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Brajsalem: Biblical Cosmology, Power Dynamics and the Brazilian Political Imagination

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ABSTRACT

Based on fieldwork with Brazilian neo-Pentecostal pilgrims to the Holy Land and ongoing survey of social media in this article I argue that Brazilian neo-Pentecostals increasingly imagine Brazil as a Promised Land and the Brazilian People as the People of God. Here, different substances associated with the Holy Land, the Jewish People and Jesus Christ are used to disperse in Brazil divine power, which is seen to emanate from God. This imaginary seeks to replace the hegemony of the democratic ethos of power in Brazil, which is seen to emanate bottoms-up from the Brazilian People. I associate this process with the conservative wave sweeping through the Brazilian political system and show what a Brazilian political imagination whose spiritual and moral centre is located in Biblical Jerusalem may look like.

KEYWORDS Brazil; neo-Pentecostalism; Holy Land; Jerusalem; ontology

Introduction

Adherents of neo-Pentecostal spiritual organisations in Brazil invest considerable efforts in acquiring, manipulating and then deploying the divine power of God in the lives of the faithful (Shapiro 2019b; Kramer 2005; cf. Almeida 2017; Chesnut 1997). While this is not new in and of itself (viz. Fry and Howe 1975; Burdick 1998) – actions that capture and disperse otherworldly powers as vectors of bliss in people’s lives are ubiquitous in the entire sphere of Brazilian popular religiosity, across doctrinal and theological lines (Selka 2010) – in this short article I argue that these actions go beyond the Brazilian ‘spiritual marketplace’ (Chesnut 2003) to redefine the political imagination in the Brazilian society at large. This is done by gradually replacing the popular image of Brazil as a pluralist and secular democracy with an image of a Sainly Nation. Prevailing *socio-political* imaginaries and myths in the Brazilian popular discourse – such as the notion of racial democracy

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(Freyre 1933; Fry 2000) and the unity of the Brazilian People perceived as a whole larger than its parts (Buarque de Holanda 1936; Segato 1998) – thus gradually give way to new, *cosmo-political* imaginaries of divine ontological power flowing through the nation, which is ‘released’ and put into motion by the enactment of certain neo-Pentecostal rituals and rhetoric acts. I will associate the emergence of this form of ontological power with what Anthropologist Marta Topel (2011: 41–43) has called ‘the neo-Pentecostal appropriation of Judaism in Brazil’, a trend which continues to gather strength and momentum in the Brazilian evangelical movement (Almeida 2017). Within this contemporary phenomenon, growing numbers of neo-Pentecostal churches in Brazil constitute their political truth-claims on the basis of the authenticity and original bliss of the Abrahamic God and His ‘chosen’ Jewish People (Ferreira 2019). A new form of divine Christian power in Brazil thus comes about, one which emerge as pastors and churchgoers shift the symbolic source of theological and spiritual authority from Rome to Biblical Jerusalem; a mythical space seen in this context as the cosmic centre of the universe (Topel 2011: 40). I will use the neologism ‘Brajisalem’ to characterise this ongoing process analytically.

Before I begin, however, an important terminological clarification is required. In the Brazilian popular discourse, the term evangelicals – ‘*evangelicos*’ – is used as a general category that encompasses nearly all non-Catholic Christian denominational and non-denominational organisations, ranging from Protestant ‘historical’ churches (such as Lutheranism) through several types (or: ‘waves’; cf. Freston 1999) of Pentecostal renaissance/revival movements, to neo-Pentecostalism, which has been thriving across Brazil since the 1970s (Fry and Howe 1975; cf. Selka 2010).¹ This latter increasingly-hegemonic set of Christian beliefs and ritual practices, which is growing not only in Brazil but elsewhere in the Global South (Girard 2018; Haynes 2015; Sarró and Blanes 2009), can be distinguished analytically as: (1) churches organised around one or several charismatic leaders; who (2) use effervescent ritual practice aimed at ‘experiencing God in the flesh’ (Butticci 2016); and (3) actively celebrate Prosperity Theology, i.e. the idea that only through ‘sacrifice’ of cash donations and other presents toward church institutions it is possible to gain a pure life under the divine Word of God (locally – *a palavra de Deus*; Sinner 2012: 104–5; cf. Coleman 2004). Since the Judaization trend is strongly linked with embodied experiences of spiritual elevation *as well as* prosperity theology, two of the most important aspects of contemporary neo-Pentecostal ritual practices (Robbins 2004), in this text I will follow Marta Topel (2011: 36) and focus analytically mainly on neo-Pentecostal congregations rather than ‘evangelicals’ at large. Brajisalem is a conscious endeavour to recreate the Brazilian political imagination in concrete, and distinguishable, neo-Pentecostal terms.

The analysis that follows on from this assertion is primarily based on extended periods of fieldwork with evangelical and neo-Pentecostal devotional travellers to the Holy Land (2016–17). Throughout 2016 and 2017 I accompanied about 20 organised tours across the Holy Land, during which I engaged in multiple conversations with dozens of tour guides, pilgrims, and pastors. In 2016 I also dedicated three months for additional fieldwork with several neo-Pentecostal congregations in the Brazilian state of Maranhão, where I have been working intermittently since 2008 on local kinship networks, boundaries of alterity and ritual practices (cf. Shapiro 2019a and 2016). In addition, from 2016 up until the Brazilian national elections of 2018 I also

regularly surveyed a large number of Brazilian neo-Pentecostal social – and traditional – media outlets, which allowed for a wider comparative scope at the national level.

I will advance the argument in three stages. The first section briefly presents the democratic ethos of the Brazilian Constitution ratified in 1988, which is premised on the assertion that power in society emanates from the Brazilian People. I entitled this section ‘*Planalto*’ to allude to the Palace of Planalto in the Federal capital Brasilia, which is the paramount symbol of Brazilian political sovereignty. In this context, the power that emanates from the Brazilian People is seen to endlessly expand itself outwards in the making of syncretic, multifaceted and complex, always interbreeding, mutually-inclusive, sociocultural milieus. In the second section I examine the cosmological notions of power that undergird the provisional emergence of ‘Brajisalem’. I demonstrate how a dispersal of a Judeo-Christian divine substance in this context sets the ground for the evangelisation of the political imagination in the Brazilian society at large. In the third section I expand the analysis to suggest that the divine power projected from the Abrahamic-Israelite God converges inwards to form vernacular, *mutually-exclusive* political entities. This includes both a ‘deep’ inward-swirling dynamic of change involving people’s spiritual convictions at the personal level and a relational interface of ritual practice that entails social distinction between communities at the collective level. As a cosmopolitical imaginary, Brajisalem generates encapsulating, hierarchic, and encompassing boundaries, which distinguish good and evil in a binary fashion.

Planalto

The Brazilian constitution of 1988 – which some intellectuals and lawmakers both in Brazil and abroad regard as one of the most progressive, liberal and pluralist social-democratic manifestos of our time (Schuler 2018) – builds its authority on a notion of social contract that emanates from The Brazilian People. This is declared in the first article (emphases mine):

Art. 1º The Federal Republic of Brazil ... *constitutes itself as a Democratic State of Law*, under the following foundations: I – sovereignty; II – citizenship; III – dignity of persons; IV – the social values of work and free initiative; V – *political pluralism*. *All power emanates from the people, which exercises it by means of elected representatives or directly, under the terms of this constitution.*²

Not only that the terms highlighted above indicate a source of moral authority – the Constitution itself being a reflection of the Collective Will of the People, realised through and projected onto the systemic operation of governing institutions – they also delineate an egalitarian dynamic of power relations, which breaks with the hierarchies of the clientelist patronage system that marked Brazilian politics in the last century (Buarque de Hollanda 1936). While clientelism in Brazil consisted in the exchange of long-term moral and economic commitments between patrons and clients (Ansell 2010) – who were thus locked in vertical reciprocity marked by debt on the one hand and ethical or even emotional contingency on the other (Ansell 2015a) – the

new democratic ethos diffuses a universal charter that makes *every citizen* a potentially eligible political representative of the People. Continuing the vestige and flare of the 1930s ethos of a Brazilian ‘racial democracy’ – the idea that miscegenation in Brazil is a positive process consisting in cultural rather merely ethnic syncretism (Freyre 1933; cf. Fry 2000: 88) – a push towards egalitarianism here thus also seeks the destruction of instituted forms of discrimination (Ansell 2015b).³ Article Three specifies that (emphasis mine):

Art. 3° The fundamental objectives of the Federal Republic of Brazil constitute in: I – building a free, just and solidary society; II – guarantee national development; III – eradicate poverty and marginalization and reduce social and regional inequalities; IV – *promote the good of all, without prejudice concerning origin, race, sex, colour, age and any other form of discrimination.*⁴

Striving toward this pluralistic society, in the context of nation building, then highlights democratisation as a type of re-conciliating action, which brings together disparate segments of the public into symbiotic relations while promoting the ‘common good’ of all segments of Brazilian society at once (cf. Fry 2000). Here, identities are initially taken in the plural while the indissoluble Brazilian Nation is seen to unite them within a single constitutional framework (Bailey 2004). All citizens are equal, at least nominally, idiosyncrasies disregarded. Solidarity is the result of this equality, which canonizes a human-centred commitment to democratisation and liberalisation, two major social processes that have been gaining momentum since the end of the 1970s in parallel with the demise of the military dictatorship in Brazil (Ansell 2015a).

The progressive rhetoric adopted in Brasilia since the mid-1990s – first by the centrist Partido da Social Democracia Brasileira (PSDB) regime led by President Fernando Henrique Cardoso (1995–2002) and even more intensely by the leftist Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) government led by President Luiz Inácio ‘Lula’ da Silva and his successor Dilma Rousseff (2003–2016) – is probably the boldest attempt thus far to realise this humanistic moral commitment in the Brazilian social space at large (Saad-Filho 2017; cf. Pina Cabral 2007). The PT discourse, in particular, overwhelmingly focussed on the symbolic un-doing of class hierarchies, the pragmatic expansion of economic possibilities, the diversification of academic environments through affirmative action (cf. Fry 2000), and the promotion of gender equality and LGBT rights. At the socioeconomic level, PT governments also distributed funds across the stratified hierarchy of the Brazilian income levels down to the poorest sectors of the population, mainly through nation-wide social welfare programmes such as the Bolsa Família (initiated in the mid-90s by the PSDB party mentioned above) and the PT-orchestrated Minha Casa Minha Vida housing finance scheme, as well as the various legislative reforms that quite literally opened the consumerist appetite in the country (e.g. generous allowances for debit card holders, micro-credit instalments, international trade-deals that created new markets, etc.).

This ongoing process gradually infused the political discourse in Brazil with a social-democratic and profoundly *liberal* moral content. In fact, throughout her turbulent mandates, President Dilma Rousseff from the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) party, frequently and repeatedly used in her various speeches such terms as ‘social inclusion’

(*inclusão social*), ‘male and female citizens’ (*cidadãos e cidadãs*), ‘neglected social groups’ (*grupos sociais menos favorecidos*), ‘marginalization’ (*marginalização*), ‘democratization of access to information’ (*democratização de acesso à informação*) and so on. Such statements stand in their own right to create a pragmatic momentum in the imagination, a subtle yet tangible change in how things are perceived and done vis-à-vis the traditional clientelist context, wherein social disposition (mostly gender, class, and family background) largely determined relative access to or denial from socio-economic resources (cf. Ansell 2015b). For example, in 2010 I accompanied an STD prevention campaign at a health clinic located in a peripheral neighbourhood of São Luís, the capital city of the Brazilian state of Maranhão. I joined many interventions, mostly consisting in distributing condoms and conducting AIDS texts to sex workers in some brothels and bars. During one of these interventions, a man jokingly teased a woman who approached us to pick up some condoms. ‘I am a woman-citizen (*cidadã*)’ she replied, giggling, ‘I have rights!’

Increasingly, then, the mundane appropriation and articulation of inclusive citizenship, which projects itself as superior to other vectors of identity such as class, colour, family and religious affiliation, has in the past two decades become a property of an expansive political imagination in Brazil. By this I mean that the idea of democratic citizenship that is premised on the ‘power’ of the People has gradually become embedded in the experience of constant broadening of possibilities, socioeconomic or otherwise, an out-going orientation towards open social horizons. As a totalising, abstract, form of power, inclusive citizenship of that sort is ideally supposed to supersede other dimensions of people’s lives (Schuler 2018) while promoting a sense of boundlessness, a dynamic of flowing social relations that will dismantle those coercive hierarchic structures in the Brazilian society that reformers and scholars alike traditionally saw as a barrier for progress (Saad-Filho 2017; but cf. Collins 2011).

One of the most tangible dimensions of this sense of dynamic expansion is socio-economic. During my periods of research in low-income contexts of the state of Maranhão (2007–8, 2009–10, 2012 and 2016) – which statistically is still among the poorest states in the Brazilian Federation – my friends and interlocutors increasingly felt that the world was expanding because they could consume more. Within a year or two, four big shopping malls were built in the state capital São Luís and people who previously were unable to afford even setting foot in these (luxurious) commercial spaces could now find the available surplus income to purchase there such desired consumer products as Nike sneakers, draft beer, and life-size Jeeps for their babies. Some of my friends in Santo Amaro, the peripheral neighbourhood where I conducted most of my field research – who most of their lives have had to wake up at around five in the morning to catch a bus and be at work in the city centre on time – could now buy a car for which they would pay in small monthly parcels during long instalment periods. They could thus also drive out of the low-income neighbourhood in which they lived and engage in new leisure activities, such as eating in restaurants at the well-off sides of town. In 2010 it was possible to imagine a future marked by this dynamic of abundance and accumulation.

This dynamic changed quite abruptly in 2014, however, when Brazil plunged into a devastating economic and political crisis following the re-election of President Dilma Rousseff, then-head of the Partido dos Trabalhadores (PT) leftist party. The PT had ruled continuously since President ‘Lula’ (meaning ‘squid’ in Portuguese) historically won the General Federal Elections for President in 2003. The catalyst for the crisis was a federal investigation into allegations of corruption in the Brazilian oil and gas corporation Petrobrás, which opened a Pandora box into extensive collateral corruption scandals that cut across the entire Brazilian economy (Saad-Filho 2017; Costa 2019). The investigation, which Brazilian police termed Operação Lava Jato, became known in the international media as ‘Operation Car Wash’ (Almeida and Zagaris 2015). By 2018 the investigation oversaw the arrest and incarceration of many prominent Brazilian politicians and business persons, including President Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva himself, the Brazilian Congress House Speaker Eduardo da Cunha, and President Michel Temer, who replaced Dilma Rousseff in 2016. President Dilma Rousseff was not implied, but was impeached in 2016 for minor budgetary infractions. This constant, furious swell of political instability, accompanied by the worst economic recession Brazil had known in decades, ultimately cleared the ground for the frantic campaign and stunning victory of far-right candidate for President Jair Bolsonaro in the 2018 elections (Rocha 2019).

The impeachment is a topic worth a deeper anthropological contemplation.⁵ For the purpose of this article I merely wish to indicate here that throughout my work with neo-Pentecostal devotional travellers to the Holy Land, group leaders and common pilgrims alike often justified the impeachment not only on judiciary and corruption-related grounds but mainly through moral and even theological arguments. For example, a conservative Brazilian pastor of the Reformed Baptist Church named Paulo told me in an interview in 2016 that the PT-backed introduction of sexual education into schools in his native state of Bahia was a backdoor indoctrination of children into homosexuality, and therefore a crime against God. He indicated that he and others ‘will take legal action’ to prevent any sexual education pedagogical content in schools at both state and national levels. This reactionary response to a plan widely perceived in secular social circles as liberal, promotes a new kind of political imagination, which is framed cosmologically as a derivative of an impeccable, primordial, divine order. As I now turn to demonstrate, this imaginary stands at the heart of the emergent construction of Brajisalem.

Brajisalem

Marta Topel (2011: 38–39) recently argued that the increasing use of ‘biblical’ religious symbolism among Brazilian neo-Pentecostals is a form of ‘millenarian dispensationalism’, i.e. an explicit attempt to link biblical prophecies to contemporary political projects in order to bolster radical cultural change. Topel demonstrated convincingly that as they incorporate different ‘Jewish’ objects such as the *shofar* and the flag of Israel into their worship practice, neo-Pentecostal pastors in Brazil directly associate themselves with what they see as an infinite and immanent source of cosmic bliss

(Shapiro 2019b).⁶ Here, God's earliest choices are eternal and unchanging. Every divine deed mentioned in the Bible – from Genesis to Apocalypse – makes part of the master-plan for the history of the world, which encompasses everything that exists: the arrangement of planets in space, the natural world, the physical environment, and even pet human dramas (cf. Ferreira 2019). In this eschatological matrix Jewish material culture and a mythical Bible Land jointly represent the original divine setup of the universe (Fernandes 2019). They reflect an ancient time-frame, whence divine power actively manifested in everyday affairs (Dulin 2015), and which, if celebrated in ritual, may still impact the lives of the faithful in profound and irreversible ways. I will use the neologism 'Brajisalem' to describe how adherents of neo-Pentecostal spiritual practice in contemporary Brazil increasingly implement this quasi-millenarian cosmology in everyday life.

Let me begin with the Temple of Solomon (*Templo de Salomão*) mega church, which the Universal church of the Kingdom of God (*Igreja Universal do Reno de Deus*, hereafter IURD) – one of the most successful neo-Pentecostal organisations of recent decades on a global scale (Almeida 2017) – had inaugurated in São Paulo in 2014. The opening ceremony, which was held in front of a full 10-thousand-seat hall, among them some prominent Brazilian politicians including then-President Dilma Rousseff, featured songs in Hebrew (including the Israeli national anthem); a group of 'Pentecostal Levites' dressed in white robes ceremoniously carrying a golden replica of the Ark of the Covenant into the Temple; and an animation clip linking the fight of the Israelites for the Promised Land with IURD's global proselytising mission. Bearded, messianic-looking Bispo ('Bishop') Edir Macedo – the charismatic leader of the IURD empire – preached about God's eternal bliss to the believers wearing a Jewish prayer shawl (*tallit* or *tallith*, in Hebrew) and a typical Jewish skullcap (*kippah*, in Hebrew).⁷ The walls were decorated with huge seven branched candelabrum – the Jewish *menorah* – while a huge plate of marble bearing the inscription of the 10 commandments was attached to the front of the speaker's stand next to the altar on the stage. According to the IURD website, some parts of the Temple of Solomon were actually built from stones imported to Brazil from Hebron in the occupied West Bank. Here, the very materiality of a divine essence that is seen to reside in the Holy Land has been transferred across the ocean and literally planted in Brazil.

Yet, the ceremony also blended these Jewish and biblical symbols with typical neo-Pentecostal songs, blessings and prayers, including numerous *orações* (prayers), a direct approach to God and His son Jesus Christ, which is seen as a tool with which the faithful can gradually constitute reciprocal relations with God (Shapiro 2016; cf. Sarró and Mafra 2009). For example, at some point during his speech in the inauguration ceremony Bispo Edir Macedo invited the crowd to approach the altar so he could bless them. A multitude consequently flocked down the aisles and stood in front of the stage. Bispo Macedo then embarked on a long speech approaching God directly and asking Him to bless the people with 'peace' in the name of Jesus his son, and the Holy Spirit. He thus generated an 'aesthetic of power' (Kramer 2005: 101–102), an efficacious ritual energy, which directly deployed divine power – here blending Jewish and Christian elements into an uncanny smooth uniformity – and dispersed

it among the thousands of followers who were present at the site. This form of power could also explain why the IURD has transferred its famous Holy Fire (*Fogueira Santa*) ceremonies from Mount Carmel in Israel to the Temple of Solomon in São Paulo. Until 2014, the year in which the Temple was inaugurated, church affiliate could send their written requests and prayers to pastors, who would travel to the Holy Land and burn these requests on Mount Carmel with the intention of delivering them directly to God. With the inauguration of the temple, however, the church began enacting these rites in São Paulo, consequently turning the physical space of the church into a sacred ground absorbed with a divine, supernatural ‘Biblical’ essence.

As these example suggest, at least as it is celebrated by IURD officials the Power of God also has a flow and pulsation and an ontological presence (cf. Burdick 1998: 127), which may be captured, absorbed and then circulated through social worlds. This notion of active or flowing divine power increasingly becomes common among other neo-Pentecostal churches in Brazil (Sinner 2012). Pastor Juanribe Pagliarini of Comunidade Crista Paz e Vida, for example, promotes for some years now the idea that the power of God in fact regularly flows through the ground of the Holy Land. In a series of YouTube clips focussing on sinkholes that began to appear near the Dead Sea in the south of Israel, Pagliarini claims that this strange phenomenon is already explained in a prophecy from Ezekiel 47, where the Prophet predicted that the power of God will create a sweet-water river, which will flow eastwards across the Arava Region and into the Dead Sea, replacing its salty ‘dead’ liquid with life-giving water.⁸ The lake, which currently cannot sustain any life forms, will consequently swarm with fish and other creatures. Pagliarini (incorrectly) claims that this awesome phenomenon puzzles scientists and concludes it proves that both the absolute truth of the Power of God and the fantastic biblical features are eternally wired in the very texture of the Holy Land. Here, divine power is almost literally understood as a source of energy that vividly pushes things forward in a process of creation, generation and efflorescence. It is both a fluid immanence or a divine essence that literally moves things and rivers and people (emotionally and physically) *and* an abstraction, an idea, a mythical property of the imagination, which secures moral fidelity to the Abrahamic God.

The capturing and harnessing of this divine essence becomes notable during devotional journeys to the Holy Land, which Brazilian neo-Pentecostals call *caravanas* (expeditions) in order to distinguish them from Catholic pilgrimage (*peregrinação*). These trips are done in groups of around 40 travellers sharing a bus, accompanied by a Brazilian pastor and an Israeli tour guide, usually for the duration of about 10 days. The ‘bubble’ of the bus (Feldman 2007) – that is, the fact that for the duration of the journey these devotional travellers make part of a relatively isolated social context abounding with daily prayers and other common rituals, as well as a significant emphasis on the exchange of money within the vestige of prosperity theology (Feldman 2014) – generates an exclusive neo-Pentecostal worship environment, which thus also often includes direct references to a primordial divine force that is thought to permanently reside in the Holy Land/Promised Land of the (‘Chosen’) Jewish People. Commonly, these references are related to and celebrated in the presumed geographical sites in which certain biblical events are said to have occurred, such as the war of David and

Goliath in the Valley of Ellah, or Jesus's Sermon on the Mount of Beatitudes. In such places, whose holiness is predisposed and unquestioned, worship practice includes a preaching session often followed by spontaneous (or even orchestrated) episodes of glossolalia.

But sometimes the search for the flowing power of God also manifests through entirely incremental activities. For example, I accompanied Brazilian neo-Pentecostal pilgrims who purchased bottles of olive oil and bags of salt in Israeli supermarkets in order to quite literally *charge* them with a sacred divine bliss. This is done by concentering these artefacts and substances in different symbolic spots, such as Mount Carmel in northern Israel, which neo-Pentecostal devotional travellers celebrate as the site in which Prophet Elijah fought pantheistic worship of the Baal among the Israelites and thus proved the efficacy of the power of God as the one and only credible supernatural force (cf. Shapiro 2019b). during my fieldwork with Brazilian neo-Pentecostal devotional travellers in the Holy Land I documented pastors who filmed themselves consecrating such products on Mount Carmel and then released these clips online as advertisement blurbs for upcoming ritual events in different churches in Brazil, which would include anointment with a divine substance charged with the essence of God, imported directly from the Holy Land. Moreover, in every group I accompanied at least some of the travellers also purchased such typical Jewish sacramental objects as prayer shawls (*tallit*), 'kippah' head-caps and *mezuzahs*.⁹ Several neo-Pentecostal churches in Brazil now use such objects in order to 'liberate' persons from demonic influence, heal various ailments or purify domestic environments (Topel 2011; cf. Kramer 2005; Shapiro 2019c). In all these examples, a 'Jewish' or sometimes 'biblical' origin becomes a metonym for an ontology of divine power that is seen to represent the original eschatological setup of the universe (cf. Feldman 2016).¹⁰

The common view, then, is that such divine ontology could ultimately make miracles, not only in the Holy Land but also in Brazil. Consider the following example. A IURD clip entitled 'The Consecration of the Veil of Israel' (*consagração do manto de Israel*), begins with a pastor blessing several sheets of cloth in fluent Hebrew. He asks God to pour his grace on these cloths once they touch the 'stones of the grave of Lord Jesus' and then begs Him to transmit that bliss into the lives of the people who will touch these cloths in the future. The clip then cuts to the Garden Tomb in Jerusalem, a space of mainly evangelical, neo-Pentecostal and protestant workshop celebrated as an alternative to the Holy Sepulchres Church, where other Christian theological traditions (mainly Catholicism and Greek-Orthodoxy) commemorate the crucifixion, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. There, another IURD pastor is seen holding two nylon bags full of cloths. We see him queuing to enter the burial cave, which is revered by some neo-Pentecostal traditions as the *actual* cave in which the body of Jesus was buried after his crucifixion. He then enters the cave while the camera awaits outside, filming the grave from an elevated platform. We then only hear the pastor's voice in prayer, asking God to bless every person who will touch the cloths he holds in his hands. As he walks out of the burial cave to the sound of a Hebrew love song to Jerusalem, bold yellow inscription at the bottom of the screen invite the faithful to come and touch the now-consecrated mantles that coming Friday in

church in Brazil. The clip then cuts and the pastor is seen handing over a red cloth to another person. He says: ‘I give this mantle personally to Pastor Vandilson ... this mantle is a testimony for the resurrection of Jesus, a mantle that breathes Life ... and Pastor Vandilson will pass it on to you [in Brazil]’ ... The second Pastor, Pastor Vandilson then promises that

the people who will touch this mantle, a miracle will happen [in their lives]; much like Lord Jesus who has resurrected [in Jerusalem], there will be a resurrection in your marriage, your health, your financial condition, and in any other sense.

The clip ends with the first Pastor, who earlier consecrated the veils, saying: ‘this mantle has been consecrated here, we blessed this mantle, and when you touch it, power will emanate [from it]’ (cf. Shapiro 2019b).¹¹

While this last case is not about Jewish sacramental objects strictly speaking, it is definitely about the transfer of saturated divine power from sacred sites across the Holy Land, through the spiritual ‘charging’ of certain artefacts, to Brazil. During my work with neo-Pentecostal devotional travellers I have also witnessed how pastors use this same tactic to charge olive oil or salt bought in Israeli supermarkets with the almighty power of God, which they later used to exorcise demons and other malignant creatures after the return to their home communities in Brazil (cf. Shapiro 2019c). By capturing and implementing in Brazil the divine power that is associated with this primordial, *impeccable*, order of things, it ultimately becomes possible to *embody* this power in the person (Fernandes 2019). Brazilian neo-Pentecostals that celebrate the ‘Judaization’ trend (viz. Topel 2011) thus emphasize an *experiential* ontology, a life giving-substance that is immersed in the ground in the Blood of Christ and dispersed through prayer or touch to actively transform people’s lives. In that sense, I claim that deploying this power in Brazil is not conceptualised as metaphorical nor as suggestive, but rather, as the literal constitution of what can be imagined as islands of divine grace scattered across the land and its people. It is through this process of dispersal that Brajisaalem comes into being. And this emergent construction, as I now turn to elaborate, *makes manifest* a new political reality in Brazil, which transpires ontological power: the reality of a never-secular Christian Nation (Luhmann 2012; cf. Robbins 2004) that relies on the divine power of god (rather than on the power of the People) to achieve material prosperity and social justice.¹²

Ontological Presence and the Political Imagination

In her analysis of ‘contact zones’ between African neo-Pentecostals (mainly from Ghana and Nigeria) and Roman-Catholics in Italy, Analisa Butticci (2016) argues that both these Christian spiritual frameworks share a common ‘catholicity’, which is ‘the sacramentality manifest in the conflation of spirit and matter that generates perceived real presences of divine and supernatural powers pulsating in the material world, in nature, objects and substances, as well as in the human body’ (p. 8). ‘Catholicity’ then generates an ‘aesthetic of presence’, which Butticci understands as a principle of mediation between divine ontology and human worlds. It is the materiality of

different ritual practices, which compete with one another to invoke and feel the *real* presence of God, that enables religious practitioners in the ‘contact zone’ to authenticate their cosmological views in mundane reality (cf. Kramer 2005). These Italian churches thus become contested spaces for the redefinition of boundaries of alterity, which are verified, negotiated and occasionally also destroyed (Butticci 2016: 111ff);

Butticci’s argument is telling with regard to the Brazilian neo-Pentecostal practices described here because it allows thinking comparatively of divine power as something that circulates in society in material ways – rather than as an abstract, invisible force – and thereby as an ontology that inspires a tangible dynamic of social relations between people and groups (Kramer 2005). For example, during a speech he gave at the National Congress in October 2015, Congressman Cabo Daciolo, then representing the centre-right-wing party Partido Trabalhista do Brasil (PTdoB), begun speaking in tongues while delivering a condemning message from the Book of Jeremiah to the Congress Speaker at the time, Eduardo da Cunha; who like Daciolo is an adherent of a neo-Pentecostal church. Upon completing his message, Congressman Daciolo emphasised that these were not his own words, but *God Himself*, who was speaking through him.¹³ If we think of the National Congress as a contact zone, where different views on ‘Brazilian-ness’ (*brasilidade*, cf. Buarque de Holanda 1936) come into dialogue and occasionally clash, the ontological status of the Voice of God speaking through Daciolo’s throat manifests a certain aesthetic of divine presence that Da Cunha simply could not ignore. It is God’s message that is now at play, rather than minor human disagreements or diverging visions about the future of the Brazilian society. It is this powerful ontological presence of God, in its myriad aesthetic manifestations, which adds a cosmological dimension to the ongoing struggle in Brazil over definitions of alterity beyond the religious sphere of worship into the political and legislative arenas in Brazil and beyond (Silva 2007).

Consider the following two examples. First, Apóstolo Rene Terranova, the charismatic leader of the International Restoration Movement (Movimento Internacional de Restauração – MIR) and one of the most vocal conservative pastors in Brazil these days, has been promoting for some years now an official church theology he calls ‘The Jerusalem Doctrine’. After centuries of Roman-catholic hegemony, Apóstolo Terranova repeatedly argues in his many sermons, Christians must return to Jerusalem, where it all began, and where God dwells for eternity. For that end, Terranova organises huge annual rallies for his church members in Jerusalem, which he uses to blend political and religious messages aimed at achieving an effervescent Christian catharsis. I was present at the 2016 rally, during which Terranova preached vehemently on ‘the divine standard for the family’ using biblical texts that according to Terranova infamously denounced Abraham’s wife Sarah as disobedient and incredulous. He then demanded a ‘return’ for well-defined masculine and feminine roles in the family and a strict banning of children from access to the internet and social-media apps.¹⁴ Terranova here reconstitutes a hierarchic model of power relations reminiscent of the colonial patriarchal family (Freyre 1933), which also reifies the idealised role of the nuclear family as the *only* ‘proper’ form of emotional and erotic kinship relatedness pertinent to a divine standard. It thus presents itself as superior to the multiplicity of alternative

familial models in Brazil that do not correspond with this ideal of ‘family values’ (cf. Fonseca 2000; Kulick 1998).¹⁵

And second, take a post that was uploaded to a Brazilian Neo-Pentecostal WhatsApp group of which I was a member during the 2016 election campaign in the USA. The post declared that Donald Trump is in fact *Jewish*; and that he consequently deserves the unequivocal support of every Brazilian ‘faith-culture’ follower (cf. Harding 2000). The extractive power of Trump’s presupposed Jewishness is then used to go beyond the level of individual faith-acts to promote a global war against liberals and the Muslims, which is legitimised by the transfer of the American embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, an act that in and of itself is seen to strengthen or even fulfil God’s explicit will.¹⁶ Brazilian neo-Pentecostalism, widely considered, here thus indirectly also becomes a global actor in a global political game, conjoining with emerging political forces that would protect their shared values. This is the full post, which is indeed bold in its far reaching cosmopolitical scope:

For those of you who don’t know, Donald Trump is Jewish, and due to questions associated with his (non-religious) faith he is already naturally associated with the State of Israel, as many of his friends and partners are Jews. Donald Trump affirmed that he will transfer the American Embassy in Israel from the city of Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, and will formally recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel. Although Donald Trump apparently treats women badly (sic) – principally during his acting career – he has declared publically that he valorises family values, much more than Hilary Clinton, who has been incentivizing gay marriage. Donald Trump declared publically that he will stand to the side of Israel and combat the hypocrisy which calls Islamism (sic) ‘a religion of peace’. He will fight to exterminate ISIS together with Russia and he will take Hilary Clinton to the Court of Law for putting the country’s security at risk [my translation, parenthesis in origin].¹⁷

In all these examples, then, the power of the Abrahamic-Jewish God that dwells in Jerusalem (and the Holy Land more generally) is taken to create predisposed divisions between those who are blessed (namely, neo-Pentecostal worshipers) and those who are not (atheists, Catholics, adherents of Afro-Brazilian spiritual doctrines, gays, human rights activists etc.; cf. Almeida 2017; Birman 2009). A ‘Jewish’ essence, or a divine original bliss, then become a shield or even a weapon, a substance with ontological power, which rebukes and disarms a liberal-secular morality that emerges from ‘the People’. One afternoon in March 2016, for example, Congressman Cabo Daciolo who I mentioned above took to the Speakers Stand at the Brazilian Congress. Beginning with *Glória a Deus*, Daciolo read a short passage from the Book of Luke (11:14–19), which describes how Jesus expelled a demon from the body of a person who was ‘mute’. Bewildered biblical onlookers then accused Jesus that he was a witch working for the Prince of Demons – Beelzebub – but in response Jesus questioned their own authority, proclaiming he was in fact liberating people from the destructive influence of demons with the ‘finger of God’. Visibly moved, Daciolo closed his bible and looked at his fellow Congressmen and women. ‘The Kingdom of God is coming’, he affirmed, and began prophesying:

I speak here under the authority, which belongs to Lord Jesus Christ, [to claim] that the blood of Christ has power! And under the authority of Lord Jesus Christ I say: all demons roaming this

nation – leave this nation! In the name of Jesus Christ, all demons that roam the National Congress, leave in the name of Lord Jesus! ... This nation will be the mirror of the world for the honour and glory of Lord Jesus Christ ... Together we are strong, we will not take one step back, and God is in control.¹⁸

Daciolo's exorcism of demons from the national congress came at a time when political reality in Brazil looked grim. The impending impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff, the worsening economic crisis and the daily scandals emerging from the Petrobrás investigation all instantiated collective anxieties. Attributing the chaos to the work of demons, Daciolo framed the entire human political sphere as a *cosmological stage* on which a variety of extra-human agents compete for the realisation of their different eschatological plans. At this cosmic register, divine power actively displaces humans from the centre of the universe while replacing them with Christ, the Abrahamic God, the Holy Land and a set of divine standards that are used to actively transform the Brazilian public sphere at large. The ontological presence of this power in the congress, through Daciolo's own prophecies and the presumed simultaneous flow of angels there, thus creates an overlap between state politics and neo-Pentecostal ritual practices. In 2015 Congressman Daciolo was in fact *expelled* from the left wing party PSOL (Partido Socialismo e Liberdade) – which at the time he represented as a congressman for his Rio de Janeiro electorate – for initiating a motion to amend the Brazilian constitution. He proposed to change the sentence 'all power emanates from the people' to 'all power emanates from God'.¹⁹

Within these terms, the cosmic power that is at the heart of Brajisaalem can be seen as a mana-like substance that flows through people, buildings, streets, and the Nation as a whole to make concrete distinctions between the 'pure' and the 'impure', friends and enemies, blessed and cursed. Contrary to the abstract force, which according to the aforementioned Planalto political imaginary is emerging bottoms-up from all segments of the Brazilian People to create a unified nation; an ontological divine power in Brajisaalem descends top-down from the heights of God's sublime cosmic space (or from the elevated spiritual position of the Holy Land in which He dwells) to encompass only those individuals and communities willing to absorb it. This constitutes structured recessions into ever purer spaces of social interaction, a process which thereby creates a very powerful aesthetic distinction between those who are blessed and those who are not (Reinhardt 2007). This cosmopolitical imagination thus brings forth a dynamic of social relations that I perceive analytically as the actual encapsulation of social entities, a swirling inwards of the power of God, a motion of essentialization or even enclosure, a form of regression into clear-cut social divisions in which higher levels of purity (by virtue of their proximity to the divine) encompass lower ones. As with the strict gender differentiation of which Apostolo Terranova speaks, criteria for political participation is here defined in binary terms, which are premised on the cosmic incommensurability between good and evil, light and darkness, angels and demons' in short, between neo-Pentecostalism and the rest.

And this ultimately extends beyond the neo-Pentecostal and evangelical realms to create further dynamics of encapsulation in the Brazilian society. It will suffice to note three pertinent examples. First, and in direct relation to Terranova's push

towards 'divine' standards for gender differentiation, opposing the PT liberalism has in recent years also become associated with a 'return' to conservative family relations. In 2016, as the momentum for impeachment grew stronger, middle-class women participating in mass anti-PT demonstrations across Brazil were often filmed with evocative signs in their hands, which exclaimed that Dilma was 'not a real woman'. Whether these demonstrators were adherents of neo-Pentecostal churches or not, their reliance on heteronormative ethical codes reorganised gender relations along binary divisions that marked a certain conservative uprising against the pluralist discourse that has become synonymous with Dilma's public personality. Second, throughout the months preceding the impeachment of President Dilma Rousseff, her opponents in the congress and in the media kept using a technical language that made tangible the kind of political enclosure they were attempting to demarcate within static bureaucratic regulations. Such terminology – 'unemployment indices', 'diversion of funds', and the magic word 'corruption' – made it possible to ignore the relational, often elusive personalism, which characterises social interactions in the Brazilian cultural universe at large (Ansell 2015a). They could thereby imagine instead the possibility of a straightforward, demarcated, exact – in fact, almost sterile – political reality, which coincides with the kinds of divine purity and Total Order promoted by people like Cabo Daciolo. And third, long-sleeve beachwear with UV protection are increasingly becoming trendy for both men and women across Brazil, a stark visual differentiation from the once-popular thong-bikinis and speedos worn by beach goers everywhere in the country. While this consumerist hype is also linked to popular middle-class discourses on health and life-style choices, it may nonetheless also be seen as a symptom of a sociality gradually covering itself up as it fortifies social distinction, which takes the form of newly-defined boundaries between gender roles, bodies, classes and spiritual communities.²⁰

Yet, as I emphasised above, the emergent construction of Brajisalem – including the rituals that make it possible – from exorcism (cf. Shapiro 2019c), through 'cleansing' and healing (Fernandes 2019) to ongoing worship practices that involve 'Jewish' religious objects (Topel 2011) – primarily takes place through the increasing influence of neo-Pentecostal cosmological ideas on the democratic political game. President Jair Bolsonaro's baptism in the Jordan River in Israel in 2016 is a good example. Although Bolsonaro was not previously a Pentecostal 'convert', his trip to Israel in 2016 and his consequent immersion in the water of the River Jordan can be read either as a mimetic attempt to become viscerally absorbed with a divine power (as a converging force) or as a marketing gimmick that would appeal to the huge Evangelical electorate in his ultimately successful 2018 Presidential Campaign.²¹ Indeed, that baptism have plausibly been conceived as a strategy to achieve both these objectives. In this cosmopolitical game, which increasingly infuses Brajislaem with Planalto, manipulation of divine power progressively becomes a pragmatic platform for policy making. Evidently, in an interview that took place during his own Campaign for President in 2018, Congressman Daciolo differentiated himself from Jair Bolsonaro with the claim that while Bolsonaro seeks the execution of criminals, Daciolo himself merely proposes 'washing and curing them with the blood of Lord Jesus'.²² It is the ontological power that is

infused in the symbols of total divine grace, and the ways by which these symbols create a political presence in everyday life, which is used here not only to promote a cosmopolitical version of reality, but also to distinguish between levels of authenticity of faith and the possibility of enhancing God's power in the benefit of the nation.

On the basis of this analysis it then becomes possible to distinguish analytically between what I see as an 'interface' and a 'depth' dimensions underlying the emergent construction of Brajisaalem. Interface relates to the performance of divine power as a horizontal boundary maker relational to other cosmological theories prevalent in the Brazilian public sphere, such as Catholic, Historical Protestant, and Afro-Brazilian spiritual frameworks, as well the secular civilian ethos more generally. 'Depth' refers to the fact that this process of differentiation also potentiates vertical or 'deep' individual transformations. For example, a so-called 'conversion' to neo-Pentecostalism in Brazil was traditionally associated with alcohol abstention, the wearing of modest clothes and reinforced emphasis on 'family values' (Selka 2010); but among those churches that adopt the judaization trend (Topel 2011) such conversion now also entails the appropriation of several 'Jewish' customs, such as the celebration of the Pentecost holiday, the wearing of a Jewish Prayer Shawls, and in some cases the lighting of Shabbat candles (cf. Ferreira 2019). In that sense, Brajisaalem engages the interiority and mental composition of persons who seek divine supervision. As they immerse themselves with the divine power of the Judeo-Christian God, Brazilian citizens seeking to participate in this emerging form of cosmopolitical power ultimately become subjected to a double socio-spiritual process: on one hand, they are literally being elevated closer to God; while on the other hand they set themselves apart from their neighbouring communities and fellow Brazilian citizens. I now turn to some final considerations.

Conclusion

The emergent construction of Brajisaalem increasingly stimulates a deep transformation of the Brazilian political imagination. I analysed this transformation as a nuanced (yet concrete) shift in conceptions of power relations. While the democratic ethos of 1988 establishes its legitimacy largely on social contract (Schuler 2018), universal humanism (Saad-Filho 2017) and a pluralist electoral system (Rocha 2019); those who promote a literalist adoption of a Biblical time-frame in Brazil cite the Abrahamic God and His son Jesus as the unique, omnipresently ultimate, sources of moral authority. They thus empirically associate the provisional *mana* of Brazilian society with a cosmic rather than civil order (Sinner 2012). Whereas the production of power in the constitutional imaginary advances a dynamic of multiplicity and endless expansionism, an unwitting flow of diverse civil identities that often fuse one into the other and forwards in all directions towards a utopian edge of Progress; the dynamic of power that governs a biblical imaginary of power is of modular enclosure and inwards convergence, an orderly compartmentalisation into localised communities that are minutely divided along clear lines of separation. I used the term Brajisaalem to describe the kind of sociality that comes into being with the emergence of this last kind of political imagination, which always

remains rooted in the Brazilian way of ‘doing things’ as well as in the images and symbols of the very kind of democratic citizenship it purports to challenge.

The imaginaries of power in Planalto and Brajisaalem can thus be seen to actually implicate each other, for two main reasons. First, both are utopian ideal-types in their own right; they include a desired edge and an impulse towards the realisation of this aspired utopia, and in that sense they are both expansive or outward-oriented. And second, from the ‘converging perspective’, the tradition of patron-client relationship remains entrenched in the Brazilian cultural style (Ansell 2010). Even the most progressive segments of the Brazilian governing elites maintained clientelist forms of exchange throughout the last decade despite the hegemony of ‘openness’, transparency and inclusion (cf. Almeida and Zagaris 2015). Democratisation itself is also inherently limited and limiting. Taken together, it thus becomes possible to think of Brajisaalem and Planalto as intrinsically infused, which thereby may suggest that in the future their respective dynamics may even merge into a single political presence of power, at once egalitarian (in the social-contract vein) and hierarchic (in the religious vein), alternately ‘expanding’ and ‘contracting’ social relations in different intensities across the Brazilian social landscape as a whole. For the time being, however, those who seek to deploy the divine power of God in Brazil as a vector of sociocultural change quite openly seek the reinstatement of a cosmic divine order not only as means for spiritual salvation but also as the explicit implementation of a series of conservative moral arguments in the evaluation of current world-affairs (Almeida 2017). They consequently still define the rules of the political game in binary terms – it is the power of God that will overcome the power of the people as His faithful decuples institute His Kingdom in Brazil. The question thereby remains open: what will become of the Brazilian political imagination when the country’s spiritual and moral centre is finally relocated to Biblical Jerusalem?

Notes

1. Protestant revival movements have arrived in Brazil as early as 1910 (Freston 1999), but the number of adherents remained negligible until the 1970s, amounting to no more than 5-6% of the Brazilian population. In that decade, however, a rapid acceleration in the diffusion of Evangelical doctrines among the popular classes began to take place, and today roughly 25% of the Brazilian population – approximately 50 million people – define themselves as ‘Evangelicals’ (IBGE Internet Site, accessed June 2018). In recent years, Brazil has consequently become the largest Evangelical national community in the world (Sinner 2012).
2. In Portuguese:

Art. 1º A República Federativa do Brasil... constitui-se em Estado Democrático de Direito e tem como fundamentos: I - a soberania; II - a cidadania; III - a dignidade da pessoa humana; IV - os valores sociais do trabalho e da livre iniciativa; V - o pluralismo político. Parágrafo único. Todo o poder emana do povo, que o exerce por meio de representantes eleitos ou diretamente, nos termos desta Constituição.

3. Brazilian scholar Gilberto Freyre famously coined the term ‘Racial Democracy’ in the 1930s to indicate that ethnic and religious syncretism is not an impediment for the ultimate growth and prosperity of the nation but rather its most promising social characteristic. He used this notion to counteract the proto-fascist eugenic idea that the Brazilian population must be ‘whitened’ in

order to increase productivity and welfare in the country. For excellent debates on this issue see Buarque de Holanda (1936), Bailey (2004), Collins (2011), Fry (2000) and Edmonds (2010).

4. In Portuguese:

Art. 3º Constituem objetivos fundamentais da República Federativa do Brasil: I - construir uma sociedade livre, justa e solidária; II - garantir o desenvolvimento nacional; III - erradicar a pobreza e a marginalização e reduzir as desigualdades sociais e regionais; IV - promover o bem de todos, sem preconceitos de origem, raça, sexo, cor, idade e quaisquer outras formas de discriminação.

5. Petra Costa's 2019 documentary *The Edge of Democracy* (Busca vida Filmes, distributed by Netflix) is an excellent recent contemplation on the repercussions of this process, which also includes dazzling ethnographic gazes into the highest levels of the Brazilian political classes.
6. Shofar is a horn of a ruminant animal used like a trumpet in a series of Jewish holidays to communicate with divine authority, as with the annual act of 'opening' the gates of heaven and then closing them at the end of Atonement Day.
7. For an excellent analysis of Edir Macedo's marketing tactics see Mafra et al (2012). Partly due to Macedo's own adoption of the predominantly Catholic term, Bispo – Bishop – and later on also – Apóstolo – Apostle – have both become common quasi-aristocratic titles among neo-Pentecostals in Brazil in recent decades. These terms are used not only to indicate the presupposed elevated spiritual status of those pastors who have already conducted pilgrimage to the Holy Land, but also to suggest leadership positions at the political level.
8. Pagliarini uses the term *Bolaines* (pronounced *bo-lay-nis*), an adaptation into Portuguese of the Modern-Hebrew term *Bol'anim*, which geologists in Israel use to describe this same phenomenon, albeit supplying an entirely geo-centric explanation devoid of divine causality. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zq5ZMEtUF0Y> [accessed June 2019].
9. Mezuzah is a rectangular wooden or plastic case containing scrolls with the Hebrew inscription of biblical verses, which is fixed to the threshold of doors. For further reading on the contemporary commercialization of the Holy Land tourism market see Feldman (2014 and 2016); and Kael (2014).
10. There is an interesting semantic contrast between these recent neo-Pentecostal display of a Jewish divine power and the history of Marrano communities in Brazil and other parts of Latin America, which is all about hiding Jewish religious artefacts (Wachtel 2013). It is also important to note that contemporary neo-Pentecostal Judeophilia and philo-semitism sharply contrast with a traditional Popular-Catholic anti-Semitic idea of Jews as archetypical Traitors (cf. Dulin 2015). I thank Ethnos anonymous reviewer for this comment.
11. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JVxxn-1RoQM> [accessed June 2019]. Throughout this clip the Garden Tomb is represented as Christ's authentically verified burial and resurrection site, although different Christian churches relish different sites related to this cosmologically significant event, as I mentioned above.
12. 'Never secular' Christian doctrines is a term coined by Tanya Luhmann (2012) to refer to doctrines that reject a multiplicity of frameworks of belief as an ontological possibility, thereby insisting on a single frame of reference through which spiritual phenomena can be experienced and interpreted. For example, Joel Robbins (2004) argues that the Urapmin are totally and fully engrossed with Christian ritual practice through every day activities to the extent that any other spiritual practice is not only condemned but also excluded as a cultural impossibility.
13. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vZ9SR29JCyU> [accessed June 2019].
14. Terranova in fact claimed on stage that he 'was forced' to dismiss his former house-keeper and nanny (*empregada*) after he discovered she allowed his children to watch Brazilian *telenovelas*.
15. The notion of 'family values' is only one of the many grounds on which neo-Pentecostal life-styles and beliefs can come about. Another important arena is that of the spiritual warfare against various agents of evil, human and extra-human alike (Burdick 1998; Silva 2007; Chesnut 1997).
16. Donald Trump is not Jewish. He did however transfer the American Embassy in Israel from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, thereby de-facto recognizing Israel's claims for sovereignty over the entire

city and its capital, including the Eastern parts which were occupied in the six-days war in 1967 and that are still disputed by Palestinians as their own future capital.

17. The Portuguese version:

Para quem não sabe, Donald Trump é judeu, e por questões associadas a sua profissão de fé (não religiosa) ele já está naturalmente associado ao Estado de Israel, sendo que muitos dos seus amigos e parceiros são judeus. Donald Trump afirmou que mudará a embaixada americana em Israel da cidade de Tel Aviv para Jerusalém e reconhecerá formalmente Jerusalém como a Capital do Estado de Israel. Donald Trump apesar de aparentemente tratar mal as mulheres, principalmente durante sua carreira como ator, declara publicamente valorizar os valores de família, bem mais que Hillary Clinton que estava incentivando o casamento homossexual. Donald Trump declarou publicamente que estará ao lado de Israel e combaterá a hipocrisia que chama o islamismo de religião de paz, lutará para exterminar o ISIS junto com a Rússia e vai levar Hillary Clinton aos tribunais por pôr em risco a segurança do país.

18. See: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ccmzbnk3GdM> [accessed June 2019]. Congressman Daciolo has since left PTdoB and is currently affiliated with the right wing Patriota Party, a contemporary reincarnation of the centre-right Partido Ecológico Nacional (PEN). He ran for the 2018 Presidential Elections as the party's candidate but won little support.
19. See: <http://www.ebc.com.br/noticias/politica/2015/05/psol-expulsa-deputado-daciolo-por-desacordo-com-estatuto-e-programa> [accessed June 2019].
20. See for example <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7r94ZfdlV8> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=q0syCWXtNoo>. Note that the popularization of this trend also implicitly signifies whitening, or *branqueamento*. [accessed June 2019].
21. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XmDE6jGtfRU> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9kTdasE8rY> [accessed June 2019].
22. See <https://epoca.globo.com/politica/noticia/2018/06/cabo-daciolo-o-pastor-presenciavel-que-efenomeno-na-internet-e-promete-expulsar-o-demonio-do-planalto.html> [accessed June 2019].

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