

1-2011

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Recommended Citation

Smither, Edward L., "Bridging the “Excluded Middle”: The Case of Brazilian Evangelical Missionaries Serving among Arab-Muslims" (2011). *Faculty Publications and Presentations*. Paper 373.
http://digitalcommons.liberty.edu/lts_fac_pubs/373

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BRIDGING THE “EXCLUDED MIDDLE”: THE CASE OF BRAZILIAN EVANGELICAL MISSIONARIES SERVING AMONG ARAB-MUSLIMS

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Published in “Contemporary Practice” www.GlobalMissiology.org, January 2011

I. INTRODUCTION

Since Paul Hiebert first challenged missiological reflection with his notion of the “excluded middle,” missiologists and practitioners from the West have been forced to face the deficiencies of a rationalistic worldview; especially when serving in animistic contexts. Hiebert, Bill Musk, Rick Love, and others have further asserted that Western missionaries serving among Folk Muslims need to be better equipped to minister to the felt needs of their host peoples. While the literature and evidence of missionary practice suggest that North Americans and Europeans are working hard to climb “learning curve” dealing with this worldview. Missionaries from Brazil serving among Arab-Muslims seem to have fewer obstacles in this area.

In this article, I will begin with a brief summary of how the official religion is regarded in the Arab world (Islam) and in Brazil (Roman Catholicism). Next, I will survey popular religion in both contexts—Folk Islam in the Arab world and Spiritism in Brazil—including a discussion of practices, motivations, and worldview. Building on this background, I will explore the missiological implications for Brazilian evangelicals serving in Arab-Muslim contexts.

While this discussion will be supported by the relevant anthropological and missiological literature, it will be further enriched by the perspectives of Brazilian workers and mission leaders serving in Arab contexts—insights based on interviews conducted with forty-five Brazilian missionaries and ten Brazilian mission leaders in 2009 and 2010. In short, I will argue that Brazilian missionaries in general have a worldview of the spiritual realm that allows for the supernatural and demonic; thus, they are not alarmed by the spiritual realities of Folk Islam, and they are generally more prepared than Westerners to minister to Folk Muslims. Indeed, some

members of the Brazilian missionary force have a personal background in Brazilian Spiritism prior to coming to Christ, while the rest, including Pentecostals and non-Pentecostals alike, have grown up around and are quite accustomed to Brazilian popular religion.

II. ARABS AND ISLAM

Though birthed in a seventh-century Arabian tribal context, Islam spread rapidly and established itself quickly as the official religion of most Arabs. As the majority religion, Islam has also served as a defining and cohesive element for Arab society in general. As an official religion, Barakat notes, Islam is characterized by “religious texts, the *shari’a* (Islamic law), absolute monotheism, the literal interpretation of religious teachings, ritualism, absence of intermediaries between believers and God, and the religious establishment’s close connection with the ruling classes.”¹ Based upon sacred books (the Qur’an and Hadiths), the religion is characterized by recognized practices (e.g. prayer, fasting, almsgiving, pilgrimage), officially sanctioned sacred places (e.g. mosques, pilgrimage sites), and recognized religious leaders (e.g. imams, muftis). Islamic orthodoxy has been articulated for many centuries through a significant corpus of writings by Muslim theologians and, as Islam has spread into the world, there have also been theological reform movements such as Wahhabism which sought to preserve the purity of this religion.²

Islam has, of course, shaped the spiritual worldview of Arabs. This is best observed in how the name of God is invoked in daily situations. In communicating “please,” North Africans will say *b-rabbi* (“by God”), *yaishek* (“God extend your life), and *Allah hamda walidek* (“God bless your parents”). “Thank you” is conveyed with *baraka Allah fik* (“God bless you”), *Allah ybarak fik* (“God bless you”), and again *yaishek* (“God extend your life). “Goodbye” is communicated through *rabbi yawenek* (“God help you”), *Allah yawen* (“God help you”), and *rabbi mak* (“God be with you”). Arabs around the world remember God’s provision and blessings throughout the day by uttering *Hamdulillah* (“Praise God”). Finally, fatalism—a prominent aspect of the Muslim worldview—is affirmed daily through the oft repeated phrase *inshallah* (“God willing”).³

While Islam has served to define Arab society in general, it has also provided an identity for Arab individuals and families who cannot conceive of being anything but Muslim. Indeed, the religion—sustained by the family and community—does not allow for conversion to another belief system. Hence, for the vast majority of Arabs, to be an Arab is to be a Muslim.⁴

III. ARABS AND FOLK ISLAM

Despite the significant work of Muslim theologians, the presence of world-renowned Islamic theological schools such as Al-Azhar (Cairo) and the *Jammat al-Zeitouna* (Tunis), and the efforts of Muslim reformers such as Abd-al Wahhab, most Arab-Muslims are not strict adherents to the official religion. Rather, they practice what is commonly called “popular Islam” or “Folk Islam” — “A broad, catch-all phrase that describes the mixing of formal or orthodox Islamic practices with primitive animistic practices.”⁵ Animism is, of course, understood as “the belief that all of creation is pervaded or inhabited by spirits or souls, that all of creation is in some sense animate or alive.”⁶ Rick Love asserts that 75% of Muslims worldwide practice Folk Islam, and that number increases to 95% among women.⁷ Though more prevalent in villages, Folk Islam is also commonly practiced in urban centers.⁸

Contrasting Folk Islam to the official religion, Barakat writes:

Popular or folk religion . . . refers to a very different religious orientation. This pattern of religious life personifies sacred forces, emphasizes existential and spiritual inner experiences, seeks intermediaries between believers and God, and interprets texts symbolically.⁹

Musk adds that while the official religion emphasizes morals, ethics, institutions, and hierarchy, Folk Islam is less institutional and more pragmatic.¹⁰ Indeed, official Islam seeks to answer the religious question “what is true?” while Folk Islam is more concerned with getting at “what works?” Swartley describes official Islam as a “shopping mall” with “neatly organized shops,” while folk Islam is “an open market or bazaar, a fluid, free-flowing maze that sprang up without careful pre-planning.”¹¹

Having established that most Arab-Muslims are syncretistic in mixing official Islam with animistic practices, let us now explore the motivations behind such actions. The first motivation seems to be a yearning to connect with the divine. Swartley helpfully writes: “Overall, Muslims are seeking a connection with the spiritual world and with God. In Islamic theology, God is primarily transcendent: He is distant and uninvolved in human affairs . . . This heartfelt need for connection with God (immanence) is a driving force in popular Islam.”¹² Barakat affirms, “The role of shrines and saints is to provide mediation between ordinary believers and God, whom official religion has rendered too remote and abstract.” Thus, such practices are a “highly personalized and concrete alternative for common people.”¹³

Second, Muslims seem driven to animistic practices out of fear. Hiebert asserts that a primary motivation for any religion is the desire for security and comfort, especially during a crisis.¹⁴ Swartley adds: “Many Muslims are fearful of the pressures affecting their daily lives: sickness, death, jealousy, infidelity, and privation, to name a few. They have mounted an unrelenting search for supernatural forces to counteract these forces.”¹⁵ Arab-Muslims are particularly afraid of *jinn* (evil spirits or demons), which are generally blamed for many of these difficulties.¹⁶

Third, in the absence of an immanent deity and with the presence of *jinn*, Folk Muslims are concerned with finding solutions to daily problems. A farmer hopes for rain and an eventual good harvest. Young women long to conceive and give birth to healthy children. A university student hopes to pass his exams and then find a job. A young wife needs assurance that her husband is being faithful and that her jealous neighbor will not put curses on her. Hence, Folk Muslims are concerned with dealing with these heart-felt issues rather than speculating over philosophical or eternal questions.¹⁷ Again, their religion is more motivated by answering “what works?” instead of “what is true?”

Fourth, also with the absence of an immanent deity and given that Islam is strongly fatalistic, Folk Muslims desire to have some power and control over their lives.¹⁸ In fact, Woodberry argues that, “The felt need for power is so great among folk Muslims that their entire

worldview is seen through the spectacles of power.”¹⁹ In an extended discussion on power, Love asserts that Muslims perceive spiritual power on a number of levels. First, there are powerful spiritual beings—angels and demons—that Muslims desire to appease and manipulate.²⁰ Second, there are powerful people whose services can be retained in times of need. While they may consult an imam, Folk Muslims are more likely to call upon a shaman (a practitioner of magic).²¹ Musk adds that women also figure among the powerful people in Folk Islam, and they include—midwives (*qabila*), who are not only skilled in delivering babies, but also capable of using herbal potions and working magic; sorceresses (*sahhara*) whose powers are believed to diminish or heighten sexual desire; and matchmakers (*shawwafa*) who are helpful in arranging marriages.²² Love further asserts that Muslims are interested in objects of power (charms, amulets), places of power (saints’ tombs, Mecca), times of power (Muhammad’s birthday, the period of the hajj), and power rituals (Quranic prayers).²³

With these motivations in mind, let us now explore further some specific Folk Muslim practices. Love helpfully places such practices into four categories of magic—productive magic, protective magic, destructive magic, and divination. Productive magic is observed, for instance, when a university student consults a shaman for blessing (*baraka*) in order to pass his exams. It is further observed as Muslims—the sick, infertile, and unemployed—visit the tombs of Muslim saints (*marabout*).²⁴ Commenting on this regard for Muslim saints, Musk writes:

Alive or dead, saints are believed to possess great power. The kind of miracles (*karama*) attributed to them include raising the dead, walking on water, covering great distances in very short times, healing, having knowledge of the future, guarding people or tribes, and being in two places at one time.²⁵

During the shrine visit, Muslims honor the saints and make their petitions known through lighting a candle, making a sacrifice, offering a meal, or leaving a piece of a sick person’s clothing at the tomb.²⁶ In Southern Tunisia, where a significant number of shrines are located, some 20,000 Muslims attend an annual festival in which participants make sacrifices, dance, and even fall into trances as they seek *baraka* from the saints.²⁷

Protective magic can be observed when Muslims visit a shaman for *baraka* to ward off a curse.²⁸ It is also evident when pregnant women visit shrines in hopes that their unborn children

will come to full term and will be born healthy. This type of magic is also practiced through the use of certain potions. For instance, in Morocco, a woman will place a drop of her urine in her husband's tea to insure his faithfulness to her. It is said that every man in Morocco, from the king to the poorest peasant, has at some point consumed his wife's urine.²⁹

Protective magic is also evident when Muslims attempt to protect themselves from the evil eye—a look of envy that is believed to cause harm.³⁰ Musk writes that “the fundamental concept of the evil eye is that precious persons or things are constantly vulnerable to hurt or destruction caused by other people's envy.”³¹ While those most often accused of giving the evil eye are poorer and less fortunate women, those regarded as victims of it include barren women, unmarried women of a higher social standing, the sick, and animals. The latter are cursed because they are the source of a family's livelihood.³²

To protect themselves against the evil eye, Muslims will hold out their hand (making a “stop” gesture) in the direction of the one suspected of giving the evil eye. Because such a gesture is quite offensive under ordinary circumstances, many Muslims choose to wipe their forehead with the back of their hand in a subtle manner, which gives them protection from the evil eye but also saves them any potential embarrassment if they are mistaken. A second mode of protection against the evil eye is simply repeating the phrase *mashallah* (“God willing”). Finally, Muslims find protection by using amulets—an object worn on the body. Often infused with power by a shaman, amulets include the hand of Fatima, the *Nazar* (a replica of the evil eye), a pouch with Quranic verses, a miniature Quran, and certain types of jewelry. Also, it is common for families to place an amulet in the home—typically a wall hanging—in order to protect the entire family.³³

While many Folk Muslims focus on protecting themselves from *jinn* and human enemies, others engage in destructive magic in order to harm others. Such strategies include giving the evil eye and placing curses on others.³⁴ Love notes that in Yemen, curses are placed on others by stealing some of their hair, while in Tunisia, it happens through taking an enemy's finger nail clippings.³⁵

Divination is the final common form of magic practiced by Folk Muslims. Motivated by a desire to know the sex of an unborn child, to have wisdom for important decisions like marriage, and even to know the cause of a certain sickness, Muslims commonly visit fortune tellers in search of answers about the future. While some fortune tellers use tarot cards, others perform a ritual by letting the Qur'an fall open to a random page and then offer an interpretation of that verse.³⁶

While Arab-Muslims certainly ascribe to the official expression of Islam with its sacred texts, meeting places, and its recognized leaders, the vast majority still resort to animistic practices for their daily survival. Though it seems apparent that the official religion proves inadequate for daily practice, Patai correctly notes that “the believers are unaware of any incompatibility between their belief in Allah the only God, and these numerous super humans who people their world of the unseen.”³⁷

IV. BRAZILIANS AND ROMAN CATHOLICISM

Despite significant evangelical growth in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Brazil remains one of the largest Roman Catholic countries in the world. Adherence to the church in Brazil has, of course, been weakened by the influence of liberal-minded leaders such as Pedro II, which has encouraged a general free spirit toward religion in Brazilian society.³⁸ In addition, the shortage of priests—half of whom are foreign born—and the lack of Roman Catholic teaching have resulted in Brazilian Catholicism being largely nominal.³⁹ Observing Catholic devotion in Recife in Northeast Brazil, one writer commented that “Sunday mass is not an institution and many regard an annual confession as sufficient.”⁴⁰ This nominalism is also apparent through the Brazilian expression that a man needs to go to church just three times in his life—to get baptized, to get married, and to die.⁴¹

Despite the overall lack of devotion to Roman Catholicism, the Catholic Church remains “the institution that defines public religion in Brazil.”⁴² Hess argues: “Although lay support is soft . . .

the Catholic Church is still the hegemonic religion in Brazilian society. Catholicism was the official religion until the end of the nineteenth century, and its hegemony in the religious arena has continued into this century.”⁴³ Ribeiro adds that “it is so difficult, in truth, to separate the Brazilian from the Catholic: Catholicism was the cement of our unity.”⁴⁴ Indeed, Catholic influence on the Brazilian spiritual worldview can be observed in how God’s name is used in daily expressions. When saying goodbye to a friend, Brazilians commonly say, *Deus o acompanhe* (“God be with you”) or *fique com Deus* (“stay with God”). In response to a favor or an act of kindness, Brazilians say *Deus te pague* (“God will repay you”). *Graças a Deus* (“thank you God”) is used to express gratitude or contentment, while *meu Deus* (“my God”) communicates surprise, shock, or disbelief. Finally, Brazilians also reveal a fatalistic worldview when adding the qualification *se Deus quiser* (“God willing”). While Arab-Muslims and Brazilians share a similar practice of using the name of God in daily expressions, some of these expressions actually have similar meanings—especially the example of *inshallah* and *se Deus quiser*.

Another similarity between Islam and Brazilian Catholicism is that, historically, it was unthinkable that a Brazilian would convert to another faith. Writing in the earlier part of the twentieth century, Tucker asserted that “for a native Brazilian, who was brought up a Roman Catholic to apostatize and become a Protestant is intolerable.”⁴⁵ Though evangelicalism has exploded in Brazil and Latin America, this has not been without resistance from the Catholic Church.

V. BRAZILIANS AND SPIRITISM

Though Roman Catholicism is Brazil’s dominant religion and leaving it is not encouraged, Brazilians certainly mix the official religion with Spiritism.⁴⁶ In fact, Neuza Itiokia argues that the Roman Catholicism that came to Brazil in the sixteenth century was already quite syncretistic and included the worship of saints and even witchcraft.⁴⁷ This tendency was furthered by the Portuguese authorities who, in an effort to control the African slaves in the colony, encouraged the practice of African religions alongside Roman Catholicism.⁴⁸ Finally, Jesuit missionaries,

aiming to contextualize the Gospel, also accommodated the animistic practices of their target peoples and, as a result, encouraged syncretism.⁴⁹ This history has contributed to a prevailing tolerance toward religious syncretism. Illustrating this attitude in reference to the peoples of Bahia, Silverstein writes: “A popular saying describes Bahians as a practical people who go to church in the morning, a Spiritism session in the afternoon . . . and a Candomblé ritual in the evening.”⁵⁰

Given the syncretistic nature of Brazilians, let us now define Spiritism, explore the underlying motivations for it, and then describe the various strains of Spiritism in the Brazilian landscape, including their prominent practices. Kloppenburg helpfully describes Spiritism as:

A pretentiously evoked, perceptive communication with spirits from the beyond, whether to receive news from them, to consult them (necromancy), or to place them at the service of men (magic); whether to do good (white magic) or to perform some evil (black magic). To be Spiritist, therefore, it suffices to accept this minimum doctrine: that spirits exist; that these spirits are ardently interested in communicating with us in order to instruct us or help us; that we can evoke perceptible communication with these spirits.⁵¹

Highlighting its animistic foundations, Park points out that Spiritism involves “the belief [in] innumerable spiritual beings concerned with human affairs and capable of helping or harming men’s interests.”⁵² While Finley asserts that 30% of Brazilians are involved in some form of Spiritism, Itiokia argues that this number is more like 70% of the population.⁵³ Even the more conservative estimates indicate that millions of Brazilians are active participants in Spiritism.

Brazilians seem motivated to practice Spiritism for at least three reasons. First, not unlike the Muslim worldview, the Brazilian Catholic conception of God is distant and uninvolved in daily life. Vincent helpfully writes:

Brazilians are drawn to such religions at least in part because traditional Catholicism seems to offer unsatisfactory answers in a society in flux. With its emphasis on the eternal, on life *after* death, and with a doctrine being advocated by a largely foreign priesthood, Catholicism seems to many Brazilians to offer few answers to more immediate concerns . . . The perceived failure of Catholicism to respond to such mundane problems is also one of the reasons Brazilians are attracted in ever larger numbers to other religious doctrines.⁵⁴

Second, also like Folk Islam, Spiritism, is “primarily concerned with day-to-day matters, not with metaphysical or other worldly concerns.”⁵⁵ Itiokia adds that Umbanda adherents are look for something “more tangible.”⁵⁶ Describing the work of one practitioner, Hess notes that his specialty was dealing with “lover’s quarrels, impotent husbands, long strings of financial setbacks, and disease—in short, bad luck.”⁵⁷ Because problems beset the rich and poor alike, devotion to Spiritism can be observed in every social class. Page asserts: “People from all social classes belong to Afro-Brazilian cults. Businessmen follow cult rituals before making important deals. The poor find comfort and hope in places of cult worship.”⁵⁸

Finally, because Brazilians are open to creative solutions (*jeito*) to such daily problems, they are willing to consider all of the spiritual possibilities available within Brazil’s diverse cultural landscape.⁵⁹ Commenting further on the appeal of Spiritism, Vincent adds, “It is natural to wonder why such an eclectic religion would enjoy such popularity, but Brazilian society is a fluid and eclectic one, and on reflection it may seem a perfectly logical manifestation of the kind of free-wheeling spirit of the culture.”⁶⁰ Describing the animistic spiritual worldview of Bahians, Silverstein shows that their involvement in Spiritism is driven by a “Who knows what will work?” mentality. He continues, “In a constantly changing and insecure world—a world in which adroit manipulation of one’s available social network could mean the difference between having and not having a job, food, or medicine for one’s suffering children—all doors must remain open.”⁶¹

Given these motivations, let us now describe the major expressions of Brazilian Spiritism. The first is called Candomblé, though it is also known as Macumba in Rio de Janeiro, Xangô in Pernambuco, and Batuque in Pará.⁶² The cult originates from the Bantu and Yoruba peoples of Southern and Western Africa who came to Brazil as slaves.⁶³ Despite these origins, many white Brazilians have also embraced Candomblé through the influence of African servants and mistresses.

Within Candomblé, there is a belief in ancestral spirits called *orixás*, which are associated with the sea, water, thunder, and ancient kings and queens. Though the Yoruba honored a supreme god named Olorum, the *orixás* developed because Olorum was perceived as being too distant.⁶⁴ Candomblé rituals take place at a small shrine within a courtyard (*terreiro*)—a plot of land often donated by a wealthy benefactor. Accompanied by singing in the Yoruba or Bantu languages, animal sacrifices are offered by a *mãe de santo* (“saint’s mother”) or by a *pais de santo* (“male priest”).⁶⁵ Through this, the *exu* (demons) are appeased and leave the shrine and the *orixás* come and take possession of adherents—“sons” and “daughters” of the spirits who attain this status after some months of instruction and practice.⁶⁶ Page adds that, once possessed, adherents will go into a trance and “will shake convulsively, scream, gyrate wildly about the room, and flop to the floor like a rag doll.”⁶⁷

In general, the rituals are complex and follow a set calendar, surely a practice borrowed from the Catholic Church. Also, many of the *orixás* are named after some of the famous Catholic saints. In addition to these syncretistic practices, Candomblé adherents are encouraged by their leaders to remain in the Catholic Church and benefit from both spiritual contexts.

A second form of Brazilian Spiritism is called Kardecismo. Developed in the late nineteenth century by a Frenchman named Allan Kardec (1804-1869), Kardecismo is a combination of philosophy, science, Hinduism, and Catholicism.⁶⁸ Appealing to educated Brazilians already influenced by French philosophy and culture, Kardec emphasized “rationality without dismissing Catholicism.”⁶⁹

Affirming a Deistic doctrine of God in which the creator is no longer involved in the affairs of the world, Kardec emphasized the importance of communicating with spirits in outer space and also with the dead. The latter practice was developed to meet the felt needs of those who had lost loved ones. Communication with spirits and the dead was facilitated through séances performed in the home of a trained Kardecist.⁷⁰

Kardecismo has also been characterized by a strong commitment to morality and charity, which over time has eclipsed communication with the dead in importance. Because of its popularity among the middle class, the educated, and intellectuals—a predominantly white population—the group has encountered less opposition from the Brazilian Catholic Church.⁷¹

The final prominent form of Brazilian Spiritism is Umbanda. Having developed in São Paulo and Rio de Janeiro in the mid-twentieth century, it is still regarded as an Afro-Brazilian religion.⁷² “The ultimate evolution of Brazilian Spiritism” according to Itiokia, Umbanda is the most definitive expression of Brazilian syncretism as it mixes Roman Catholicism with Candomblé, Kardecismo, and Indian Spiritism.⁷³ While Umbanda has managed to “whiten” Candomblé and bring it more into the mainstream of Brazilian religious practice, the movement still regards itself as Roman Catholic. Through the influence of Kardecismo’s rationality, animal sacrifices and trances have been eliminated in Umbanda. Though Umbanda retains the Candomblé rituals of *orixá* possession, the rituals have come to resemble the Roman Catholic sacraments. Indeed, the *orixás* have been venerated as Catholic saints, while Jesus is depicted as the great *orixá* and the *exu* is reinterpreted as the devil. In addition to these rituals, sorcery is prominently practiced in Umbanda, especially as adherents seek to defend themselves against curses and destructive magic.

While highly syncretistic, Umbanda, which literally means “all of us”⁷⁴ or “the limit of limitlessness,”⁷⁵ also prides itself on being extremely tolerant. Umbanda leader Jota Alves de Oliveira asserts that, “Umbanda does not support any racial prejudice and intends to unite all races and all different social strata and cultures in Brazilian soil.”⁷⁶ Indeed, Umbanda does appeal to the diversity and creative spirit within the cultures of Brazil. Though Umbanda practitioners must always be mindful of the potential of government repression, the 40,000 Umbanda centers in Rio de Janeiro alone are evidence of its widespread popularity.⁷⁷

VI. FOLK ISLAM AND BRAZILIAN SPIRITISM – SUMMARY

Though the practices of Folk Islam and Brazilian Spiritism differ significantly, some general continuity in the spiritual worldview and motivation for such practices can be observed. First, between their official religions and accompanying popular practices, both Arabs and Brazilians demonstrate a strongly spiritual worldview. Speaking of Brazilians, DaMatta remarks, “we are a people that believes profoundly in another world.”⁷⁸ One Brazilian transcultural worker, observing this similarity between his home culture and his Arab ministry context, wrote: “Brazilian culture is ‘theologically’ oriented [and] Brazilians (Christians and non-Christians) refer to God daily in their speech. The use of expressions such as ‘God willing,’ ‘God bless you,’ ‘God be with you’ are very common. Arabs speak much in the same manner.”⁷⁹ Within this general spiritual worldview, Arabs and Brazilians are both strongly fatalistic—a value expressed in the daily expressions *inshallah* and *se Deus quiser* (“God willing”). Page argues that due to their presence in Portugal until the thirteenth century, the Arabs influenced Portuguese Catholics toward being more fatalistic—a worldview that came to characterize Brazilian Catholicism.⁸⁰

In light of these common aspects of worldview, Arabs and Brazilians also share some similar motivations for practicing Folk Islam and Spiritism. First, in Islam and Brazilian Catholicism, God is perceived as distant and uninvolved in the affairs of the world and thus unavailable to help with daily problems. Second and related to the first, adherents to popular practices in both contexts are concerned with felt needs and daily problems rather than eternal, philosophical, or cosmological questions. Finally, though more apparent in the Folk Muslim context, both Arabs and Brazilians engage in animistic practices in order to have some power or control over their lives.⁸¹

VII. MISSIOLOGICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR BRAZILIAN EVANGELICAL MISSIONARIES

In light of these observed similarities in the spiritual worldview of Folk Muslims and Brazilian Spiritists, what are the implications for Brazilian evangelical missionaries serving

among Arab-Muslims? Having been raised in a context of Catholicism syncretized with Spiritism, Brazilian transcultural workers generally possess more of a pre-modern worldview in which they are aware of the supernatural and demonic world. Consequently, they are more sensitive to ministering to the needs of Muslims plagued by the spiritual conflicts brought on by Folk Muslim practices.

Before elaborating further, it should be noted that a key shortcoming of Western missions in the Muslim world has been failing to relate to the spiritual world of Folk Muslims.⁸² Essentially describing Hiebert's "excluded middle" paradigm in the worldview and ministry of Western missionaries, Love helpfully writes:

Since most Western missionaries come from a materialistic-oriented culture which relegates the supernatural to other-worldly concerns, when faced with the realities of the spirit realm, they often either ignore the issues or offer naturalistic solutions to what are perceived by Folk Muslims as supernaturally-caused problems—so opportunities for ministry are lost.⁸³

Nevertheless, Hiebert urges that all missionaries serving among Muslims be equipped to minister to the spiritual needs of those practicing Folk Islam: affirming God's presence and care for their daily needs, sharing the availability of God's power for their lives, and encouraging them to call upon the Lord for physical healing and deliverance from evil spirits.⁸⁴

While North American and European workers among Muslims have heeded Hiebert's call and are learning to approach Muslims with a more integrated worldview, it seems that they have much to learn from Christian workers from the Global South in this area. This influence is apparent in the following excerpt from the 1978 Willowbank Consultation:

A number of us, especially those from Asia, Africa, and Latin America, have spoken both of the reality of evil powers and of the necessity to demonstrate the supremacy of Jesus over them. For conversion involves a power encounter. People give their allegiance to Christ when they see that his power is superior to magic and voodoo, the curses and blessings of witch doctors, and the malevolence of evil spirits, and that his salvation is a real liberation from the power of evil and death. Of course, some are questioning today whether a belief in spirits is compatible with our modern scientific understanding of the universe. We wish to affirm, therefore, against the mechanistic myth on which the typical Western worldview rests, the reality of demonic intelligences which are concerned by all

means, overt and covert, to discredit Jesus Christ and keep people from coming to him.⁸⁵

Brazilian evangelical missionaries certainly number among these Global South peoples and again, their worldview and experiences growing up in a syncretistic Brazilian religious milieu has prepared them to minister in spiritual contexts such of the Folk Muslim world. In his study on pre-field training for Brazilian transcultural workers, Finley offers support by observing that, “Brazilians take seriously the subject of spiritual conflict, following the Brazilian tendency to acknowledge the existence of middle-level spiritual beings, but going against the culture in viewing these beings as demonic rather than deities.”⁸⁶ Commenting further on their preparedness to minister in contexts of spiritual battle, Finley writes:

In terms of worldview, these first- and second-generation Christians usually have little hesitancy in continuing to affirm the reality of spiritual beings beyond the physical senses of the world. This would tend to make them somewhat more prepared for some of the spiritual realities that can be anticipated on pioneer fields, where entrenched non-Christian religious systems sometimes exacerbate the potential for spiritual conflict.⁸⁷

Silas Tostes, present director of the Antioch Mission, affirmed that growing up in an environment of Spiritism has prepared Brazilians for the Folk Muslim context, especially those who engaged in Spiritist practices themselves prior to professing faith in Christ and pursuing the missionary call. Tostes illustrated this by referring to one such Brazilian church planter serving in a Folk Muslim context in West Africa. While preparing to baptize two believers, he noticed that the men were beginning to vomit and show signs of spiritual conflict. He rather routinely stopped the baptism and began to pray for the men and take authority over the oppressing evil spirits. After the issue was resolved, the Brazilian missionary went ahead with the baptism.⁸⁸

It also seems that Brazilian workers from Pentecostal backgrounds have a particular sensitivity to the spiritual world of Folk Muslims due to their theology and worldview. While observing some similar sociological patterns in Pentecostalism and Spiritism, Freston concludes that, “Pentecostalism is . . . tuned in to an inspirited world.”⁸⁹ Commenting further on the Pentecostal worldview and how they have engaged Spiritism in Brazil, Itiokia adds:

It was this group [Pentecostals] which acknowledged the supernatural view of reality including the interaction of angels and demons in the everyday lives of

people. With [their] emphasis on the Holy Spirit, Pentecostals involved themselves in “power encounters,” calling Satan by name and expelling demons . . . Their evangelistic approach toward Spiritism was never polemic.⁹⁰

Though Pentecostals represent less than one-third of the Brazilian evangelical mission force in the Arab world, those that have gone have nevertheless applied a Pentecostal worldview to ministry in Folk Muslim contexts. One worker in the Middle East, who was personally converted in Brazil after his mother was healed from cancer, described his Arab ministry context as spiritually oppressive. He attributed things like his son’s constant illnesses and an automobile accident to the spiritual battle around them. Acknowledging that spiritual conflicts are prevalent in both Brazil and the Arab world, he commented that in Brazil the spiritual evils are more outwardly observed while in the Arab context, they go on more in people’s hearts. In terms of his ministry strategy, this worker reported that throughout his ministry, he has seen people physically healed after praying for them. While cautioning against sensationalizing these outcomes, he simply emphasized that he has learned to pray with faith and expectation.⁹¹

A similar worldview and subsequent willingness to engage in spiritual warfare is apparent in the following account from a female Pentecostal missionary in the Arab world. She shared: “Once I was praying for a family. In the family was a boy who was spiritually oppressed. I told my mom in Brazil about this and she had a vision about the family. She prayed and I prayed for the family and the boy’s problems were resolved.”⁹² Finally, another Brazilian Pentecostal worker related that Muslim background believers still experience many spiritual conflicts and it was important that missionaries be prepared to minister to them.⁹³

Though it seems logical that Brazilian Pentecostals would be eager to engage in spiritual warfare in the Arab-Muslim world, Brazilian missionaries from the historic churches and denominations have also demonstrated similar spiritual sensitivities.⁹⁴ One woman from a Presbyterian background offered some helpful insights as she correlated her experiences with spiritual warfare in Brazil to her current ministry in the Arab world. She related: “There are lots of evil influences in Spiritism rituals in Brazil. Also, my own brother who was not a believer was possessed. I have had some real experiences praying for him and others and seeing them delivered and this has helped to prepare me for spiritual warfare here [in my Arab context].”⁹⁵ Also, a Baptist pastor

serving among Arabs in Southern Brazil shared the following moving account of spiritual warfare in a Muslim context. He stated:

After eight years, I became deathly ill and felt the spirit of death. I was losing weight everyday and the doctors did not know what to do for me. A group of Christians came and prayed for me. They discerned that a curse had been placed on me by Muslims. They could not stop the work of our church and ministry so they wanted to stop me. The group prayed for me and I was healed and was able to return to ministry.⁹⁶

Hence, from these accounts, it seems that Brazilian workers from Pentecostal churches and the historic churches share a similar perspective on spiritual warfare in the Arab-Muslim context. Indeed, this regard for the spiritual world by non-Pentecostal Brazilians workers affirms a general observation made by Mark Noll about majority world Christianity. He writes: “Westerners who minister in Latin America, China, the Philippines, Africa, or the South Seas consistently report that most Christian experience reflects a much stronger supernatural awareness than is characteristic of even charismatic and Pentecostal circles in the West.”⁹⁷

Additional insights were gained after surveying Brazilian missionaries—from both Pentecostal and historic church backgrounds—regarding their views on spiritual warfare in the Arab context. Of those surveyed, 29.5% reported that prayer and spiritual warfare ministry were regular aspects of their ministry. Interestingly, not a single respondent indicated that dealing with spiritual conflicts was a difficult or impossible ministry. Also, none reported a lack of spiritual warfare training in their pre-field preparation. This is significant because Western missionaries often feel unprepared and inadequate for the spiritual challenges in a Folk Muslim context.

Brazilian workers indicated a strong awareness of the spiritual battle around them. One worker related, “We know that there is a great battle. We have had some periods of great crises because of this,”⁹⁸ while another added, “There is a great spiritual battle here. If you have no spiritual life, you will die spiritually.”⁹⁹ Similarly, others affirmed, “This [attention to spiritual life] is an area of which we need to always pay much attention to in the Muslim world, because we are constantly in spiritual battle in all levels,”¹⁰⁰ and “It's fundamental that we are aware of the spiritual battle because we live in it daily. We need to use our spiritual weapons.”¹⁰¹ One worker from a Baptist background asserted, “I try to have a balanced view of the spiritual. Like

C.S. Lewis, not give too much attention to the devil, but not ignoring him either.”¹⁰² Another affirmed, “We certainly pray against the Evil One; but I am not obsessed with every problem being caused by a demon or the devil.”¹⁰³

In addition to the cases already noted, other Brazilian workers attributed health problems to the spiritual battle around them. One missionary shared, “Sometimes I have not felt well but I do understand that there is a spiritual context, especially during the month of Ramadan.”¹⁰⁴ Another shared, “I was once very ill during a ministry outreach and after prayer from colleagues, saw myself quickly recover.”¹⁰⁵ Finally, the previously mentioned Baptist pastor in Southern Brazil recounted, “I recovered from a serious illness after the intercessory prayer of a group of believers.”¹⁰⁶

Building upon this general awareness for the spiritual world, some Brazilian workers were able to discern that spiritual warfare differed in various contexts. One worker who had previously served in North Africa before moving to Southern Brazil asserted, “There is a greater spiritual battle among Muslims in Southern Brazil than there was in North Africa. This is especially true among the Shia Muslims.”¹⁰⁷ On the other hand, a Brazilian women shared, “I feel that the spiritual battle is greater here [in my Arab context] than in Brazil (though in Brazil I have been involved in praying for people oppressed by the devil).” Another worker observed: “It is easier to perceive the evil in Brazil, it is more subtle here [in my Arab context]. The Evil One works in a different way.”¹⁰⁸

Some of those interviewed observed that Brazilians are generally more sensitive to spiritual warfare than Western missionaries are. One Brazilian woman related, “I think I feel a greater sense of prayer than my husband (who is from North America).”¹⁰⁹ Describing his organization’s training strategy for prayer and spiritual warfare, a North American mission leader working with Brazilians in Muslim contexts admitted: “We do emphasize prayer and spiritual warfare training with our Brazilian workers. Any weakness in this training would be because of shortcomings by our North American leadership.”¹¹⁰ By shortcomings, he was aware

that the North American leadership might tend to default to an “excluded middle” paradigm on spiritual warfare issues.

Respondents also offered insights on their strategies and general approaches to spiritual warfare. Most Brazilian workers stated that prayer was their primary strategy. One worker indicated that “[prayer and spiritual warfare] are necessary for work in a Muslim country. There is an oppression that can only be defeated by prayer,”¹¹¹ while another added, “Spiritual warfare is very big; so prayer is a necessity.”¹¹² Reflecting on the importance of personal prayer, one missionary shared, “I learned that in order to survive on the field among the Muslims it is necessary to have a strong prayer life, because it is the key of our victory because of the constant spiritual battles that we go through.”¹¹³ One woman related that intercessory prayer was her main ministry in her Arab context: “This is a major part of my ministry; the foundation of all that I am doing here. Prayer is the first thing I do when starting a new project. It is prayer that helps me to love this country and to see change. It is very spiritually oppressive here.”¹¹⁴ Finally, others shared that praying in groups and developing prayer networks were also important strategies. One worker stated, “Prayer is an important concept and we try to pray as a team and with the church regularly. There are moments where the spiritual battle gets stronger, and in those times we pray and fight in the spiritual battles with much effort.”¹¹⁵ Another affirmed, “Prayer is the foundation of the mission agency that I am part of, and that has influenced me a lot in my transcultural ministry. I am part of a prayer network in some countries where there are people praying for our work on the field.”¹¹⁶

Some Brazilians indicated that fasting with prayer was an important spiritual warfare strategy. One worker ministering in Southern Brazil shared, “We had a great dependency on God. Our work was only possible through fasting and prayer. In fact, we prayed and fasted every Friday when the Muslims were at the mosque that there would be a spiritual breakthrough.”¹¹⁷ A Brazilian woman added, “My husband and I have experienced separating a period of three days, four times a year, for fasting and prayer. We saw results and need to start doing that again.”¹¹⁸

Finally, some Brazilian workers reported that deliverance prayer and power encounters were part of their approach to spiritual warfare. For instance, one worker shared, “Arabs have a strong spiritual mindset (demons, spirits, dreams). God works miracles and can speak to Muslims through their dreams and our message speaks to their spiritual mindset.”¹¹⁹ Another added, “It [spiritual warfare] is important in freeing lives from the hands of the enemy, especially when he manifests himself.”¹²⁰

VIII. CONCLUSION

In this article I have attempted to show that Brazilian transcultural workers possess a spiritual worldview that not only makes them sensitive to the spiritual realities in the Arab-Muslim world but also capable of effectively ministering in this context. Having grown up in a context of Catholicism mixed with Spiritism, Brazilian evangelical missionaries, including ex-Spiritists, Pentecostals, and historic Protestants, seem prone to adapt to the spiritual context of Folk Islam. In this sense, they are not only more prepared than their North American and European colleagues, but they also have much to teach them about spiritual warfare ministry. In particular, their practical emphases on prayer, fasting, and engaging in appropriate power encounters seem to be models worth emulating.

¹ Halim Barakat, *The Arab World: Society, Culture, and State* (Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 1993), 118-19.

² Albert Hourani, *A History of the Arab Peoples* (London: Faber & Faber, 1991), 348-49, 397-400.

³ Margaret Nydell, *Understanding Arabs: A Guide for Modern Times*. Boston: Intercultural Press, 1988, 2006), 28.

⁴ Barakat, *The Arab World*, 120; also Raphael Patai, *The Arab Mind* (New York: Hatherleigh Press, 1976, 2002), 9-11; and Paul Hiebert, *Cultural Anthropology* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 1976, 1983), 375-76.

⁵ Keith D. Swartley, ed., *Encountering the World of Islam* (Waynesboro, GA: Authentic, 2005), 196.

⁶ Swartley, 196.

⁷ Rick Love, “Power Encounter Among Folk Muslims,” in Swartley, 209; also Rick Love, *Muslims, Magic, and the Kingdom of God* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2000), 23.

⁸ Love, *Muslims, Magic*, 4; also Barakat, *The Arab World*, 118.

⁹ Barakat, *The Arab World*, 118.

¹⁰ Bill Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam* (Oxford: Monarch Books, 1989, 2003), 180-84.

¹¹ Swartley, 196; also Love, *Muslims, Magic*, 21; and Hiebert, “Power Encounter in Folk Islam,” in Dudley Woodberry, ed., *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road* (Monrovia, CA: MARC, 1989), 45-46.

¹² Swartley, 194.

¹³ Barakat, *The Arab World*, 119.

¹⁴ Hiebert, *Cultural Anthropology*, 375-76.

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- ¹⁵ Swartley, 194.
- ¹⁶ *Jinn* are mentioned in the Qur'an in Sura 18:50 and 55:14-15; also Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam*, 94-96, 174; and Patai, 154.
- ¹⁷ Swartley, 197; also Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam*, 71, 122; Barakat, *The Arab World*, 59, 119; Love, *Muslims, Magic*, 22; and Hiebert, "Power Encounter in Folk Islam," in Woodberry, *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road*, 47-49.
- ¹⁸ Nydell, 29; also Tim Matheny, *Reaching the Arabs: A Felt Need Approach* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 1981), 25.
- ¹⁹ Cited in Love, *Muslims, Magic*, 1.
- ²⁰ Love, *Muslims, Magic*, 24.
- ²¹ Love, *Muslims, Magic*, 29-30.
- ²² Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam*, 106-111.
- ²³ Love, *Muslims, Magic*, 30-35.
- ²⁴ On a hike through the mountains of North Africa, I observed a pregnant woman travel for hours by donkey on a rocky path in order to seek blessing from a famous Muslim saint.
- ²⁵ Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam*, 47.
- ²⁶ Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam*, 47-50.
- ²⁷ Love, *Muslims, Magic*, 20.
- ²⁸ Love, *Muslims, Magic*, 1; also Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam*, 23.
- ²⁹ Love, "Power Encounter Among Folk Muslims," in Swartley, 209-210.
- ³⁰ Sura 113:5 of the Qur'an.
- ³¹ Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam*, 23.
- ³² Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam*, 18, 94.
- ³³ Love, *Muslims, Magic*, 30-33.
- ³⁴ Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam*, 23.
- ³⁵ Love, "Power Encounter Among Folk Muslims," in Swartley, 209.
- ³⁶ Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam*, 61-64.
- ³⁷ Patai, 154; also Musk, *The Unseen Face of Islam*, 202-203.
- ³⁸ Jon S. Vincent, *Culture and Customs of Brazil* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 2003), 71-72; also Joseph Page, *The Brazilians* (Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Press, 1995), 91; and Donald K. Finley, "Contextualized Training for Missionaries: A Brazilian Model," (PhD dissertation, Asbury Theological Seminary, 2005), 104.
- ³⁹ Vincent, 72; also James P. Wiebe, "Persistence of Spiritism in Brazil," (DMiss dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1979), 96.
- ⁴⁰ Robert M. Levine and John J. Crocitti, *The Brazil Reader: History, Culture, and Politics* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1999), 340.
- ⁴¹ Vincent, 73.
- ⁴² Finley, 95.
- ⁴³ David J. Hess, "Hierarchy, Heterodoxy, and the Construction of Brazilian Religious Therapies," in David J. Hess and Roberto A. DaMatta, *The Brazilian Puzzle: Culture on the Borderlands of the Western World* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1995), 200.
- ⁴⁴ Darcy Ribeiro, trans. Gregory Rabassa, *The Brazilian People: The Formation and Meaning of Brazil* (Gainesville, FL: University of Florida Press, 2000), 102-103; also Finley, 82.
- ⁴⁵ Cited in Emilio Willems, *Followers of the New Faith: Culture Change and the Rise of Protestantism in Brazil and Chile* (Nashville, TN: Vanderbilt University Press, 1967), 60.
- ⁴⁶ Osvaldo Prado, "The Brazil Model," *AD 2000* (web site) <http://www.ad2000.org/gcove95/prado.html> (accessed March 16, 2010).
- ⁴⁷ Neuza Itiokia, "O Desafio Da Umbanda A Comunidade Evangélica O Baixo Espiritismo Brasileiro Implicações Teológicas e Pastorais," (DMiss dissertation, Fuller Theological Seminary, 1986), 438-40; also Finley, 79-80.
- ⁴⁸ Leni M. Silverstein, "The Celebration of Our Lord of the Good End: Changing State, Church, and Afro-Brazilian Relations in Bahia," in Hess and DaMatta, 137; also Vincent, 74; and Wiebe, 81.
- ⁴⁹ Wiebe, 100-103; also Itiokia, "O Desafio Da Umbanda," 443.
- ⁵⁰ Silverstein, "The Celebration of Our Lord of the Good End: Changing State, Church, and Afro-Brazilian Relations in Bahia," in Hess and DaMatta, 137.

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- ⁵¹ Cited in Wiebe, 13; also Finley, 84.
- ⁵² Cited in Wiebe, 14.
- ⁵³ Finley, 86; also Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 432.
- ⁵⁴ Vincent, 77.
- ⁵⁵ Wiebe, 15.
- ⁵⁶ Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 478-79.
- ⁵⁷ Hess, “Hierarchy, Heterodoxy, and the Construction of Brazilian Religious Therapies,” in Hess and DaMatta, 197; also Wiebe, 56, 108-122, 137-42.
- ⁵⁸ Page, 353.
- ⁵⁹ Finley, 79.
- ⁶⁰ Vincent, 77.
- ⁶¹ Silverstein, “The Celebration of Our Lord of the Good End: Changing State, Church, and Afro-Brazilian Relations in Bahia,” in Hess and DaMatta, 138; also Finley, 107.
- ⁶² Finley, 86-87; also Vincent, 75-76.
- ⁶³ Silverstein, “The Celebration of Our Lord of the Good End: Changing State, Church, and Afro-Brazilian Relations in Bahia,” in Hess and DaMatta, 135.
- ⁶⁴ Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 445.
- ⁶⁵ Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 451-52.
- ⁶⁶ Wiebe, 24; also Page, 362-63; Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 451-52; and Silverstein, “The Celebration of Our Lord of the Good End: Changing State, Church, and Afro-Brazilian Relations in Bahia,” in Hess and DaMatta, 136.
- ⁶⁷ Page, 362.
- ⁶⁸ Kardec was born Denizard Hyppolyte Leon Rivail; also Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 456.
- ⁶⁹ Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 455-56; also Finley, 85; and Hess, “Hierarchy, Heterodoxy, and the Construction of Brazilian Religious Therapies,” in Hess and DaMatta, 187-88.
- ⁷⁰ Wiebe, 26-27; also Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 457-60.
- ⁷¹ Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 456-60; also Hess, “Hierarchy, Heterodoxy, and the Construction of Brazilian Religious Therapies,” in Hess and DaMatta, 201.
- ⁷² Vincent, 76-77; also Hess, “Hierarchy, Heterodoxy, and the Construction of Brazilian Religious Therapies,” in Hess and DaMatta, 195; and Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 462.
- ⁷³ Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 464.
- ⁷⁴ Hess, “Hierarchy, Heterodoxy, and the Construction of Brazilian Religious Therapies,” in Hess and DaMatta, 198.
- ⁷⁵ Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 462.
- ⁷⁶ Cited in Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 438.
- ⁷⁷ Hess, “Hierarchy, Heterodoxy, and the Construction of Brazilian Religious Therapies,” in Hess and DaMatta, 198; also Finley, 88.
- ⁷⁸ Cited in Finley, 77.
- ⁷⁹ L.C., “Mais missionários brasileiros para o mundo muçulmano,” in Kevin D. Bradford, Ralph D. Winter, and Steven C. Hawthorne, eds., *Perspectivas no movimento cristão mundial* (São Paulo: Vida Nova, 2009), 470. Translation by Barbara Hubbard.
- ⁸⁰ Page, 235.
- ⁸¹ Wiebe, 58.
- ⁸² Hiebert, “Power Encounter and Folk Islam,” in Woodberry, *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road*, 45.
- ⁸³ Love, *Muslims, Magic*, 6; Itiokia (“O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 482-84) adds that historic Protestant North American missionaries to Brazil in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries also failed to address the spiritual world of Brazilian Spiritists.
- ⁸⁴ Hiebert, “Power Encounter and Folk Islam,” in Woodberry, *Muslims and Christians on the Emmaus Road*, 54-60.
- ⁸⁵ “The Willowbank Report: Consultation on Gospel and Culture,” (Lausanne Occasional Paper 2. Lausanne Committee for World Evangelization, 1978) <http://www.lausanne.org/all-documents/lop-2.html#1> (accessed September 2, 2009); also Phillip Jenkins, *The Next Christendom: The Coming of Global Christianity* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007), 125, 145-47, 257; Mark A. Noll, *The New Shape of World Christianity: How American Experience Reflects Global Faith* (Downers Grove, IL: Intervarsity, 2009), 34; and Greg Livingstone,

“Laborers from the Global South: Partnering in the Task,” in Dudley Woodberry, *From Seed to Fruit: Global Trends, Fruitful Practices, and Emerging Issues Among Muslims* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2008), 54.

⁸⁶ Finley, 170.

⁸⁷ Finley, 206; also Charles Kraft, *Anthropology for Christian Witness* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1996), 53-54, 351.

⁸⁸ Interview July 23, 2009.

⁸⁹ Paul Freston, “Contours of Latin American Pentecostalism,” in Donald M. Lewis, ed., *Christianity Reborn: the Global Expansion of Evangelicalism in the Twentieth Century* (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans, 2004), 255-56; also Finley, 93; and Samuel Escobar, *The New Global Mission: The Gospel from Everywhere to Everyone* (Downers Grove, Ill: Intervarsity, 2003), 115

⁹⁰ Itiokia, “O Desafio Da Umbanda,” 485.

⁹¹ Interview January 6, 2010.

⁹² Interview January 7, 2010.

⁹³ Interview January 6, 2010.

⁹⁴ Greg Livingstone, “Laborers from the Global South: Partnering in the Task,” in Woodberry, *From Seed to Fruit*, 54.

⁹⁵ Interview January 7, 2010.

⁹⁶ Interview July 21, 2009.

⁹⁷ Noll, *The New Shape of World Christianity*, 34.

⁹⁸ Interview October 15, 2009

⁹⁹ Interview January 7, 2010.

¹⁰⁰ Interview May 8, 2009.

¹⁰¹ Interview October 15, 2009.

¹⁰² Interview July 29, 2009.

¹⁰³ Interview July 20, 2009.

¹⁰⁴ Interview October 15, 2009.

¹⁰⁵ Interview July 29, 2009.

¹⁰⁶ Interview July 21, 2009.

¹⁰⁷ Interview July 20, 2009.

¹⁰⁸ Interview January 7, 2010.

¹⁰⁹ Interview January 7, 2010.

¹¹⁰ Interview July 21, 2009.

¹¹¹ Interview October 15, 2009.

¹¹² Interview October 15, 2009.

¹¹³ Interview July 24, 2009.

¹¹⁴ Interview January 7, 2010.

¹¹⁵ Interview May 4, 2009.

¹¹⁶ Interview May 8, 2009.

¹¹⁷ Interview July 21, 2009.

¹¹⁸ Interview August 14, 2009.

¹¹⁹ Interview July 19, 2009.

¹²⁰ Interview July 24, 2009.