Against These Things There Is No Law

Spirit-empowered Witness in Secular Uruguay

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Abstract

Uruguay is a country unique in Latin America for its secularism. It secularized early, thoroughly, and publicly, under the leadership of President José Batlle y Ordoñez, at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. A century later, Uruguay still boasts the highest percentage of atheists, agnostics, and nones in the continent. This is a country that seems to defy the sometimes triumphalist narratives of the pentecostalization of the global South. Yet, even amidst this backdrop, there are bright spots of Spirit-empowered witness. This article seeks to examine two of these bright spots of Spirit-empowered hope during Uruguay's historic secularization process and in the present.

Introduction

Uruguay is a country without an indigenous population, that has been lauded as a "democratic miracle,"[1] and labeled the "Switzerland of South America."[2] The early genocide of the indigenous Charrúas[3] created a supposed *tabula rasa* in which modern Enlightenment ideals could be enacted in a South American landscape. A heavy influx of European immigrants created a demographic described as being "descended from the ships."[4] Uruguay's cultural patriarch, José Batlle y Ordoñez, received these immigrants with open arms, so long as they left their "superstitions," including religion, on those ships. Today, Uruguay has remained the most secular country in Latin America, with the church having been "privatized and ghettoized"[5] for over one hundred years. Todd Johnson and Gina Zurlo's *World Christian Encyclopedia* states simply, "Uruguay is by far the most secular and least Catholic nation in the Americas." While Johnson and Zurlo show Catholic adherents in Uruguay at 52.9 percent, they note that regular mass attendance stands at 3 percent.[6] However, even here, bright spots of Spirit-empowered courage, hope, and tenacity shine forth. This article examines two of these bright spots:

the witness of Mother Francesca Rubatto and the Capuchin sisters, Italian nuns who sailed as missionaries to Uruguay during the height of anti-clerical tensions in the late nineteenth–early twentieth centuries, and the potentially equally significant witness of current neo-Pentecostals in Uruguay.

Method, Structure, and Sources

This article draws from Eneida Jacobsen's factual model of public theology. The factual model calls the researcher and reader alike to look for where and how faith is "already being made public" as the faithful live out their theology.[7] This article will look first at the efforts of Uruguay's cultural patriarch, José Batlle y Ordoñez (hereafter Batlle), to transform Uruguay from an immigrant backwater into a modern, secular, and homogenous nation and the witness of the Capuchin sisters. This article will then jump forward one hundred years, looking at neo-Pentecostals in present-day Uruguay.

Historian Susana Monreal's work on Italian nuns in education and healthcare in Uruguay provides insight into the late nineteenth–early twentieth centuries from the Catholic perspective. Sociologist Néstor Da Costa is an important voice on the current religious climate in Uruguay. Finally, Magdalena Milsev's thesis on a prominent neo-Pentecostal church network in Uruguay, Misión Vida para los Naciones, provides valuable ethnographic insight into Pentecostal belief and praxis.

Ideology and Identity: A Brief History of Uruguayan Secularism

The birth of Uruguay did not happen peacefully. Achieving independence from Spain in 1811, Uruguay was not yet its own country, forming instead the Banda Oriental together with Brazil and Argentina. In a complex history deserving of its own study, Uruguay finally emerged from the Banda Oriental as a separate country forming a Spanish-affiliated buffer state between Brazil and Argentina. Uruguay's first constitution was enacted in 1830. Uruguay then embarked on more than half a century of internal conflict, with ongoing civil strife as a lengthy punctuation on a chaotic beginning.

At the dawn of the twentieth century, Uruguay was still culturally a territory. Gauchos roamed the *pampas* rounding up wild cattle and living on their meat.[8] Both dueling and bull fighting were legal.[9] Though most of the population was concentrated in the urban city of Montevideo,[10] in many ways the culture of Uruguay of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries resembled the prototypical North American Wild West.[11] The arrival of the twentieth century brought the presidencies of José Batlle y Ordoñez, member of the Colorado party, and president from 1903–1907 and

again from 1911–1915. Against the backdrop of this Uruguayan Wild West, Batlle determined to make a modern nation out of Uruguay. Martin Weinstein comments, "Given the huge flux of immigrants in the last decades of the nineteenth century, and the first two decades of the twentieth, the challenge for Batlle . . . was to integrate this new and overwhelmingly urban mass into society."[12] Cemented in history as the man who brought Uruguay into the modern era by the creation of the welfare state, Batlle was ever on the side of the urban poor through the medium of progressive government policy with a preferential view of the city.[13] Batlle was strategically building an ideology of homogeneity among those who would constitute the new Uruguayans, that is, working-class Italians and Spaniards in Montevideo. Da Costa, describes it well:

> The native people of Uruguay had been exterminated and the bulk of the country's population now descended from immigrants who had come to this land in search of a better future. In a modernized Uruguay, they found a place, sustenance, future and protection in the hands of a newly consolidated state with plans for the future. All Uruguay asked of these immigrants was to abandon the trappings of their origin and join a new "we" where egalitarianism played a very strong symbolic and ideological role.[14]

Indeed, Stephen Armet notes, "more than one researcher has commented on the state's obsession with forming, not just an integrated society, but a homogenized and uniform society leaning toward a liberal autocracy."[15] Critical in Batlle's ideology was a driving anti-clericalism with Freemason sympathies,[16] resulting, eventually, in a new constitution in which Article Five ensured complete separation of church and state.[17] However, Batlle's anti-clericalism went beyond this constitutional break between church and state. He sought removal of the church from the public square entirely. Milton Vanger summarizes, "Most of Don Pepe's [José Batlle's] moral preoccupations sooner or later involved anti-Catholicism."[18]

Batlle's legacy of anti-clericalism and, indeed, of anti-religion, reveals itself in the statistics on religious belief and practice in Uruguay more than a century later. The country currently boasts the highest number of atheists, agnostics, and nones in Latin America,[19] and seems to largely resist the pentecostalization that largely otherwise characterizes the Global South.[20] Uruguay's political history seems to have calcified into an identity element for Uruguayans.[21] Uruguayan Parliamentary Senator, Carmen Asiaín Pereira, describes it thus:

> This initial uniformity of the population in general terms of culture, language, ethnicity, and religion had a strong influence on its attitude towards the "different," undermining the development of an open-minded

> tradition. Sharing the "only child syndrome," Uruguayans found themselves in no need to resolve the challenge of coexistence with the "altar." This peculiar historical fact conditioned our nation since its birth, making it prone to holding a monolithic ideology and a single truth.[22]

Italian Sisters in the Río de la Plata

Susana Monreal traces the first four Italian convents that came to Uruguay as missionaries during the mid-late nineteenth century, including the Capuchin Sisters of Mother Rubatto.[23] Monreal emphasizes commonalities between these four orders, including Marian piety, Eucharistic worship, and missionary zeal. In this, they were not unlike the early Pentecostals, who, having experienced a new or fresh anointing of the Holy Spirit, believed they had been anointed for service and went out immediately and zealously as missionaries, some to Uruguay.[24] It was Marian devotion, common to the time period, that served as the motivation and prescription for the sisters' direct involvement in social engagement, specifically in roles of teaching and caring for the sick.[25] The first sisters arrived in 1856 to find an anemic Catholic church. Uruguay, in fact, would have no diocese in the country for a further twenty-two years, and until 1878 was considered an outpost of the Buenos Aires diocese. It was a vicarate with one parish for every 3,454 Uruguayans and one clergy member for every 1,140 Uruguayans. In total, there were thirty-three parishes and one hundred clerics for the entire nation.[26]

Meanwhile, a letter from the Daughters of Mary Helper of Christians illustrates the passion with which the sisters approached their mission, revealing that their primary motivation was evangelization. Upon arrival in Montevideo, the sisters stayed with others until their home was ready. They expressed longing for this time so that they could continue "the evangelizing task that they had already begun with the children of the Italians" who were on the same boat to Montevideo.[27] Their letter states, "On the boat we have been able to realize the great need to make God known and loved, and we burn with desire to give ourselves to souls."[28] Recent musings on Mother Rubatto's influence echo the sisters' missionary purpose: "When you study her life, you see that her missionary passion developed in this country. She came to an area that was a wasteland and had a great vision."[29]

Freemasons and Mother Rubatto

The Italian Freemasons who built the Italian Hospital of Montevideo looked to convents in Italy to supply the necessary nurses, "on the condition they do not put pressure on the sick in regard to religious practices."[30] Few wanted to work as nurses because it was considered a low-class profession. Therefore, nuns were called from Italy

to work in the Italian hospital, under the anti-clerical Freemason founders and administrators. In this context, Mother Francesca Rubatto responded to the summons, arriving in Montevideo in 1892 with three sisters. Mother Rubatto was initially hesitant to respond to the request from the Río de la Plata due to the young age of the nuns under her care.[31] Even when Mother Rubatto sailed for Montevideo, it was "with some anguish,"[32] as the sisters were young, the journey was hard. Upon their arrival, the bitter clerical/anti-clerical tensions between the Bishop of Montevideo and the Italian hospital administrators prevented the sisters from beginning their work.[33] Nora Azanza, a Capuchin sister in present-day Montevideo, describes the situation: "Since [the hospital] was administered by Freemasons, they did not want to receive [Mother Rubatto]. People were mad at her, and she could have retired, but she preferred to earn a space."[34]

Through the assistance of other influential Catholics in the Río de la Plata,[35] the sisters were eventually able to begin work as nurses, caring for the immigrants the hospital was designed to serve. Crediting the sisters' patience and tenacity, Monreal notes that despite the anti-clerical conflicts of the city, the hospital, and the nuns' work as nurses, the sisters were, for a time, able to establish a daily rosary prayer, establish a chapel, and hire a chaplain who, remarkably, was paid by the hospital administrators.[36]

Mother Rubatto seemed to overcome her initial hesitation towards the Rio de la Plata, as she first requested via letter, then personally sailed back to Italy to recruit more nurses, returning to Montevideo with five sisters.[37] In addition to the hospital, Mother Rubatto served the poor and the young in Montevideo. Monreal quotes a sister who knew Mother Rubatto, Sister Petrina Merello, assessing her impact in the hospital and beyond:

> The leaders of the hospital did not understand anything about religion . . . but the Reverend Mother with her kindness, education, and charity, knew how to win the hearts of all who came to her. The wife of the most contrary to religion, who called the priests a bag of rags and said that [Latin] America had lost all its luster after the priests entered, was the first to then give her a beautiful monstrance for the chapel.[38]

Though she does not use the phrase "fruit of the Spirit," Monreal nevertheless names two of the fruits the Spirit bears in the lives of those he empowers in describing Mother Rubatto's impact at the Italian Hospital: "Her abiding joy and 'gentle tenacity' were a powerful help in gaining the trust of the anticlerical administrators of the Italian Hospital in Montevideo."[39] In his address to the Capuchin sisters about Mother Rubatto, Pope John Paul II quotes a section from one of her letters in which she describes joyful and tireless engagement as only possible through "divine help":

> Serve the Lord joyfully, lovingly fulfill the duties entrusted to you, work tirelessly because you know how precious your work is in the sight of the Lord. And having worked hard for the glory of God whom you love so deeply, call yourself a useless servant of the Lord and be convinced of being one, because you know that you are not capable of anything without his divine help.[40]

Mother Rubatto's faithful identification with those she served in Uruguay was such that upon her death she was buried among the Uruguayan poor as she requested.[41] Indeed, her call to ministry began with a prophetic word in Italy "that she would never lack bread and that she would die in a foreign land."[42] Having dedicated her life to the service of the poor and of adolescents in both Italy and the Río de la Plata, Mother Rubatto left a legacy of nineteen convents in the Río de la Plata.[43] In 1993, she was beatified by Pope John Paul II, becoming Uruguay's first saint.

Though I can find no direct mention of speaking in tongues as the initial evidence of the Spirit as defined by classical Pentecostalism[44] in the records of the Italian sisters in Uruguay, it is clear that the sisters possessed a faith that both sustained and empowered them for effective, joyful service in an ideologically hostile environment. It is my supposition that the sisters practiced a living faith replete with the charismatic fruits of the Spirit, among them joy, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control (Gal 5:22–23). Additionally, the Holy Spirit produces endurance, resilience, and tenacity in the lives of those he infills, and these are certainly evident in the sisters, with Mother Rubatto as the exemplary case. Notably for the anti-clerical political context in which the sisters served, Paul explicitly states, "against these things [that is, the fruit of the Spirit] there is no law" (Gal 5:23).

Neo-Pentecostals in Modern Uruguay

A century later, Pentecostalism holds great potential for meaningful witness in Uruguay through the message of a God who is interested in daily concerns and offers an ongoing experience of hope in divine relationship mediated by the Spirit. The impact of this potential witness, though, is still an open question. While general reception of Pentecostalism in Uruguay is a "mixed bag" in this country so unaccustomed to and offended by public displays of faith,[45] the boldness that engenders public scorn[46] also empowers Pentecostals to engage in areas that other believers and/or government aid programs can or will not. Those who receive their message cite Pentecostalism's presence in the country as proof God has not forgotten Uruguay,[47] while critics call the Pentecostal message one of magical thinking that preys on the passive, the isolated, and the weak.[48]

Paul Freston discusses divine healing as the lens through which to give helpful elucidation on this critique: "The concept of 'divine healing' draws on Durkheim's distinction between religious and magic: the latter creates a clientele and not a community."[49] Freston argues: "The 'clientele model' has limited utility. Only a small religious enterprise can be economically viable as long as it depends on a fluctuating clientele. . . . What is called divine healing is merely an initial stage . . . to be superseded, in successful cases, by a stable community receiving doctrinal instruction."[50] By this logic, then, the authentic Christian community that outlasts whatever material gain is realized is the most potent defense against accusations of the clientelism of magical thinking. It can be argued that the Capuchin sisters' faithful authenticity thus cut through the anti-clerical tide and led, eventually, to public honor replacing the initial public scorn.[51] While beatification, or even a positive public reputation, are not the end goals of witness, they nevertheless provide an unexpected long-term legacy, pointing to the credibility earned over time by Spirit-empowered grit in a religiously hostile environment.

Neo-Pentecostalism in Uruguay has not yet earned this credibility. Relatively new arrivals on the Uruguayan religious scene, neo-Pentecostals are in the process negotiating metanarratives of religious identity in the public square, an enterprise whose outcome and impact remain unknown.[52] While economic transformation through Pentecostal social engagement among the poor has been discussed elsewhere,[53] this author's contention is that a significant social engagement Pentecostals offer Uruguay is one of negotiating hopeful and cosmological meaning-making in a modern, secular context. Magdalena Milsev's thesis on a Uruguayan neo-Pentecostal church, Misión Vida, is helpful in understanding this negotiation, especially regarding Pentecostal cosmology. Drawing from Joaquín Algranti, Milsev contrasts the idea of Pentecostal Christians as passive victims of manipulation with a description of a broad, even cosmic, understanding of reality that calls the believer within this worldview to active, hope-filled engagement:

> The cosmological formalizations in MVN [Misión Vida] are in contrast to the analytical perspectives that have seen neo-Pentecostalism as a kind of "sub-religion" where ethical elements are absent. Following Algranti, despite the "eminently practical-magical character" with which neo-Pentecostalism is usually associated, "its representations also develop a deeply theoretical dimension of representation-explanation of the world that leads to acting in the environment and transforming it."[54]

The world that Pentecostals in Uruguay work to transform is one that, in contrast to the material worldview engrained in the Uruguayan context, includes the spiritual

dimension, and thus relies on the Spirit's presence, guidance, and empowerment. In their research on Pentecostal social engagement, Donald Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori explain:

> An argument has been made that Pentecostalism is a direct response to modernity. According to this explanation, the Enlightenment produced a flat, materialistic worldview. . . . While this philosophy produced one scientific revolution after another, it also put a squeeze on the human spirit. Pentecostalism, therefore, is a reaction to this worldview. It is resuscitating the "feeling dimension" of human life by introducing the Holy Spirit, the Comforter, into everyday life.[55]

Pentecostals have long been identified by their concern for the whole gospel, including health, in the power of the Spirit. In present-day Uruguay, sharing this concern for health looks less like divine healing crusades and more like the extending of tenacious and creative care for the hopeless. Indeed, Uruguay's extraordinarily high rates of suicide make hope an issue of life and death. A 1998 article reports the worrying trend of steadily increased suicide rates.[56] Nearly a quarter of a century later, the trend is 8 percent higher[57] and, in fact, is "double the world average."[58] The *Oxford Textbook of Suicidology and Suicide Prevention* gives the following reasons as the probable causes:

> Unemployment rates, a poor economy (very low incomes and high debts), forced retirement, and the emigration of young people and professionals, etc. Other reasons include domestic violence, sexual abuse, alcoholism, isolation, and the insufficient treatment of psychiatric patients.[59]

Current Uruguayan Cardinal, Daniel Sturla, is concerned about many of these same issues, stating in one interview that "the most difficult problem is the lack of a sense of life of many, especially by the youth."[60] Though he does not credit Pentecostalism with this message, Sturla nevertheless takes a cue from the experiential nature of charismatic streams of Christianity and urges Catholics to take up the joy of belonging to God as a form of both personal empowerment and of empowerment for witness, or the public disclosure of the good news.[61]

Both Da Costa and Jorge Marquez, pastor of Mision Vida, describe the hope Pentecostalism offers in terms of access. This is notable in a country that has had religion "privatized and ghettoized,"[62] with some historical churches having seemingly invisible onramps to participation and belonging. Da Costa comments that Pentecostalism in Uruguay provides a contrast to hierarchical church structures in that they ". . . introduce other elements, such as . . . belief in healing. They elaborate less on theology and embrace a more direct approach and in turn, this demands a personal

relationship with God."[63] In describing hope as access, Marquez emphasizes the kind of God who makes himself accessible: "People come to us because we have given a more accessible God, an everyday life kind of God. A God who is interested in finding a solution to marital problems, a God who is interested in how we earn our living and what we get to eat every day."[64] When solutions and support are possible and publicly disclosed, so too, is hope.

Conclusion

Though religion has now been privatized for more than a century, neo-Pentecostalism is increasing the visibility of religion in Uruguay. Pablo Semán and Ari Oro note that Pentecostalism in Uruguay has its roots in the aggressive proselytization plans of Brazilian and Argentinian neo-Pentecostal churches, whose presence then "stimulates a Native Uruguayan Pentecostal revivalism."[65] According to Semán and Oro, the competition between the two groups is intense and decisive "in the conflictive profile of Uruguayan Pentecostalism."[66] The conflictive profile is perhaps more apt a description than a surface look would reveal. Da Costa discusses "secularities" in various global contexts, emphasizing that one secularism is not interchangeable with another, for each secularity is negotiated in context through the "struggle of various social sectors."[67] It is possible that the entry of neo-Pentecostals from Uruguay's geographic neighbors adds to the struggle to preserve a uniquely Uruguayan secularity in the face of what are sometimes perceived as imported cults.

More than one hundred years ago, when Uruguayan secularism was undergoing its first and (so far) most conflictive public negotiation, the Capuchin sisters sailed to Uruguay from convents in Italy to care for the poor and sick. Their presence as religious emissaries from the "old world" added a layer of nuance in the church-state conflict of the new republic, whose leadership's goal was for citizens to move beyond religion. As noted at the outset of this article, "all" the new republic required of arriving immigrants was to "abandon the trappings of their origin and join a new 'we.'"[68] The sisters were among these immigrants to Uruguay and yet categorically refused to leave their religious identities "on the ship." Pentecostal "foreigners" in Uruguay display initiative and boldness reminiscent of the young nuns who sailed from Italy in the previous century. A recent conversation with a pastor in Uruguay speaks to this:

> The bright spot in Pentecostalism in Uruguay is that the Pentecostals will go where no one else has the courage to go. The universities, the desperately poor, places that are just a mess. Pentecostals are already there ministering. If the people in these situations had to wait for the mainline denominations to have enough courage to go . . . .[69]

Here the pastor trailed off with a shrug of the shoulders indicating the wait would be long indeed.

Though history now reveres Mother Rubatto and the Capuchin sisters, their arrival in Uruguay at the height of the anti-clerical tensions was highly contested. Like the Italian sisters, who, through their persistent faithfulness and joy presented a compelling witness in a radically secular context, the Pentecostal worldview encompassing a spiritual reality engenders tenacious hope in the Uruguayan context. One has to wonder if the public presence and provocation of neo-Pentecostals in Uruguay will result in successful democratization of religious identity, in which the long-standing secular identity narrative is broken into alternative storylines with multiple options of belief, or if the provocation in the public square will lead to even deeper secular entrenchment. When hope breaks through, it can be transformative. The question of neo-Pentecostals in Uruguay is whether or not the hope they profess will, like the Capuchin sisters, earn credibility with the Uruguayan public over time.

While Pentecostalism does not show signs of a sweeping upward trajectory in Uruguay, neither does it show signs of withering or withdrawing. This demonstrates what Wonsuk Ma describes as Spirit-empowered grit: "The crux of the empowerment is located in tenacity and resolution to accomplish a God-given task."[70] Milsev summarizes the presence of neo-Pentecostal churches in Uruguay since the 1980s: "they have acquired social—and political—relevance, as they have achieved to reach popular sectors, providing social services where the state is not present, as well as powerful symbolical referents for people in situations of deprivation."[71] Pentecostals are in Uruguay to stay. Combined with the message of sturdy hope, which is a by-product of an experiential relationship with God through the Spirit, Pentecostal witness provides a bold and a potentially winsome counter-narrative to Uruguayan depressiveness.[72]

This article has examined two areas of Spirit-empowered witness in Uruguay's secular context, both past and present. Though the dominant narrative of Uruguay is one of secular triumph over religion, the witness of Catholic sisters in the Italian hospital at the turn of the twentieth century, and the witness of hope the Pentecostal message offers to the present-day Uruguay, both speak to the Spirit's active presence in this country. In both cases, small groups of faithful believers' lives bear evidence of the fruit of the Spirit. In the case of the sisters, they were far from home, young, and what they could offer spiritually was largely unwanted by those in power in the spheres of society in which they served. Likewise, present-day neo-Pentecostals are largely viewed with suspicion, with their presence in the country having been characterized as a cult or plague by secular power wielders.[73] Yet, in both cases, they persevere with tenacity and joy, demonstrating the resilience that so marks those who are filled with God's Spirit.[74] In both cases, through the courage and faithfulness of the minority of believers, the Spirit bears lasting, visible fruit in the radically secular context of Montevideo, Uruguay.

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Notes:

[1] Marcos Supervielle, "Uruguay's Miracle: Redistribution and the Growth of Unionism," *Global Dialogue: Uruguay* 4:1, February 2014, n.p., https://globaldialogue.isa-sociology.org/uruguays-miracle-redistribution-and-the-growth-of-unionism/ (24 April 2021); Uki Goñi, "Uruguay's Quiet Democratic Miracle," *The New York Times*, February 9, 2016, n.p., https://www.nytimes.com/2016/02/10/opinion/uruguays-quiet-democratic-miracle.html (24 April 2021).

[2] Russell H. Fitzgibbon, *Uruguay: Portrait of a Democracy* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1966), 264.

[3] This happened at the campaign of *Salsipuedes* or "Get out if you can," under Uruguay's first president, Fructoso Riveria, in 1831.

[4] Letícia Núñez Almeida, "Migration, Borders, and Identities in Uruguay," *Estudios Históricos – CDHRPYB* 11:22 (December 2019), 6.

[5] Diego Mauro and Francisco Javier Ramón Solans, "Catholics in the Streets: City and Religion in the First Half of the Twentieth Century (Spain, Argentina, Uruguay)," *Revista de Historia y Religión* 8 (January–June 2018), 11.

[6] Todd M. Johnson, Gina A. Zurlo, "Uruguay," in *World Christian Encyclopedia Online*, http://dx.doi.org.oralroberts.idm.oclc.org/10.1163/2666-6855_WCEO_COM_02URY (30 April 2021). Drawing from Grace Davie's "Believing without belonging" argument, Michael Winter and Christopher Short note, ". . . most surveys of religious belief in northern Europe demonstrate high levels of continuing belief in God and some of the more general tenants of the Christian faith, but rather low levels of church attendance" (Michael Winter and Christopher Short, "Believing and Belonging: Religion on Rural England," *British Journal of Sociology* 44:4 [December 1993], 635). By contrast, Ignacio Zuasnabar, Director of the Uruguayan polling company Equipos Consultores, describes the Uruguayan religious landscape as one of loose belonging to a group that has shame as one of its primary identifiers: "Catholics are a big group in our country but with a sense of shame because we are a secular country and religion is not a positive value" (Stephanie Nolen, "In Secular Uruguay a Populist Cardinal Rallies the Faithful and Kicks Off a Feud," *The Globe and Mail*, 24 May 2018, n.p., https://www.theglobeandmail.com/world/article-in-secular-uruguay-a-populist-cardinal-rallies-

the-faithful-and-kicks/ [December 2021]). Here, identifying as Catholic comes with the side-effect of social shame, which perhaps describes in part the hesitancy Uruguayans have to regular mass attendance.

[7] Eneida Jacobsen, "Models of Public Theology," *International Journal of Public Theology* 6 (2012), 13.

[8] "Gaucho: South American History," *Encyclopedia Britannica*, n.d., n.p., https://www.britannica.com/topic/gaucho (24 April 2021).

[9] Bullfighting was banned in 1912. See Guy Hedgeco, "The Death of Bullfighting Worldwide," *Animal Guardians*, n.d., n.p., http://bullfighting.animalguardians.us/bullfighting-overview/bullfighting-bans/#:~:text=Bullfighting%20was%20introduced%20in%20Uruguay,Uruguayan%20law%20in%20February%201912 (29 April 2021). Dueling was outlawed in 1920 in Uruguay, and apparently reinstated in 1992. See "Uruguay Ex-President Wants to Bring Back 'Duels' to Solve Legal Disputes," *The Q*, 17 June 2017, n.p., https://qcostarica.com/uruguay-ex-president-wants-to-bring-back-duels-to-solve-legal-disputes/ (29 April 2021).

[10] Michael Goeble, "Gauchos, Gringos, and Gallegos: The Assimilation of Spanish and Italian Immigrants in the Making of Modern Uruguay: 1880-1930," *Past and Present* 208 (August 2010), 196.

[11] Philippe Bled, personal communication with author, Broken Arrow, Oklahoma, 20 April 2021.

[12] Martin Weinstein, *Uruguay: The Politics of Failure* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1975), 20.

[13] Weinstein, *Uruguay*, xv.

[14] Néstor Da Costa, "Non-Affiliated Believers and Atheists in the Very Secular Uruguay," *Religions* 11:50 (2020), 3.

[15] Stephen Armet, "Education Policy as a Mechanism for Secularization in a Catholic Majority Country: The Case of Uruguay, (1877–1932)," (PhD diss., University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN, 2014), 111.

[16] Victor Dahl, "Book Review: Garibaldi y el Uruguay," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 50:3 (August 1970), 641–42. Carmen Asiaín Pereira, "Religion and the Secular State: Uruguayan Report," in *Religion and the Secular State: National Reports*, eds. Javier Martínez-Torrón and W. Cole Durham, Jr. (Washington, D.C.: International Congress of Comparative Law, 2010), 770.

[17] "Appendix: The Constitution of the Republic of Uruguay," *The Southwestern Political Science Quarterly* 1:1 (June 1920), 95–118.

[18] Milton Vanger, *José Batlle y Ordoñez of Uruguay: The Creator of His Times 1902-1907* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1963), 249.

[19] Da Costa, "Non-Affiliated," 3.

[20] Philip Jenkins, *The New Faces of Christianity: Believing the Bible in the Global South* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2006).

[21] Néstor Da Costa, "The Laicity Phenomenon as Identity Element: The Uruguayan Case," *Civitas* 11:2 (May—August 2011).

[22] Asiaín Pereira, "Religion and the Secular State," 769.

[23] Susana Monreal, "Religiosas Italianas en la Consolidación de la Iglesia Uruguaya Moderna," *Revista del Instituto Histórico y Geográfico* 32 (2010), 152; Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 2–4.

[24] Allan H. Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 57–59; Arto Hamalainen, "Europe's Christian Heritage: Lost or Finding Its Roots Afresh?" in *The Remaining Task of the Great Commission*, eds. Wonsuk Ma, Opoku Onyinah, and Rebekah Bled (Tulsa: ORU Press, 2022), 149.

[25] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 5. Susana Monreal, "The Virgin of Verdún and the Political Struggle Against Secularization in Uruguay," in *Marian Devotions, Political Mobilization, and Nationalism in Europe and America*, eds. Roberto Di Stefano and Fransisco Javier Ramón Solans (London: Palgrave MacMillan, 2016), 316.

[26] Armet, "Educational Policy," 45.

[27] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 10.

[28] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 10.

[29] Nora Azanza, quoted in "Uruguay tendrá su Primera Santa: Madre Francesca Rubatto," *Iglesia Católica Montevideo*, 22 February 2020, n.p., https://icm.org.uy/uruguay-tendra-su-primera-santa-madre-francisca-rubatto/ (28 December 2021).

[30] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 13.

[31] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 13.

[32] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 13.

[33] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 13.

[34] Adrían Echevarriaga, "Fransisca Rubatto es la Primera Religiosa en Uruguay en ser Canonizada," *Galería Montevideo*, April 18, 2020, n.p., https://galeria.montevideo.com.uy/Revista-Galeria/Francisca-Rubatto-es-la-primera-religiosa-de-Uruguay-en-ser-canonizada-uc750151 (21 July 2021).

[35] Monreal notes the Auxiliary Bishop of Montevideo and the superiors of the Jesuits and Salesians among those who aided the sisters ("Italian Sisters," 13).

[36] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 13.

[37] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 13.

[38] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 14.

[39] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 14

[40] "Address of John Paul II to the Capuchin Sisters of Blessed Francesca Rubatto," 7 February 2002, n.p., https://www.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/speeches/2002/february/documents/hf_jp-ii_spe_20020207_cappuccine.html (28 December 2021).

[41] Roxana Alfieri, "Uruguay: La Madre Fransisca Rubatto sera Canonizada Poxímamente," *Vida Neuva*, 27 April 2021, n.p., https://www.vidanuevadigital.com/2021/04/27/uruguay-la-madre-francisca-rubatto-sera-canonizada-proximamente/ (20 July 2021).

[42] Echevarriaga, "Fransisca Rubatto."

[43] Echevarriaga, "Fransisca Rubatto."

[44] Vinson Synan, *The Holiness-Pentecostal Tradition: Charismatic Movements in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1971), 111–12.

[45] "2018 Report on International Religious Freedom: Uruguay," *U. S. Embassy in Montevideo*, 9 July 2019, n.p., https://uy.usembassy.gov/2018-report-on-international-religious-freedom-uruguay/ (28 December 2021).

[46] "Since the arrival of neo-Pentecostalisms in Uruguay, prosperity theology has been the aspect that has most attracted the attention of the media, sparking various controversies in them regarding the actions of religious leaders, these being often classified as subjects deceptive and malicious, and the faithful as passive and 'alienated' beings who 'allow themselves to be swindled.'" See Magdalena Milsev, "Salvación y Política en el Final de los Tiempos: Una Etnografía en la Iglesia Neopentecostal Misión Visa para las Naciones," (Master's thesis, Universidad de la Republica, Montevideo, Uruguay, 2020), 60.

[47] Ana Cibils, "Polémico Obispo Macedo Inauguró Nuevo Templo en Montevideo," *Redacción* 180, August 4, 2013, n.p. https://www.180.com.uy/articulo/34873_Polemico-obispo-Macedo-inauguro-nuevo-templo-en-Montevideo (28 December 2021).

[48] Maria Victoria Sotelo and Felipe Arocena, "Evangelicals in the Latin American Political Arena: The Cases of Brazil, Argentina and Uruguay," *SN Social Sciences*, 6 July 2021, n.p., https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s43545-021-00179-6 (28 December 2021).

[49] Paul Freston, "Contours of Latin American Pentecostalism," in *Christianity Reborn: The Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century*, ed. Donald M. Lewis (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2004), 236.

[50] Freston, "Contours," 236

[51] Monreal, "Italian Sisters," 13.

[52] Narrative identity in Uruguay, while fascinating, is outside of the scope of this article. For more see, Rebekah Bled, "Whose Line Is It Anyway: A Dialogical Narrative Analysis of Two Public Neopentecostal Narratives in Uruguay" (Paper presented at the 51st Annual Meeting of Society for Pentecostal Studies, Costa Mesa, CA, 2022).

[53] See Donald E. Miller and Tetsunao Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism: The New Face of Christian Social Engagement* (Berkely: University of California Press, 2007); and Wonsuk Ma, Opoku Onyinah, and Rebekah Bled, eds., *Good News to the Poor: Spirit-Empowered Responses to Poverty* (Tulsa: ORU Press, 2022).

[54] Joaquín Algranti, "La Política en los Márgenes: Estudio Sobre los Espacios de Participación Social en el Neopentecostalismo," *Caminhos, Goiania* 5:2 (July 2007), 361–80, quoted in Milsev, "Salvación y Política," 39.

[55] Miller and Yamamori, *Global Pentecostalism*, 25.

[56] Raul Ronzoni, "Population—Latin America: Uruguay has Highest Suicide Rate," *Inter Press Service*, 20 August 1998, n.p., http://www.ipsnews.net/1998/08/population-latin-america-uruguay-has-highest-suicide-rate/ (26 December 2021).

[57] "Uruguay Suicide Rate 2000–2001," *Macrotrends*, n.d., n.p., https://www.macrotrends.net/countries/URY/uruguay/suicide-rate (26 December 2021).

[58] Iolanda Fonseca, "Suicide Rate in Uruguay Grows and Doubles the World Average," *The Rio Times*, 22 July 2019, n.p., https://www.riotimesonline.com/brazil-news/miscellaneous/%EF%BB%BFsuicide-rate-in-uruguay-grows-and-doubles-the-world-average/ (27 December 2021).

[59] Silvia Pelaez Remigio, "Suicide Prevention in Uruguay," in *Oxford Textbook of Suicidology and Suicide Prevention*, eds. Danuta Wasserman and Camilla Wasserman (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011), https://oxfordmedicine.com/view/10.1093/med/9780198570059.001.0001/med-9780198570059-chapter-134 (27 December 2021).

[60] Jim McDermott, "'Listen to the Voice of the Holy Spirit,' Archbishop Daniel Fernando Sturla Berhouet; Montevideo, Uruguay," *America: The Jesuit Review*, 12 February 2015, n.p., https://www.americamagazine.org/content/dispatches/listen-voice-holy-spirit-archbishop-daniel-fernando-sturla-berhouet-montevideo (26 November 2021).

[61] McDermott, "Listen to the Voice."

[62] Mauro and Solans, "Catholics in the Streets," 11.

[63] Jessica Martinez, "Pentecostal Churches on the Rise in Predominantly Secular Uruguay," *The Christian Post*, August 3, 2013, n.p., https://www.christianpost.com/news/pentecostal-churches-on-the-rise-in-predominantly-secular-uruguay.html (27 December 2021).

[64] Martinez, "Pentecostal Churches on the Rise."

[65] Ari Pedro Oro and Pablo Semán, "Pentecostalism in the Southern Cone Countries: Overview and Perspectives," *International Sociology* 15:4 (December 2000), 610. This paragraph is adapted from Rebekah Bled," Whose Line is it Anyway," 17–18.

[66] Oro and Semán, "Pentecostalism in the Southern Cone," 610.

[67] Néstor Da Costa, "The Laicity Phenomenon as Identity Element: The Uruguayan Case," *Civitas* 11:2 (May—August 2011), 210.

[68] Da Costa, "Non-Affiliated," 3.

[69] John Hamilton, interview by author, Montevideo, Uruguay (via Zoom), 24 August 2021.

[70] Wonsuk Ma, "Isaiah," in *Biblical Theology of the Holy Spirit*, eds. Trevor J. Burke and Keith Warrington (London: SPCK, 2014), 37.

[71] Sotelo and Arocena, "Evangelicals."

[72] Ronzoni, "Population."

[73] U. S. Embassy, "2018 Report."

[74] Wonsuk Ma, "Lecture Nine," class notes from GTHE 962 Theologization in the Changing Global Context of Christianity, Oral Roberts University, Spring 2021.