church leaders will presumably be more sensitive to issues of general institutional vulnerability by virtue of their position in the Church, and are personally responsible for maintaining the ties with secular elite that they would forfeit by engaging in contentious work (Johnston and Figa 1988:43-4). Yet like Johnston and Figa (1988:43), I am also inclined to hypothesize that the rank-and-file clergy were more predisposed to radical action than their superiors because they were generally closer to the grassroots and thus more regularly exposed to social issues. To begin, most rights-engaged Church leaders in Latin America lived and worked in urban

slums and in isolated rural communities. This not only put them at a geographic distance from their superiors, thus reducing the internal risks of engaging, but also meant that they were regularly confronted with issues of social justice that could readily radicalize their personal religious politics. For instance, many Peruvian liberation theologians lived among the poor, and Fleet and Smith (1997:87-8) argue that it was this first-hand exposure to the injustices suffered that informed their sense of responsibility for accompanying the poor in their fight for justice. Nepstad (2004:56-7, 60-3) argues that American priests and nuns similarly embraced liberation theology only after being exposed to the injustices of life in the urban barrios and rural communities to which they were sent as Catholic missionaries. Many proceeded to act on their newfound mission by leading the Central American Solidarity Movement after returning home.¹¹⁵

Moreover, evidence suggests that this exposure-conversion argument may help to explain the engagement of high-ranking Church officials in Latin America. For instance, scholars routinely describe the transformation of Salvadoran Archbishop Romero into a staunch rights defender as a conversion, prompted by his exposure to rights abuses in his country (Garr 2004:87-8; Dipboye 1982:506). In turn, Msgr. Bambarén was responsible for overseeing the Church's ministry in Lima's squatter settlements, and this exposure to widespread deprivation may have played a role in shaping his more radical position on rights in practice vis-à-vis his ecclesial colleagues (Fleet and Smith 1997:89). Similarly, eight of the nine bishops who helped form the CNBB and were initially the most socially active were responsible for dioceses in Brazil's Northeast (Bruneau 1975:108-9). Heavily

¹¹⁵ Bell's (2007) study of the worker-priest movement in post-war France and Belgium suggests that a similar pattern operated there. Namely, Catholic priests became increasingly aware of the exploitative conditions in the countries' factories after being tasked to work alongside lay employees. Bell describes how this encouraged most to reject the standard approach of convincing the laypeople to accept their structural position, with many becoming instead active supporters of and participants in the union struggles that challenged the injustices (2007:435-7).

dependent on traditional agriculture, this was the poorest region in the country, as well as the area where social issues were most pronounced (Bruneau 1974:71-2). Thus, while the need for more research is clear, the available evidence suggests that relative exposure to issues of systemic deprivation and to rights violations may have played a role in shaping individual-level willingness to engage with rights in practice.

Clearly, there is insufficient data to talk of causation or advance any generalizable theory on this relationship at the individual level, and it is not the purpose of my study to do so. This would require systematically collected data on such factors as gender, age and socioeconomic status, educational and employment background, parental occupations and personal relationships with the ruling elite, political affiliations and previous experiences with secular movements, along with other variables that may have also influenced church leaders' willingness to support rights in practice. Without this data, I cannot conclude for certain that belonging to a religious order is indeed a facilitating factor, since their comparably stronger engagement may reflect an extraneous characteristic shared by those who join socially progressive orders, such as their exposure to social activism as a child or youth. Nonetheless, these actors did share some common characteristics, at least one of which clearly suggests that considerations of relative risk shaped their response to rights politics. Therefore, while further work is needed to clarify how this engagement operates at the level of the individual pastoral agent, both my institutional theory and my preliminary observations above should prove useful in helping to structure and guide this research.

What Next?

In addition to studying church-rights engagement at an individual level, I have identified four main areas of future research that can further advance our understanding of how the churches engage with rights in practice. First, my study has demonstrated that bystander theory can offer important valuable insights into the behaviour of churches vis-à-vis rights-based work by helping to explain why they may prove less willing to intervene in cases of abuse when others can also clearly do so. In Chapter One, I noted that Englund (2000) found that the Malawian churches' direct engagement with rights-based work was weaker under democratic as compared to authoritarian rule, while Borer (1996) observed that the South African churches only rose to the forefront of the anti-apartheid movement after the state had effectively eliminated its secular leadership. Moreover, in more general studies of church-led opposition to authoritarianism in cases like Kenya (c.f. Adar and Munyae 2001; Sabar-Friedman 1997), scholars have noted that the churches played a similar surrogate role, speaking out on issues of social justice while under generalized repression, but withdrawing once repression subsided. This pattern of churches playing a surrogate rights-based role under repressive rule, but retreating when others could assume responsibility, suggests that my theory about the impact of bystander apathy on church-rights engagement may prove generalizable. Therefore, I maintain that further attention to bystander theory is merited when studying the churches' position on rights-based work in other cases, and that such work may prove highly insightful.

Second, as I argued in Chapter Three, considerations of internal politics are an important area of future study into what facilitates or impedes church-rights engagement in practice. Indeed, as the discussion above indicates, fear of internal reprisal may have

limited church leaders' willingness to mobilize their institution in the fight for human rights. Since gaining institutional support generally depends on winning the allegiance of the church's leadership (Zald and McCarthy 1987:72), including issues of internal risk in discussions of relative vulnerability can help to strengthen the power of this concept in explaining the churches' willingness to participate in rights politics. Notably, this risk most often varies based on a church's organizational structure,¹¹⁶ particularly its structure of accountability and governance, since this shapes the relative autonomy of each church or parish and the ability of its local leadership to dictate social policies. Similarly, relative proximity to centres of authority seems to affect the level of internal risk, as noted above. Therefore, the analysis of these factors represents a key area of future research that can further develop and strengthen my theory about the role of relative risk and institutional vulnerability in shaping church-rights engagement.

Third, like other studies of religious engagement with contentious work, my study supports the theory that autonomy from the state is a precursor to sustained involvement. Yet there is evidence to indicate that this relationship is not straightforward. For instance, Pentecostal churches in Latin America are generally "self-governing, self-supporting and self-propagating" religious forces that are independent of the state (Acosta 2009; Levine 2009). Yet there is conflicting evidence on whether this has encouraged their support for contentious politics, as they closely aligned themselves with repressive regimes in some cases (Klaiber 1998:52-3; Cleary 1997:13; De Kadt 2009:783; Freston 2011), but have also fostered a strong rights consciousness at the grassroots in others (Novaes 1985:131, cited

¹¹⁶ Other scholars have used organizational structure as an explanatory factor in studies of congregational engagement with social services (c.f. Brooks 2008). This includes whether a church is hierarchically structured and governed, as best exemplified by the Roman Catholic Church, or congregation-based, as in many Protestant churches.

in Burdick 1993:20). Most would reason that their limited support for rights work stems primarily from a lack of rights-supportive political theology (Toft, et al. 2011; Philpott 2007). This argument has merit, since Pentecostalism largely blames individual sin rather than unjust social structures for misfortunes. Thus, rather than demanding social change, adherents are encouraged to focus on personal transformation, and to remain obedient to authority, staunchly apolitical, and generally withdrawn from the secular world (Drogus 1995:472; Escobar 1997:103, 101; Gooren 2002:35, 40; Cleary 1992:186-7, 181). Clearly, this is not conducive to stimulating social action. Nevertheless, a 2006 Pew study indicates that Latin American Pentecostals do indeed support basic human rights (Freston 2011:118-9). Further, my study has consistently demonstrated that the existence of rights-supportive theology does not always lead to support in practice. Moreover, as outlined in Chapter One, Freston (2011) argues that Brazilian Protestants' hesitation vis-à-vis rights work can be partly attributed to issues of institutional vulnerability and a longing for state privileges, which suggests instead that my theory may apply. Therefore, more research is needed to clarify the role of autonomy from the state, particularly in relation to theology and institutional vulnerability, in shaping church engagement with rights in practice.

Fourth, I have shown that churches were generally willing to raise concerns over rights issues through diplomacy, even if they shunned public advocacy. Indeed, my study suggests that the churches generally prefer to provide indirect rather than direct assistance to rights victims, often by mobilizing their unique institutional resources and position vis-à-vis the state, since this carries comparably lower risk than the conventionally high-risk tactics of rights activism. This implies that they may prove more willing allies if allowed to play a more behind-the-scenes and supportive role in the fight for human rights. Thus,

while their direct participation is perhaps more desirable, I argue that secular activists and researchers alike should begin to examine the churches' unique tactical repertoire and resources, and to consider how these can best be mobilized to bolster respect for human rights. Indeed, by recognizing how churches may already do so, such as via diplomacy with the state, and then coordinating efforts with these religious actors, secular activists may effectively improve the sustainability of rights efforts in the global South without the churches ever needing to become directly involved in the higher risk rights activities that jeopardize their institutional wellbeing.

As a final note, my study clearly suggests that the churches will prove unwilling to engage with rights work unless they believe that doing so contributes to their religious cause. Other studies suggest likewise (Borer 1996; Afshar 2006; Hertzke 2001; Nurser 2003; Smith 1979). This indicates that activists must be prepared not only to engage in dialogue with these actors, but also to clearly demonstrate the link between their interests as religious actors and those of the secular rights movement. This will require religious literacy and an appreciation for the theological resources that could support or undermine respect for human rights, as well as for the constraints within which these actors operate and the risks they assume by engaging. Without this understanding, rights activists will continue to speak past the churches, while they continue to see rights work as something distinct from their religious practice and oft-antithetical to their interests. As Archbishop Desmond Tutu (2010:7) notes, this would be unfortunate, since religion has the potential to bolster rights efforts worldwide. It is thus up to secular rights activists and researchers alike to determine the most effective means of tapping into this potential and ultimately winning the churches' allegiance to the cause of human rights in the global South.

Appendix 1: Consent Materials



Norman Paterson School of International Affairs
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Title of research project: Human Rights Organizing and Christianity in Latin America and Northwest India

Date of ethics clearance: November 18, 2010

Ethics clearance for data collection expires: December 3, 2011

Date:

Researcher: Sarah Wicks McCallum

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Supervisor: Professor James Ron

Norman Paterson School of International Affairs
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Re: Participation in research study

My name is Sarah Wicks McCallum, and I am a second-year MA student at the Norman Paterson School of International Affairs (NPSIA) at Carleton University. I am currently conducting research under the supervision of Professor James Ron, who teaches at NPSIA.

My research is currently titled Human Rights Organizing and Christianity in Latin America and Northwest India. The purpose of my research is to understand what Christians think about human rights, and when and how they will participate in human rights work. This study will be part of my thesis to complete my master's degree in international affairs, and may inform later articles and presentations on this topic.

If you agree to participate, I would like to hear about your background, your education, and your Church, and about your experiences with social justice issues. I would also like to hear your opinion on human rights issues in India, and on Christian engagement with these issues. If you agree, we would meet in the next few weeks, as your schedule

permits, with each meeting lasting for no longer than two hours. The information that you give me will help us understand important human rights issues in India and the role that Christians continue to play in supporting social justice and development in Ahmedabad and in India.

With your permission, our interviews will be tape-recorded, but you will be assigned an interview code. Your real name or other identifying characteristics will be known only to me and will not be used in the recordings or in future written or oral work. Other people may learn that you spoke with me, but none of the information you provide will ever be linked to you. If you do not want to use the tape-recorder, interview information will be written. No photographs or video will be used. We can review the information together once the interviews are complete and you will have the chance to correct any mistakes.

Some of the questions may be difficult to answer. You may feel uncomfortable talking about some human rights or religious issues. I will never ask you to reveal any information that could put you in danger. You may refuse to answer any question or to stop the interview at any time. If you leave the study early, you can decide if you want me to use or erase the information that you already provided. Once the interview is complete, you still may choose to withdraw from the study for up to 3 months from the date of our interview. If you decide to withdraw, all information you provided will be immediately destroyed.

There is no reward or payment for your participation in this study. A summary of the final results of the study will be given to you in English, if you would like one. This study will also inform presentations and newspaper articles for Canadian audiences. These will help inform Canadians about the beliefs and lives of Christians in Ahmedabad, and the role that Christians can and do play in supporting social justice, development and human rights in your country.

I will keep all information you provide to me, unless you change your mind and leave the study early. I do not plan to destroy the notes or recordings at a later date. All recordings will be kept on a password-locked removable USB key while in Ahmedabad and later stored in an encrypted folder on my password-locked computer in Canada. Only I will have access to any information that links you to the information you provide, and this will be kept separate from the interview information. I may share information with other researchers, but I will not share your name or other personal information.

This research was reviewed and received ethics clearance by the Carleton University Research Ethics Committee. However, the final decision to participate is yours. If you have any questions about the study that I cannot answer, please contact the ethics committee chair:

Professor Antonio Gualtieri, Chair
Research Ethics Board, Carleton University Research Office, Carleton University
1125 Colonel By Drive, Ottawa, Ontario K1S 5B6
Tel: 613-520-2517 E-mail: ethics@carleton.ca

Oral Consent:

Thank you for your interest in this study. Do you have any questions or require any clarification at this point?

Do you agree to participate in this interview?

YES NO

May I take written notes of our conversation to ensure accuracy?

YES NO

May I make an audio recording of our conversation to ensure accuracy?

YES NO

Thank you for agreeing to participate.

Written Consent:**SIGNED CONSENT:**

Title of research project: Human Rights Organizing and Christianity in Latin America and Northwest India

Researcher: Sarah Wicks McCallum

MA Candidate, Norman Paterson School of International Affairs

Carleton University

Ottawa, Ontario, Canada

Tel.:

swicks1@connect.carleton.ca

I _____ have read the above letter and voluntarily consent to participate in the study as described above.

Signature of participant

Date

Signature of researcher

Date

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