

With God on Their Side: The Religious Populism of Bolsonaro and Ventura

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Abstract

This paper discusses the relationship between populism and religion by focusing on a comparative analysis of Brazil's Jair Bolsonaro and Portugal's André Ventura. The article describes each respective leader's individual path and personal relationship with religion, the ways that each expresses and performs religiosity, each claims a special mission bestowed by the divine, and the parallels between and differences in each leader's use of religion for political causes. This comparative study emphasizes the role religion plays in each figure's leadership as an identity and civilizational marker while both Bolsonaro and Ventura invoke religion in depicting their political activities as a combat against a variety of *evil* forces; however, this comparative study casts doubt on oversimplified assertions that exclude the power of actual religious belief in both cases under analysis.

Keywords: Religion, Populism, Ventura, Chega, Bolsonaro, Christianity

Introduction

There has been an exponential increase in the academic literature on populism, particularly since the 2010s, and even the study of the relationship between populism and religion that had long been overlooked by scholars has been the subject of growing academic interest (see for example Zúquete, 2017; Caiani & Carvalho, 2021; Ylmaz & Morieson, 2021; Dieckhoff & Portier, 2023; Cremer, 2023). With that said – as pointed out in the literature (Peker & Laxer 2021, p. 337; DeHanas 2023, p. 2) – much still needs to be done both on the theoretical connections between populism and religion, and especially on comparative empirical case studies showing those connections at work in the discourses and performances of specific political leaders. Hence the need for papers such as this one.

This paper contributes to the comparative study of populism and religion by focusing on Jair Bolsonaro, former President of Brazil (between 2019 and 2022), and André Ventura, co-founder and leader of the Portuguese radical-right populist party CHEGA (since 2019). Why compare Bolsonaro to Ventura? Not only the importance of research on populism – in this case religious populism – with a cross-regional focus has been noted by scholars (Kaltwasser et al., 2017) – but also the historical and cultural ties between the two countries, as well as the close relationship that both leaders and parties have developed throughout the years, make this case particularly significant to ascertain the similarities as well as the differences in their populist styles of leadership, that emerged in parallel time frame. The role played by religion in both Bolsonaro's and Ventura's political communication has been the subject of mostly journalistic pieces, although a few academic articles (for example, Bissiati, 2022, and Barbosa Jr & Casarões, 2022, in the case of the Brazilian; and Dias, 2022, and Moniz & Brissos-Lino, 2023, in the Portuguese case) have focused on each individual respective leader's

performance and manifestation of religiosity. This paper is the first scholarly article that compares both figures with respect to the prominence of religion in their leadership styles, exploring the contexts, commonalities, differences, and avenues for further research. Although the focus will be placed on each leader, this paper will also pay attention to a cadre of figures close to them, including family members and also political partners and advisors. This paper takes a qualitative methodological path, focusing on the verbal, non-verbal, and symbolic political communication of each leader with an emphasis on primary sources such as manifestos, political speeches, social media activity (in each case, Facebook posts) and performative acts.

The wider religious context of each case is the same – Western Christianity – and while both countries are majority Catholic, the rise of Brazilian evangelicalism may outpace Catholicism in that country in the near future, while Portugal remains overwhelmingly Catholic even if there has been an uptick in evangelicalism since the early 2000s. Throughout the article, the focus is on religious populism which is understood as a subtype of populism and viewed two-dimensionally: one dimension comprising the politicization of religion, or the use of traditional religion to legitimate political ends, and the other focusing on the sacralization of politics, or the re-enchantment of politics infused with sacredness and holy narratives and missions (Zúquete, 2017; Peker & Laxer, 2021; Peace, 2021; de la Torre & Srisa-Nga, 2022). These dimensions of religious populism intertwine and cross-pollinate, as will also become clear below.

Bolsonaro and Ventura's religious paths

Before diving deep into the religious dimension of both leaders' politics, it is important to briefly explore each leader's personal religious path.

Bolsonaro presents himself as a Catholic who attended Evangelical churches (Amado, 2021). However, he has never made it clear which religion he really follows, and before the mid-2000s his religious affinities had not been politicized. It is difficult to identify and analyze Bolsonaro's true religious identity before the period between 2006 and 2015. In 2014, he supported the evangelicals in the Brazilian Parliament, when the former voted against a project aiming to make homophobia a criminal offence (Martín, 2014). Until then, he had not been an overtly religious MP but was rather closer to the military's interests (Amado, 2021). Around 2015, he described himself on his Twitter account as having been raised a Catholic and mentioned that his two oldest sons were Baptists (UOL, 2022a). By this time, he had already established close connections with well-known preacher Silas Malafaia from the evangelical Church *Vitória em Cristo* (or, Victory in Christ Church). Malafaia conducted Bolsonaro's marriage with Michelle Bolsonaro, an Evangelical from the *Igreja Batista Atitude* (or, Attitude Baptist Church), in 2013 (Santos, 2022).

In 2016, Bolsonaro donned a white robe, leaned into the River Jordan, and was baptized in the arms of Everaldo Dias Pereira, pastor of the Brazilian Evangelical church *Assembléia de Deus* (meaning, Assemblies of God) and then-president of *Partido Social Cristão* (the Social Christian Party) (UOL, 2022a). His religious identity was intensely debated at this time, due to his Catholic past. Preacher Everaldo answered that baptism is not about being Catholic or Evangelical but about believing in Jesus Christ as his Saviour (UOL, 2022a). In this sense, Bolsonaro underwent this conversion without renouncing his Catholic identity. Overall, he aimed to consolidate a conservative, right-wing Christian common platform for diverse denominations. This conversion was highly influenced by Michele Bolsonaro, whose social life and relationships have always been deeply connected to Evangelical Churches.

When compared with Bolsonaro, Ventura's biography is full of religious influences from an early age until his maturation as a professional politician (Marchi, 2020, pp. 19-28). Ventura grew up in Algueirão-Mem Martins, a multiethnic Lisbon suburb, where, according to Ventura himself, there was a social, ethnic, and racial conflict due to the presence of Roma community members and Afro-descendent population (Matos, 2023). Ventura admits that his early contact with radicalism was not with political radicals but with Catholic conservative radicals (Matos, 2023). His religious awakening drove him to seek baptism and enter politics, by joining PSD, a centre-right party with some Christian democracy influences. In the following years, young Ventura decided to follow his theological studies at a Catholic seminary, while his political thought was impacted by Christian social teaching (Marchi, 2020, pp. 20-22).

Although he decided to leave the seminary and not pursue the priesthood path (due to a vocational crisis, fed by the absence of a more vigorous monastic life in the seminar and also to romantic affairs), religion continued to have a major role in his life. In this context, he met Mário Rui Pedras, a conservative Catholic priest, who became his spiritual guide for life (Matos, 2023). Ventura was already a devout Catholic before he became CHEGA's leader, although it is fair to state that his religious path went hand-in-hand with his political steps, towards present-day political rhetoric that includes numerous religious elements. Ventura considers that God and religion made him the man he is today, both in his personal life and in his political life (Matos, 2023).

Data on Bolsonaro and Ventura: with God on their side

Bolsonaro's and Ventura's political leadership are heavily related to religion. In this section, we briefly present data gathered from their Facebook account posts (including

text and iconographic data), emblematic political discourses, and party political manifestoes.

Facebook data research

Facebook is the social network chosen to the detriment of Twitter or Instagram because Facebook “remains by far the main social media platform provider of news all over Europe [and] is the leading platform for populists in Europe and the US” (Marincea et al. 2021, p. 5) and because Facebook content is very often replicated on other social networks. Also, relevant research considered Facebook to be the most adequate social network to promote populist far-right messages (Zulianello et al., 2018).

We screened the political leaders’ Facebook accounts ranging from 2019 (the year when Bolsonaro became President of Brazil and Ventura founded CHEGA) to 2022, and identified and explored all the posts which included religious content¹. An analysis of Bolsonaro and Ventura’s Facebook posts is aggregated in the appendix tables.

It should be noted that the new restrictions associated with Facebook's privacy policy implied limitations on the automatic download of posts. Therefore, we opted to use screenshots of the posts of both leaders.

a) Bolsonaro:

(Bolsonaro’s table)

From 2019 to 2022, Bolsonaro presented a total of 22 Facebook posts related to religion. Although this may seem to be a small number, the posts present a significant impact, as they largely display his notion of having a special relationship with God to lead the Brazilian nation; in this sense, the most common subject category is the

Christian identity of Bolsonaro, alongside the sacralization of politics. Bolsonaro's regular biblical quotations largely refer to the Old Testament. In these posts, Bolsonaro both directly and indirectly proclaims that his leadership has a divine mission (the third most common subject category), and thanks for saving his life during a knife attack while he ran for president in 2018. He also does not appeal to any Christian denomination but only to Christians in general, and also praises the Israeli state, which he supports unconditionally.

b) Ventura:

(Ventura's)

Between 2019 and 2022, Ventura presented a total of 54 posts related to religion. The most common subject categories are the Christian identity of Ventura, where he identifies as a devout Catholic while stressing the importance of religion in his personal and public life, and his divine political mission. In third and fourth place are highlighted Ventura's rhetoric against the alleged dangers of Islam regarding ethnic nationalist and securitarian reasons; and Ventura's display of Christianity as an identitarian marker linked with Western civilization.

Speeches data research

In their speeches, both leaders make numerous references to religious themes and topics. Below we present a non-exhaustive set of examples.

a) Bolsonaro

Bolsonaro portrays his political path as a struggle against the forces of *evil*. It depicts a Brazilian Christian society, where values rooted in the family are allegedly under attack from many directions, and politics God-driven politics are the only solution.

- “Let's unite the people, value the family, respect religions and our Judeo-Christian tradition, fight gender ideology, [and] preserve our values. Brazil will once again be a country free of ideological constraints” (UOL, 2019);
- “What we want is for Joãozinho to be Joãozinho for the rest of his life. May Mariazinha be Maria all her life, and that they may constitute a family.” (UOL, 2022b);
- “Anyone who does not accept my battle flags - family, God, Brazil, weapons, freedom of expression, free market, [...] is in the wrong government.” (Revista Oeste, 2020);
- “Brazil above everything, God above all”. (Gazeta do Povo, 2018a);
- “I want to thank God for being alive, and also thank God for this mission. I am sure that, together with Him, we will overcome obstacles”. (Folha de São Paulo, 2018).

b) Ventura

Ventura portrays politics as a tool of salvation and his party, CHEGA, as a holy enterprise, even being compared with Christianity itself (Pimenta et al., 2022). The set of examples below is full of mystical references within a framework where politics and religion are fully entwined and depend on God's will (Pimenta et al., 2022):

- “They say we are like a religion and we are because we have an enormous strength that is born inside of us.” (Presidential campaign, August 8, 2020);

- “I am very religious and I believe that what happened to me, and also to CHEGA, considering the history of Portugal ... was a miracle ... it was against all odds that someone without political, financial, and operational means would rise from zero ... to earn a spot in Parliament ... it was a sign from God.” (Presidential campaign, January 11, 2021);
- “I thank God for making me the voice of this country” (Presidential campaign, January 24, 2021);
- “There is in CHEGA this dimension that is similar to Christianity. People convert themselves and change. It’s possible to change. Fighting corruption allows us to change, fighting clientelism allows us to change.” (Parliamentary elections campaign, January 17, 2022);
- “People get converted, they end up here and they see the light that guides Portugal.” (Parliamentary elections campaign, January 17, 2022).

Political manifestoes data research

Below we present an overview characterization of the PSL – the Social Liberal Party on whose ticket Bolsonaro ran for President in 2018 – and PL (the party for which he ran for re-election in 2022) and CHEGA’s main political manifestoes. Regarding PSL and PL, we analyzed the respective political manifestoes of 2018 and 2022. Regarding CHEGA, we analyzed the 2019 political manifesto for the 2019 legislative election and the 2021 political manifesto related to the 2022 legislative election.

a) PL and PSL

The 2018 program is characterized by an anti-left, economically liberal, and anti-corruption bent. It mentions Gramscism and Cultural Marxism as an opprobrium that

divides the Brazilians, pitting one social sector against the other. In each of its 81 pages there is an image of two unfolded hands coming together below a blue cloudy sky, a symbol commonly seen in evangelical tracts. The religious element is implied in symbols such as these and in the framing of the fight against left-wing ideologies.

The references to religion in Bolsonaro's program for the 2022 elections resume the world vision of the writer and polemicist Olavo de Carvalho,² allegedly Bolsonaro's intellectual mentor. That is, he defends religious freedom and, at the same time, does not affirm that the state should be secular. Moreover, the program promulgates a highly liberal – in the economic sense – program, characterized by an emphasis on voluntary charitable initiatives conducted by grassroots organizations. Bolsonaro's vision of the welfare state is grounded in these types of initiatives.

b) CHEGA

The references to religion in the 2019 political manifesto include the following. The defense of a culturally homogeneous Europe that is built on the diversity of Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian heritage. The defense of an educational system based on cultural and civilizational Judeo-Christian values and religious freedom. And, finally, the defense of Portugal's Christian heritage while opposing Islamic radicalism.

The references to religion in the 2021 political manifesto include the following. First, CHEGA proclaims that the state must not act under religious guidelines. Second, CHEGA advocates prohibiting radical Islamic mosques and practices, as well as other religious places of worship and practices, that are opposed to Western culture and identity. Third, CHEGA defends religious freedom. And, finally, CHEGA supports a policy of promoting the primacy of Portugal's Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian heritage.

A comprehensive analysis: at the intersection of sacralised politics and politicized religion

The data presented in the previous section shows that Bolsonaro and Ventura are paradigmatic cases in which their political narrative shows a *rendez-vous* between religion (in its spiritual and cultural dimensions) and politics (with a populist flavor).

Both leaders present themselves as messianic leaders chosen by God to fulfill the sacred mission of saving the nation and its people (Zúquete, 2017) and each legitimizes the messianic nature of their leadership by promoting the belief that they have a personal relationship with God. Their religious populism is analyzed in the following paragraphs.

Bolsonaro

Jair Bolsonaro relies on religious discourse and a world frame in which both Neo-Pentecostalism and conservative Catholicism converge (Wink, 2021). This discourse and frame are highly similar to the discourse and framing of the American Christian Right (which appeared on the American political scene in the 1960s). It is a platform that combines several Christian conservative denominations (Willcox, Rozell & Gunn, 1996; Wacker, 2000; Lugg, 2001; Dowland, 2009; Winter, 2013; Conger, 2019). Basically, it regards the triad of feminism, LGBT advocacy and rights, and abortion as an *evil* axis that must be combated in eminently political terms.

The increase of the evangelical population in Brazil, alongside the stagnation of left-wing PT (Worker's Party) governments, facilitated the upsurge of a radical right-wing candidate. According to Bolsonaro, the vast majority of Brazilians are Christian, and so he argues that a secular state cannot serve a Christian society (Tamaki, Mendonça &

Mendonça Ferreira, 2021). In his government program, he does not claim a secular state; however, the program appeals for religious freedom at the same time that the former president states that Brazilians are Christians and have the right to exert their religiosity against advances from the left-wing and social liberalism (Tamaki, Mendonça & Mendonça Ferreira, 2021). In this way, Bolsonaro's program makes no space for ethnic movements, especially Afro-Brazilian and indigenous ones, related to different religious traditions.

Although Bolsonaro has made statements against Haitians, Bolivians, and Senegalese immigrants (Gazeta do Povo, 2018b), immigration is not as prominent or common among the Brazilian far-right as it is in European cases. Thus, Christianity plays a more important role than national or even ethnic matters in general. The *others* have not an ethnic dimension but are associated with the left-wing political forces and their allegedly anti-Christian inclinations.

Bolsonaro's Facebook page attempts to portray him as having a close relationship with the divine. Although the majority of his posts are not on religious issues, there are paradigmatic cases in which he mentions religion. For example, Bolsonaro characterizes his survival of a knife attack before the 2018 elections as owing to divine intervention (Bolsonaro's Facebook post of 19/07/2019), a kind of resurrection allowing Bolsonaro to lead the Brazilian nation against the forces of *evil*. He credits his survival to the will of God. This particular point brings Bolsonaro close to one of the six key images of a religious populist charismatic leader (Zúquete, 2017) – the leader as a martyr. The one who is able to self-sacrifice to the cause, and goes through pain, tribulation and assassination attempts to accomplish his divine mission.

During his government, Bolsonaro posted praises of Christ and the Christian heritage at Easter time, while citing the Bible (Bolsonaro's Facebook post of 4/04/2020).

Moreover, Bolsonaro compares the political opposition to his government to *evil* forces and cites the Bible (Bolsonaro's Facebook post of 30/10/2022). In 2022, after his electoral defeat, he said that the Brazilian population must put on the armor of God since the political enemy represented the forces of *evil*; also, his and his followers' struggles were not against fellow humans but rather the so-called rulers of this dark world (Bolsonaro's Facebook post of 30/10/2020). It is noteworthy that he gives significant weight to the Old Testament. On his birthday, Bolsonaro posted a photo with his daughter and cited Proverbs 24:10 to state that "If you show yourself weak on a day of anguish, your strength will be small" (Bolsonaro's Facebook post of 21/03/2021).

In this sense, with a populist tone, Bolsonaro incarnates the 'pure' people as well; he presents himself as a common member of a Brazilian society whose more genuine Christian values are being profiled by lurking forces of *evil*. Forces that mainly work along with the established political and cultural elites. Moreover, Bolsonaro typically states that the state is secular, but the President and the Government are Christian (like the majority of Brazilians), establishing a halfway between a secular and non-secular state (Oro, 2023); again, he suggests a non-secular future path.

In 2020, when he celebrated the electoral losses of the left and the center-right, at the end of the post, he displayed one of his main banners: "God, Fatherland, and Family" (Bolsonaro's Facebook post of 16/10/2020). Although a vast number of posts are related to projects regarding the military of his cabinet, there is a tendency to refer to religion when the content concerns his struggle in eminent political terms. Bolsonaro puts himself as a man close to the *good* forces and against the *evil* forces. His narrative is based on the opposition to mundane, worldly political forces outside his political bloc, which are coordinated by *evil* itself, while Bolsonaro is the spearhead of the forces of God: the *good* and the Western Judeo-Christian civilization. In this case, Bolsonaro

displays a specific trait of a religious populist leader – missionary politics, i.e., the leader on a mission to save a whole world and not only to administer a state through routine politics (Zúquete, 2017). Bolsonaro's missionary discourse seeks to create a moral community and defend it from conspiratorial enemies.

Bolsonaro's almost unconditional defense of the Israeli state demonstrates how he supports what he envisions as the Christian's universe initial stage. On Facebook, there is a post of him and the Israeli ambassador, displaying his praise for Israel (Bolsonaro's Facebook post of 22/08/2020). For him, as well as for his supporters' think tanks inspired by Olavo de Carvalho (Teitelbaum, 2020; Wink, 2021; Guimarães, 2022), Israel is the cradle of Christianity and should be defended against the Western left-wing and Islam.

When dealing with eminent political and personal struggles, Bolsonaro evokes the divine. His participation in the *Marchas para Jesus* (meaning, Marches for Jesus) organized by evangelical churches, his appearances with Catholic priests and evangelical preachers, and his regular appeals to God are intended to exemplify this close relationship between the leader and the Lord (Bolsonaro's Facebook posts of 11/08/2019 and 4/06/2020). A very important illustration is the way he dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic. Bolsonaro refused to follow the instructions from the World Health Organization (WHO). Rather, he followed what he asserted was a faith-based path toward solving the crisis. He prayed with evangelical preachers in the streets, vowing that in the following days, there would be not a single death more (Tamaki, Mendonça & Mendonça Ferreira, 2021). He also convened fasting and prayers on Facebook to combat the virus (Bolsonaro's Facebook post of 29/03/2021). Bolsonaro approached the pandemic as a tragedy that should be faced in the 21st century the same way as tragedies were faced in times when the Church had the complete prerogative

over public health measures. The pandemic was presented as a biblical tragedy that should be treated with biblically oriented solutions – a paradigmatic *Olavismo* trait. Olavo de Carvalho stated that the pandemic did not exist and was a global elites' conspiracy (Poder360, 2020).

With regard to the pandemic, Bolsonaro incarnated a prophetic figure and the leader as a moral archetype (Zúquete, 2017). He shows himself as an exemplary figure against the technical and scientific elites dictating how the people must behave through the pandemic. He puts himself as a strong, resilient man with trust and faith in God, who does not take any measure of confinement and also does not bear masks. As a prophet, he defies the dominant discourse of the elites, shattering the alleged lies of the dominant group (Zúquete, 2017).

He mocks the COVID-19 virus, displaying his faith in God and his physical resistance at the same time (BBC, 2020). Also, Bolsonaro proposes fasting according to Christian terms instead of the medical guidance given by the scientific community, while he suggests that the population should ignore most of the techno-scientific scenarios and follow their life normally, with faith in God and struggle in toil (Bolsonaro's Facebook post of 29/03/2021). Bolsonaro, as a religious populist leader, uses his own example emanating both from his personal qualities and from his life achievements (Zúquete, 2017).

On one hand, there is a mundane world for Bolsonaro, related to the more technical areas of his government. On the other hand, there is a sacred universe coterminous with political and personal struggles. This universe is Christian, before anything else, being his fatherland a country where, at least through a reflexive rationality, a continuous process of ethnic mixing is ongoing³. It gains prerogative over the scientific and technical world, as Bolsonaro's way of dealing with the pandemic has demonstrated.

Under Bolsonaro's leadership, this social world, independent of ethnicity, culture, or heritage, shall be conducted by a conservative Christian social doctrine. Also, Bolsonaro presents himself as the divinely ordained standard bearer, a man at the head of the political forces representing the will of God.

Throughout his political career, Bolsonaro defended proposals that were regarded as a real opprobrium by the Christian Right. For example, the forced sterilization of low-income people in order to stop the spread of misery, assistencialism, and criminality (Moreira, 2018). After his new political-religious path, he tended to somehow avoid these issues. He was closer to a military world frame, grounded in secularism and scientific positivism. His discourse was inclined to the defense of the former Military Regime (from the period of 1964-1985) and to more strict laws against any kind of crime.

Following the anti-left wave of massive street manifestations from 2014 on, Bolsonaro presented himself as a possible leader to defeat the left and put an allegedly real conservative right in power. Many proposals of the new right in Brazil were connected to the growing presence of evangelicalism, and Bolsonaro plunged into the Brazilian Christian conservative universe. He left behind some of his former proposals (such as forced sterilization, with the exception of some types of criminals, namely rapists) and reconfigured his conservatism through a Christian conservative prism.

With regard to Bolsonaro's beliefs, sometimes, it is discussed how frank and genuine his Christianity is (Cremer, 2022). Before the new right wave, his Catholicism was restricted, basically to baptism, and seemed not to be part of his regular life, let alone his political life. However, such a discussion is innocuous since what is really essential for understanding the role of religion in Bolsonaro's vision is the model of society defended. Thereby, it is irrelevant, whether what rules in the most profound depths of

Bolsonaro's subjectivity are the gospels or not. Independently of what Bolsonaro believes in or not, his conversion and proximity to evangelical and conservative catholic leaders put him as the conductor of a Christianizing state.

In sum, Bolsonaro converges the two fundamental dimensions of religious populism (Zúquete, 2017). That is, the sacralization of politics and politicization of religion. He presents himself as the spearhead and special messenger of God leading a community of morally higher standards, and he leads a political wave that tries to put conservative Christianity back into politics as an institutional axis to replace an allegedly decaying liberal society. Religion here marks a division between *us* (*good* citizens of Christian values) and *them* (or the *evil* others, namely communists, liberals, globalists, abortionists and so on). Christianity is the utmost meaning for the Brazilians, according to Bolsonaro, and only he and those who follow him could make this meaning a reality through politics.

Ventura

André Ventura's stances are located between the so-called American (North and South America) perspective of a *Christian nation* ideal and a Western European *post-Christian* standpoint (Haynes, 2020, p. 8). Ventura mentions the importance of God and religion in politics (alongside a conservative agenda regarding gender issues, for instance), but also stands for a secularized state, where Christianity stands in cultural (or ethnic) dimension against non-native internal and external enemies. This resonates with evidence found about the decrease in religiosity in the West (Norris & Inglehart, 2011; Inglehart, 2020) that leaves an emptiness ready to be filled with identitarian proposals from radical right-wing parties – “commitment to religion or class may be waning, the yearning for group identities is not” (Cremer, 2022, p. 542). In other words, *believing* is,

in part, replaced by *belonging*, in the sense that religion is increasingly “used politically as a secularised cultural identity marker” (Cremer, 2022, p. 539); religion (namely, Christianity) enters the realm of civilizationism, as a core element of Western civilization identity, alongside Greco-Roman and Judeo-Christian heritage (as observed in CHEGA party manifestoes of 2019 and 2021).

Like Bolsonaro, Ventura uses abundantly religious references in his social media and speeches, alongside the official party documents. Also, like Bolsonaro, Ventura portrays himself as fighting cultural wars in the name of a Christian conservative religious heritage (whether Evangelical or Catholic), with respect to gender, abortion, and religious values. However, Ventura also follows an ethnic nativist route, observed in other European far right-wing parties. Similar to other European radical right-wing politicians, he uses Christianity, in a populist way, as a “cultural identity maker of ‘pure people’ against external *others* (in particular Islam)” (Cremer, 2022, p. 534), beyond his well-known Catholic faith. This route emerged with the French *Nouvelle Droite* and the European identitarian movement, which claims that native Europeans are being replaced by foreign ethnicities fuelled by multiculturalism migration policies and globalization’s economic and political model (Zúquete, 2018). For Ventura, religion is also an ethnic identitarian issue, since there is a distinction between *good* immigration (associated with immigrants from Judeo-Christian European or Lusophone stock from former Portuguese colonies) and *bad* immigration (associated with Muslim immigrants).

The most obvious and visible side of Ventura’s religious conservatism is his Catholicism, which is marked not only by his personal Catholic background and practices but also by his links with Catholic conservative groups, namely *Opus Dei* – a devotional movement sometimes depicted as a religious ultra-conservative secret

society with political ambitions. A paradigmatic example is Ventura's Facebook post (Ventura, 2022) thanking God for the recent election results and political mission, standing side by side with a Saint and founder of *Opus Dei*. Also, Ventura confesses the past self-inflicted bodily mortification practices (such as the use of cilice) (Matos, 2023), commonly associated with *Opus Dei*.

In addition to Ventura, CHEGA presents several leading members with conservative Catholic stances, namely two paradigmatic cases. Rita Matias, daughter of Manuel Matias (CHEGA notorious member and former president of a Christian pro-life party), is one of the most vocal CHEGA MPs on religious matters; a recent tweet, posted on the National Day of Religious Freedom, shows her stances, especially regarding the *belonging* dimension, by arguing against the impact of attacks on Churches in Europe and progressist agendas (Matias, 22/7/2023). Also, Pedro Frazão, a party leader and MP, who is a lay *Opus Dei* member (Mais Ribatejo, 2021) and frequently shows religious positions in his rhetoric. In a 2022 tweet, Frazão shows his stances, especially regarding the *believing* dimension when congratulating and praising Rita Matias, comparing her with Saint Ignatius of Antioch (Frazão, 17/10/2022).

Nevertheless, there is also an ecumenical side to Ventura and the party. Manuel Matias stated that among the CHEGA party members are Catholics, Jews, Ismailis, and also Evangelicals while assuming the opposition to left-wing progressive Catholics allegedly linked with Marxism (Gomes & Miranda, 2023). A closer analysis, however, shows that Ventura's ecumenism is more centered in Christian churches in a similar fashion as Bolsonaro, from Orthodox to Evangelicals, eventually targeting the support of Brazilian immigrants in Portugal (who are also Bolsonaro supporters).

Evangelicalism became particularly important to Ventura and CHEGA (albeit to a different degree than for Bolsonaro and PL). Ventura's leadership is politically

supported by religious groups that have their own agenda, which presents a clear example of the politicization of religion (Zúquete, 2017). If in Bolsonaro's case, Evangelicals fully dominated the PL leadership, in the case of CHEGA, Catholics are the most influential group, mirroring their devout leader André Ventura; although, at early stages in its history, the party had notorious Evangelical Church members in leadership positions or promoting the party online (Carvalho, 2020). Evangelicals are a driving force that feeds conservative politics in both South and North America, and unite conservative Catholics and conservative Jews in culture wars against abortion and gender identity issues.

Beyond Christian ecumenism, far-right Western politics often show signs of philosemitism (Rose, 2020). Although there is no visible approach by Jewish organizations to CHEGA, the party echoes a *soft* philosemitism by supporting the State of Israel (CHEGA, 2019). At CHEGA's third congress in 2021, Pedro Frazão loudly declared his unconditional support for Israel regarding the Palestinian-Israeli conflict, which triggered a friendly reaction from Likud's Serbian branch and claim that CHEGA was neither xenophobic nor antisemitic (Malhado, 2021).

Besides the often-denounced corrupt left-wing elites, “‘Muslims’ have replaced ‘Jews’ as the new transnational Other in exclusionary discourses” (Zúquete, 2008, p. 329). In this sense, Ventura depicts Muslims in the same fashion as other European radical-wing populist leaders do (*vide* DeHanas & Shterin, 2018), as a fairly homogeneous group of people with a backward, illiberal, and dangerous culture and religion for Christians and Jews alike.

The combination of philosemitism and Christianity has led to the association by party faithful of the Judeo-Christian figures of the Messiah-warrior (King David) and the Messiah-redeemer (Jesus) with the “chosen” political-religious leader André Ventura

(Ferreira Dias, 2022). Ventura's messianism follows the long political-religious tradition in Portugal of Sebastianism (a messianic myth, with a popular dimension, based on the belief that King Sebastian of Portugal would reappear and return to Portugal to save the nation and inaugurate an era of true Christian doctrine) and an intense Marian devotion (Zúquete, 2022, pp. 228-230). The CHEGA leader vaunts his devotion to Mary – for example, he traveled (together with other CHEGA MPs) by foot as a pilgrim from Lisbon to the shrine of Fátima and, along the way, documented the pilgrimage route on social media. While walking he gave an interview to a national TV crew, to whom he said, “Let's hope that Our Lady of Fátima will help us to transform Portugal” (CM, 2023).

Ventura's political-religious messianism presents a common Manicheist⁴ stance, often found in populism, i.e., the opposition between *chosen people* and the Godless impure ones (Ferreira Dias, 2022) and dualistic rhetoric that opposes the two antagonistic groups. It should be noted that the *chosen people* are the so-called *good Portuguese* (Ventura's Facebook post of 20/09/2020), i.e., the typical Portuguese and Christian common man used by populist discourse as the nation's personification; and *evil* is associated with minorities, which are very much embodied by *bad* Muslims.

In a similar fashion to Bolsonaro's messianism, Ventura's messianism is frequently related to martyrdom. Examples of Ventura's divine sanction abound, as when he suggests that God saved his life from dying of septicemia (Matos, 2023), or when he states he would die for the Portuguese people if needed (Zúquete, 2022, p. 230). Besides, embodying the martyr figure, Ventura shows the other typical charismatic leadership traits, often associated with religious populism (Zúquete, 2017): the leader as a prophet (a politician ahead of his time who exposes the hard truths about Portugal's problems); the leader as a moral superior figure (detached from the allegedly corrupt

establishment); the leader as the *true* representative of the common Portuguese people; the indissolubility between the Ventura figure and CHEGA – the leader is the party; and, finally, Ventura represents a missionary figure entitled, by transcendental forces, to save Portugal.

Ventura's religious populist leadership is framed within a moral community of supporters, the so-called *good Portuguese*, envisioned as a moral superior side of the Portuguese population. Also, Ventura builds his narrative supported by Portuguese historical political and religious figures, symbols for the moral community, namely Our Lady of Fátima (Ventura's Facebook post of 13/5/2020) (highly worshipped in ritualistic ways by the Portuguese population and Ventura himself) and Nuno Álvares Pereira (Ventura's Facebook post of 14/08/2022).

Ventura's religious populism is also found in the use of bellicose language, namely when linking criminality with the Islamic religion, as seen in several Facebook posts (Ventura's Facebook posts of 16/09/2019 and 16/09/2021). Moreover, his populist speech reaches higher proportions when Ventura blames Islamism on Muslims for being subversive elements in charge of destroying European civilization as a whole (Ventura's Facebook post of 22/06/2021). Consequently, within this dramatic narrative, religion and populism mix again in an example of Western sacralization of politics (Zúquete, 2017) when Ventura presents himself as an agent of change, heavenly anointed (Ventura's Facebook post of 13/05/2020), to radically transform the system.

Overall, Ventura, like Bolsonaro, is a paradigmatic case that combines the two dimensions of religious populism (Zúquete, 2017): the sacralization of politics, in which Ventura presents himself as a spear of God, as special envoy in charge of fighting *evil* enemies through politics; and the politicization of religion, i.e., a process in which

religion is transformed in a political element of Ventura's political stances, being an identitarian tool of the *us versus them* narrative.

Ventura maintains evident *belief* elements – e.g. in the 25th of April of 2023 celebration in the Portuguese parliament, CHEGA's leader ended his speech by quoting the Apostle Paul from Romans 8: 31. A typical example of how a biblical text is used to reinforce the self-image of the righteous people persecuted by an impious and unjust power, in which he said the following: "What, then, shall we say in response to these things [injustice]? If God is for us, who can be against us?" (CHEGA TV, 2023). Nevertheless, Ventura distinguishes himself from Bolsonaro in the *belonging* dimension; for him, religion also stands with anti-Islam, ethnicity, and identity.

Concluding remarks

The political performances of Jair Bolsonaro and Andre Ventura attest to the power of religious populisms in the contemporary West. And they do that not only in relation to politicized religion – including the constant uses of scriptures, Biblical imagery, and visions of a social and cultural order attuned to Christian precepts – but also with regard to sacralized politics. Political action acquires a transcendent nature and is no longer a mundane, limited affair, but is viewed and experienced as a tool for total change, anchored in myths, rites, and symbols resulting in high emotional stakes, and the sanctification of the collective mission of the community and its messianized shepherd. In both of this study's cases, these two dimensions interact with and complement each other.

As for the politicization of religion, there has been a growing scholarly trend – emerging particularly from the study of radical-right populism – to disregard the weight

of proper religious faith and focus instead on the appeal of identity. The argument is that (in these cases) Christianity is used essentially as a marker of identity against a myriad of *Others* and not necessarily as a matter of faith or religious observance. Or, to use a buzz-phrase, it is about *belonging*, not *believing*. From this premise emerges the increased use of concepts such as Identitarian Christianity or Cultural Christianity (see Hening and Hidalgo 2021) – which can be subsumed into the notion of civilizationism, first defined by the sociologist Rogers Brubaker in reference to the invocation of Christianity – prominent in the combat against Islam - as “a cultural and civilizational identity” (2017).

Civilizationism is undoubtedly a force at work in the current dynamics of the politicization of religion. It is certainly apparent in the wider Identitarian movement and its defense of Europe as a unique civilization that should be defended as such against an onslaught from so-called *evil* forces - from mass immigration to Islam, as well as from the disintegrating forces of liberalism (Zúquete, 2018). At the same time, the right-wing populist movement’s earnestness to form transnational alliances across European countries – in the name of a wider shared identity – also demonstrates the civilizationist impulse that drives them. Civilizationism is certainly a real phenomenon – although in the Western world, it not only relates to a cultural attachment to Christianity, but also translates into the celebration of other common roots such as Greco-Roman culture.

With that said – and in light of the empirical analyses of the cases of Bolsonaro and Ventura – this paper calls for a more prudent, agnostic approach in the study of religious populisms. It posits whether in the rush to identify civilizationist dynamics, scholars do not run the risk of overlooking cases where religion also means belief and attachment to theological principles as well as a way of re-ordering society on the basis of a specific religious outlook. Hence the importance of in-depth research on empirical cases in order

to reach a well-rounded understanding of contemporary religious populisms – which may well lead to the confirmation of the “belonging without believing” hypothesis or open the door to other “belonging and believing” versions, and even in-between alternatives.

There are two instances of politicization of religion: one *cold*, where religion is understood in a “weak sense – not as a set of creeds and practices, but as historical heritage” (Dieckhoff & Portier, 2023); and one *hot*, where religion is viewed and experienced in a strong sense, as doctrinal, ritual, experiential, mythological, and institutional. In this later sense – and again only empirical analysis can flesh it out – there is a higher doctrinal intensity in the uses of scriptures, in experiential and ritual demonstrations of religiosity, and also in a more open institutional backing by religious groups or sects. Whether or not there is a pragmatic-strategic intent in this last use of religion – which in the realm of politics is natural and unsurprising – or whether this attachment to religion as a belief system is genuine and authentic is, ultimately, irrelevant; what it matters is whether it is consequential and if stimulates desires and visions of a religious reconstruction of society.

This *hot* version exists in a continuum – it is not the same everywhere, and depending on context and the strength of institutional religious actors, it may be more or less straightforward, more or less explicit, about the ultimate religious goals. Admittedly, the case of Bolsonaro seems more self-evident (see also, for example, Pexer & Laxer, 2021); also because of the socio-cultural power of the evangelical movement in Brazil, a country which by itself is a much less secularized country than Portugal and a place where openly religious narratives have more receptive ears. At the same time, and in this case, it reflects the wider civilizationist trend identified in the literature, there is in the case of Ventura a stronger territorial view of the nation as belonging to a European

matrix, and giving its religiosity a stronger ethnonational flavor. However, there is at the same time a clear flaunting of religious belief, the recurring use of biblical frames and papal citations in the discussion of social issues, as well as the support of more traditionalist currents within Catholicism but also from the incipient (but growing) Evangelicalism. Although it was not the task of this paper to make such a comparative work, the blatant use of religion by Ventura – which has put him at odds with other Portuguese politicians for whom religion is more of a private, personal affair – is distinct from the way that most radical-right populist leaders of Western Europe invoke Christianity and its heritage.

To conclude, this paper does not take issue with the argument that a new cleavage in Western politics has risen based on a secularized Christianity as a cultural identity marker (Cremer, 2022) – or with the further argument that this cleavage is reinforcing narratives of inclusion and exclusion, with an in-group pitted against a myriad of out-groups. What it does is to add more skepticism to the view that this development also marks the end – or at least the ebbing – of faith-driven political entrepreneurs or political projects. There are signs – as it is hoped this paper has shown – to the contrary.

Footnotes

1. Some posts are likely to have been deleted and others were eventually missed by the sampling method manually performed by the authors.
2. In the 2018 PSL manifesto such elements already existed but not as explicit as in 2022.
3. This does not mean that he does not attract a more “whitened” parcel of the Brazilian electorate. However, his vision of the national political community is not exclusively of one ethnicity. The think tanks supporting him, such as Canal Terça Livre and Brasil Paralelo, clearly favour a multiethnic, Lusotropicalist nation. For them, religion comes first, with regard to culture and ethnos, in an anthropological bias. They praise multiethnic Empires with strong clerical (Christian) doctrines in the social sphere.
4. Not by chance, a “religious-originated word...in reference to the ancient religious movement whose radical worldview divided the world into the diametrically conflicting principles of Light and Darkness” (Zúquete, 2017, p. 445).

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APPENDIX





Bolsonaro's table:

Date	Post	Issue	Subject category	Url
01/04/2018	"Today is an important day for all Christians, and why not say it, for all humanity. We always respect those who do not believe, to be religious is a personal choice, however, it is always worth remembering that regardless of religion, faith has always left positive messages for reflection over time. Christ is an inspiration to any person with a good heart, regardless of their belief or lack thereof. The values transmitted by Him formed our civilization and still help to maintain the sacred pillars of our society. May this day also serve to restore our faith, be it spiritual, be it in the future of our country, be it in the world... Happy Easter everyone!"	Bolsonaro praises Christ, the Christian civilizational heritage, and wishes a happy Easter.	Christian Identity	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid02Uvo84KeRSUFGDpxarDBUM98manhr7SLyJKDcErHAabz8uXEaoV21h8xgiMyedl 
17/05/2018		Bolsonaro conducts a solemn homage to the 70th birthday of the Israeli state.	Defense of Israel	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid02x2gZ1m1DPWgbyCowaNbBp9aPa5Z1qghozF7Uu4C7AEZYTEhKCrzAqE51tdofXhNl 
19/04/2019	"He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed."	Bolsonaro wishes a happy Friday and cites the Bible. 1 Peter 2 : 24.	Christian Identity	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid04Njh9Ttu77MQRMyCGuXRdWwsdzvXkbnMTLJE1kqC6KnP5tGb2XAWQWzyjwRbl 
21/04/2019	"Why are you looking for the living among the dead? He is not here! He has resurrected! (Luke 24:5,6) May we celebrate this very special day with peace, both for us Christians and for all people, regardless of belief or convictions. Jesus' message inspires everyone and continues to transform hearts. It carries the basis of our values and our civilization. I thank God for my life and I ask that he bless our Brazil more and more! Happy Easter everyone!"	Bolsonaro wishes a happy Easter and cites the Bible. Luke 24: 5, 6. He praises Christian values as well.	Christian Identity	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid024V9dQNYaYwQqMzDPyDxRxPyHrLeBhotZybPw5yqtxHtBRaK8HgAsp32ogYtn7Ehl 

19/07/2019	"The time when I was born again. I thank God for my life and all of you for your support!"	Bolsonaro thanks God for having survived the knife attack he received. He states that he was born again.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid026g7gzBzNQPkj26MWrPG2a9d17hyuapeNwu8DyAMVHwHyPyZ5z6oDn7J5XdvsAvI 
11/08/2019	"CONGRATULATIONS TO ALL DADDIES IN BRAZIL. I took this photo yesterday at the Cathedral of Brasilia. He is known as the 'Water guy' and he not only authorized it, he told me that he would be honored with the post since he is the father of 3 children."	Bolsonaro takes a photo in front of Brasilia's Cathedral side by side with an informal worker. By doing so, he wishes a happy Father's Day to all Brazilian fathers. He also wears a t-shirt with the name "Jesus" stamped.	Christian Identity	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid0ZMzmZi4RTbB4DyDsvCL2X5t8MdMUKheeT7xDrLi8gycc5yocqgnimQnYqX4L4il 
12/10/2019	"Today at 4 pm I will be in Aparecida/SP."	Bolsonaro announces that he will be present in a Mess in Aparecida do Norte, a pilgrimage traditional local of Catholics in Brazil. In the image, there is the sight of Nossa Senhora da Aparecida, Patron Saint of Brazil.	Christian Identity	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid0RSBCQKUBwPyW9voGIZBe8tZ4UTQXhbZFYCYhfkAWtDnBRat3KXZIueg7ZbRkkel 
10/04/2020	"He himself bore our sins" in his body on the cross, so that we might die to sins and live for righteousness; "by his wounds you have been healed." 1 Peter 2:24 - Wishing everyone a Holy Friday of reflection. God bless us!	Bolsonaro wishes a Holy Friday and cites the Bible.	Christian Identity	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid032xrsdzjeKaFmZxiN9uBermXt2e6cSB1QvFwF2R3uwwMb4YzGlypNe9crbzqWahQI 

30/05/2020	"FAKENEWS..."	Bolsonaro makes several accusations of being a victim of fake news by Forum News channels. In one of them, a moment of the president's pray with evangelical pastors with their arms standing high is presented as a nazi gesture. Bolsonaro implicitly states that this is fake news trying to destroy his public image and the public image of Pastors.	Sacralization of politics	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid037htfZfa95RVUwunC6v7zqTLuBCKgHuXEUJXhPB2fMTEU3soTPwZGn4FFzEj2l 
04/06/2020		Bolsonaro announces a live transmission with him and evangelical leaders. The goal is a prayer in favour of authorities and the Brazilian people. The video was be transmitted by Silas Malafaia channel. Malafaia is a well-known Brazilian evangelical leader and politician, and very close to Bolsonaro.	Sacralization of politics	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid0b8mDM8dFDRXfQqKm8eepZGYLUf2DcpFINwxFaBpD7qMsv7YV3YA4upRBTjZyCSl 
22/08/2020	"Ambassador Yossi Shelley. Updating Israel and UAE peace deal."	Bolsonaro posts a photo with the Israeli ambassador putting more emphasis on his appraisal towards Israel.	Defense of Israel	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid0Qwid3ae4iecGZNx9zfEamirJn3UB9WzrcER4ohwXWQJMXE8BbfWbGYRN6zeao8NI 
05/09/2020	"Good morning everybody. Soon, with Minister Tarcísio, we will reopen Congonhas/SP Airport."	Bolsonaro announces the reopening of Congonhas Airport together with Tarcísio Freitas, then Minister of the Infrastructure. He does so with an image of Jesus Christ at the center of the photo.	Sacralization of politics	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid02gTgWfm5U6yYayv5rzn6nWwZMgN8YwdfNkS3zRSqbsqNFcTcWNqyqfwHso2TF2Cl 
16/10/2020	"4 years ago Geraldo Alkmin	Bolsonaro celebrates the	Sacralization of politics	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid02YQ5afV6YncUpVZb8fSSgcZ5bRkXDJVHN8r4HqDjQfhGBLWKjv86yTRgc8rELnL

	<p>elected João Dória mayor of São Paulo in the first round.</p> <p>Two years later Alckmin obtained only 4.7% of the votes in the presidential race.</p> <p>My help to a few candidates for mayor came down to 4 lives in a total of 3 hours.</p> <p>As a matter of fact, leftist parties suffered a historic defeat in these elections, a clear sign that the conservative wave is here to stay in 2018.</p> <p>For 2022 it is sure that, at the polls, we will consolidate our democracy with an improved electoral system. GOD, HOMELAND and FAMILY."</p>	<p>left and center-right losses and vows to improve the electoral system in Brazil. In the end, he quotes "GOD, FATHERLAND and FAMILY".</p>		
22/11/2020	<p>"Feast of Christ the King You say so, I am king. For this I was born and came into the world, to be a witness for the truth. Everyone who stands for the truth listens to my voice" (Jo 18:37) I ask God to give us strength and wisdom to lead the nation well. Long live Christ the King!"</p>	<p>Bolsonaro announces Christ the King celebrations and quotes the Bible. Jo 18:37.</p>	Christian Identity	<p>https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid0F5vEI4DmQ4ono32M9AR8NdPibwrvwtX2cbvL1Rtutvt2KCD773y45w1qIR9Gr8I</p> 
29/03/2021	<p>"For those who can and want to participate, tomorrow, 03/29/2021, we will have a day of fasting and prayer for the good and freedom of our nation. We will continue to fight with all our strength against the virus and unemployment; for life, but without giving up the dignity of each one. The battle is hard and painful, but together, alongside God, we will win! Blessed be our Brazil and the Brazilian people! Blessed is the nation whose God is the Lord (Psalm 33:12)"</p>	<p>Bolsonaro proposes a day of fasting and prayer to combat the Corona Virus and unemployment, and cites the Bible. Psalm 33, 12.</p>	Christian Identity	<p>https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid02NoKu8HTW2mKICGKaVPwFeZTdpEozZKGSR198Nqv1tU7aYr4W57c2a2ZQ8ihmnl</p> 
21/03/2021	<p>"Proverbs 24:10. If you show yourself weak on a day of anguish, your strength will be small. Thanks for the messages."</p>	<p>Bolsonaro posts a photo with his daughter on his birthday and cites the Bible. Proverbs 24:10.</p>	Christian Identity	<p>https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid02kMg2Hs4Jn1PNLgBYolrDgVsV2VKxBHTNcwAdzhkYPL9Vijijivv6rVZZIUXWhl</p> 
04/04/2020	<p>"Jesus said unto her, I am the</p>	<p>Bolsonaro wishes a</p>	Christian Identity	<p>https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid02FbhvHHMKwlyNbyqPdSXS82tGBXip1G4vADaYwecFHxvUaNH1Zihy3Mr9mEmPMYWG</p>



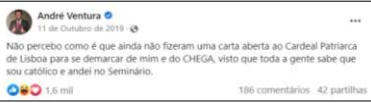


	resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live; John 11:25 HAPPY EASTER TO EVERYONE!"	happy Easter, cites Jesus Christ and the Bible. John 11:25. At the posted photo there are the words "He lives", allegedly, Jesus Christ.		
03/04/2021	"PRESENTIAL RELIGIOUS CELEBRATIONS. Minister Nunes Marques/STF grants a precautionary decision to determine that: States, Federal District and Municipalities refrain from editing or demanding compliance with decrees or local administrative acts that prohibit the holding of face-to-face religious meetings and celebrations."	Bolsonaro celebrates the decision from a Federal Supreme Court Minister - Nunes Marques - in which presential religious celebrations do not be forbidden and municipal, regional and federal levels.	Sacralization of politics	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid0QAcbsw9JM78R5M5211BK7i25mgFTTSVa2mX1g3mqpLh4FhZSRZc3XrDhmts1FWI 
06/12/2021	"Exactly 3 years ago they tried to kill me. I thank God for survival. Today, if necessary, I give my life for freedom."	Bolsonaro thanks God for his survival against a knife attack.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid0NbVUd82pA48dzvkX4xtx29H9judBMB7sf0vNvbNWChQA8F4mmcss3jVuKAs1xI 
24/12/2021	"Whoever is elected President in 2022 will nominate 2 more ministers to the Supreme Court in 2023. Merry Christmas, ho, ho, ho, ..."	Bolsonaro celebrates André Mendonça - an evangelical Pastor and Judge - then Minister at the Brazilian Supreme Federal Court, taking charge against gender issues taught in Brazilian schools.	Sacralization of politics	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid02puCP2fbP6KR5YbRm1VeQTZU33pcMQRgtmeb4RFUo6qDf7u4ne5V6utclNIHmDahl 
30/10/2022	"Put on the entire armor of God, so	Bolsonaro compares the	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/jairmessias.bolsonaro/posts/pfbid02ubnX3QrJQwYhE9ceeKMD7zQTsetuAHw8V9CYVFM8eQG45rsXGG6WG4NVHUXsI

	that you may be firm against the pitfalls of the devil, for our struggle is not against humans, but against the powers and authorities, against the rulers of a world of darkness..." Ephesians 6:11- 12 MAY GOD BLESS OUR BELOVED BRAZIL!!"	political opposition to evil forces as he quotes the Bible.		
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06/12/2022	<p>"Exactly four years ago, I experienced a miracle in Juiz de Fora MG. An attempted murder promoted by a left-wing militant was trying to get me out of the elections. An attack not only against me, but against all those who believed me. An attack on democracy. There were moments of great pain and suffering. In the minutes of consciousness, what came to mind was my young daughter. But thanks to the prayers of millions of Brazilians, the incredible work of the professionals at Santa Casa Hospital and the will of God, a new life was gifted to me. Even in the midst of all the mayhem, I could feel the support of each Brazilian. Since then, this support has been essential for us to remain standing and to overcome great challenges. Therefore, I will always support the people. Only in this way will we be able to build the future we've dreamed of."</p>	Bolsonaro celebrates 4 years of his survival from the knife attack. He credits his survival to the will of God.	Divine Mission	<p>https://www.facebook.com/photo/?fbid=672546547556103&set=pb.100044022914395_-2207520000</p>
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Ventura's table:






Post date	Post translation	Subject addressed	Subject category	Post
16/09/2019	"How many Pakistanis will have to cut women's heads in order for us to understand the real danger that this Islamic wave means for Europe? When CHEGA raises its flag on the parliament, they will be expelled..."	Ventura links criminality with the Islamic religion.	Islam	<p>https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02xfQeUw8Eu6PkFkUp6HvNx4wYamQD4RZ5s3SpVgDprAYUnXYBTUmATgPZfk2hBG1</p>






22/09/2019	"All that is necessary for evil to triumph is that good people do nothing. I ask God to give me strength and courage for not giving up to fight."	Ventura calls for God's help to fight the political battles ahead.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02ThFcxqr38euHXjSv4UuNuEB2KSMmSWrbiCzQDyK23tmjvHrtDeqjKLJ2V3wkqv3zl 
23/10/2019	"How it is possible that in Portugal, in front of the Parliament, the supporters of one of the newest parties say that the Portuguese flag is racist and imperialist? How it is possible to mock on the wounds of Christ with such massive carelessness? Now we understand why such people want to terminate the school classes of morals and religious education. They shall not pass!"	Ventura shows indignation against the mocking of the wounds of Christ and against the political will to end public education on morals and religion.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=2421346378185532 
11/10/2019	"I do not understand how they didn't send a letter to the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon asking him to distance himself from me and CHEGA, considering that everyone knows that I am a Catholic and that I studied in a Seminar."	Ventura talks about his Catholic identity and past.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02xUS84y4VSKNkEX5SKiuQLigPzQAqYM4LnP69AhmyoeCF1nbngdvtvpcC1Wdv3l 
14/11/2019	"An important clarification, in order to avoid controversy. CHEGA is not a religious party. It praises and defends always religious freedom. CHEGA has catholic, evangelical and atheist party members, it has members of all faiths. What I said in an interview for TVI is that I envision my work for the Portuguese people as a mission trusted by God. And that, as a person and a citizen, God is on my life horizon. It must be clear that I'm talking about me, a private citizen. CHEGA is and always be more than I."	Ventura stresses the importance of God in his personal and political life, while stating that his political mission is trusted by God. Simultaneously, Ventura argues that CHEGA is not a religious party.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02tPDVjTa3kapLVi8p6bfANqQG4MiC6nGtQCKPvGyKf6tvFakAtracy6Udpu65fT4l 
12/11/2019	"A different interview, where I tried to open my heart and speak about my personal life to the large public. I thank Manuel Luis Goucha for the way he conducted the interview. Some didn't like my personal passions, others didn't like my relationship with God or my deep beliefs regarding the country where we live in. But this is who I am and the electorate has the right to know me."	Ventura talks about his relationship with God.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0HwmK981P9Mu1WayPTEXQoydva5S5xqtMkSWSwPHg3qdwplm3NBMatavcvHfK5zY9l 



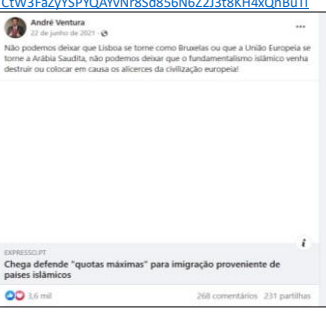
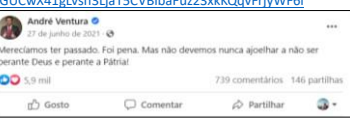

10/11/2019	"They can try to keep me quiet."	Ventura shows his faith in	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid037CjzEU8TdDsSK
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	humiliate me with fake news or insult me. Today, at Borba, we understood that they will not achieve their goals. The people are my strength and God is my resistance."	God being by his side in the political struggle.		https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0Q7Y7D4X4UzxN11NQRW3S8LvAkGWVoGJLenPE32CzoEe321q1ZnNMDSt24wd5uZfI 
24/12/2019	"This is always the day when I thank God for, unexpectedly, calling me to fulfill His mission."	Ventura states the holy nature of his political mission.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0Q7Y7D4X4UzxN11NQRW3S8LvAkGWVoGJLenPE32CzoEe321q1ZnNMDSt24wd5uZfI 
28/02/2020	"Yesterday, Chega met the Cardinal Patriarch of Lisbon. I presented my institutional greetings and we talked about life, faith, consciousness, history and the presidential elections. It went well!"	Ventura shows his connection with the high figures of the Portuguese Catholic Church.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0Zs9Tz6mzKVbEpR93mbyeehkCwe2JuABqe69cVGxf3AU5aUBv71oG8ChgrJnZHAqEI 
09/04/2020	"I thank God, every day, for the grace it gave me for being the first President of this huge party that celebrates today its first anniversary. We had an unthinkable growth. For some, it would be impossible. It happened! CHEGA became an undeniable reality of Portuguese politics. The hope of millions of Portuguese! Happy birthday to us, on this first anniversary! To all that, every day, make this party grow more!"	Ventura thanks God first, for being the first president of Chega, while considering the grace of God to have such a political mission.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid026Eue4Yj965FVhXkfuGqRnhk7AcYURruZvMFQqgB9Ka9hdy8t8XDxt4Mn5n4gQvayl 






13/05/2020	"Today is a very special day for me. On the 13th of May, 1917, Portugal changed forever. We didn't choose to change, we were chosen! I also felt that change on one of the 13th of May in my life. Today, I feel, that I know that, in the same way, my political mission is deeply rooted in Fátima. Maybe this is my big Secret."	Ventura links his political mission to the Miracle of Fátima.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0s1AeUbXcNQjVpJRxY4GtZyRfK1sK2oSuQH7DaaBznQ5GVstXKkG4gznbwKXyeI 
27/06/2020	"The just shall live by faith. But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him."	Ventura quotes the New Testament.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02jT8AaUPRFLmLVby1VCPnXHHAaAmoRXJniQmDdg9BblqFNmj3wzhQeALoATsXG9Uml 
29/07/2020	"Only God and the Portuguese people care for me and protect me. They are my inspiration and, therefore, I will resist every obstacle, attack and intimidation. Nothing will stop me or make me go back!"	Ventura states that he is protected by God.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid025NG4xS38K1gATrkm8FEcU4HoRUCr9jsyd57xsSkuaKcuKfuAk3AxKcgHUUkQWtyI 
21/09/2020	"I don't know if it is reincarnation or not, but I feel inside of me the spirit of the former prime-minister, I feel it! The love for Portugal, the constant challenge to the institutions, the ability to tell the truth to the Portuguese. I will continue to fight until the end!"	Ventura suggests some spiritual influence of the deceased prime-minister Sá Carneiro over him.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid09TLVWXYgxstjYJA3TS5Vt2obAkKoa25F4kAJ2sHxVFKVcr7JrxophWbo7CATC8U 






20/09/2020	"We are the ones. From North to South. The common people's party. The only movement in which the good Portuguese trust to change this country."	Ventura's statements in the context of calling Chega the religion of the common Portuguese.	Sacralization of politics	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid021FXNITUWgqKEfPRorJKyRhr8QySk8eodxuHfftCdteaHC1zDDwVsKcrDZcknqSI 
11/09/2020	"Here lies Apostle Saint Peter. I returned to worship and contemplate the history of the Man who gave his life for what he believed, and to gain strength for never giving up on what I believe."	Ventura is inspired by a Christian saint to fight his political struggle.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02qqEiuKBdVPrd3Rtir7yLEctDuPspMt1Vs9qVL3TPCPfbvDU2kciJxcp1nkABgzI 
31/10/2020	"Today is a sad day for the rule of law in Portugal! We are heading a dangerous path and it seems that CHEGA is the only party worried about it!"	Ventura links COVID pandemic restrictions on freedom of movement on the religious Day of the Dead with the deterioration of the rule of law.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0F6RRszFu7UshagK8BteZIXtCckCsVnZfXeDYkLJ1GASKhpbR8vZTPNQBP25oMwC5I 
19/12/2020	"I will never be afraid (of talking about God) because I am one hundred percent sure about the mission I was entrusted to accomplish. If I become afraid, I will leave CHEGA!"	Ventura states the holy nature of his political mission.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0CnRMk5ZLAVYqk4vKGZCP85vk1QjXGXhVtHFAWfWlgBECAukeifcZ8bogVoVeQS7I 
05/12/2020	"If Jesus Christ could decide, Your Excellency would not be a Bishop and would never hold authority over the worshippers. It is what it is!"	Ventura suggests that Jesus Christ is on his side.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02jMmpFn3Zba7pAMLu5RgylC9buQP5zQdsPMcs7xep6yWmj43T9ri3Q2UvDnwg5xRQI 






31/01/2021	"An elite that will do everything to survive and destroy me, but this movement is unstoppable! God is in command!"	Ventura suggests that God is commanding his political mission.	Divine Mission	
16/01/2021	"I thank very much Priest Gonçalo Portocarrero de Almada for the trust and the words. They were very important to me and certainly more important to the Portuguese Catholics."	Ventura shows his connection with figures of the Portuguese Catholic Church.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0s6r5Fc46kmfK1UvpojhFonJ1rQQ65DXnLrMqoN66e6vkgSBB6jm52BjroMcnERdjl 
10/01/2021	"A sign from heaven that wants to transform Portugal!"	Ventura states the holy nature of his political mission.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0ZxVLFyQDMgQFBbFhjpijgxEfVjo4rHW1ULHLaU23MMjdpDW8TJQo9ifLgYtmzZnzGI 
22/02/2021	"I always pray when I wake up! Today I read these words of Saint Matthew: 'For I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me, I was naked and you clothed me, I was sick and you visited me, I was in prison and you came to me.' It gave me strength, a lot of strength! Even if they want to destroy us, outlaw CHEGA, or arrest me or the party leaders, I know that Portugal will never leave me alone!"	Ventura quotes the Bible.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0N68vzu6e1LFMyEmxyStLzqaFWkjZxpv6Xru131oYtUBwJEHnRYQsz5NcVg2QTEI 
12/03/2021	"We have an MP in the Parliament that wants to preserve the 'Islamic memory' and, at the same time, destroy the monuments of our civilizational heritage!"	Ventura denounces the preservation of Islamic culture to the detriment of an alleged civilizational heritage of a Christian background.	Islam	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02xyu9cuMhbjGER3idkFAN4XfFoeSuZRSaICs6FhuVuh9P1smz2KLcKcScvQTHm58YXl 


21/04/2021	"This Government wants to transform SEF into a service of asylum and Portugal in an open door for Islamic immigration to Europe. But we will not allow it!"	Ventura opposes to Islamic immigration.	Islam	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02BHAlrAGLoZPXjmaKvPKTeF0j5WwhekDwzocXwrVyp955t8k4hiQw8g3uUhNl 
31/05/2021	"Today I had two privileges: pray in Fátima and do it side by side with Salvini! For a Europe of values!"	Ventura shows himself praying while linking this Christian act to European values.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid05h2W9s7QqPQokI9HDu9JkGtVxChmdqLFny3WftHC4DZ5K4iuUlgGgPLMqqXoGqil 
22/06/2021	"We cannot let Lisbon become like Brussels, or that the European Union become Saudi Arabia, we cannot let Islamic fundamentalism destroy or put in danger the foundations of European civilization!"	Ventura warns about Islamic fundamentalism as a cause of European civilization's destruction.	Islam	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02awpikjAkJUibEfgbnA2mR7NCTw3FaZyYSPYQAvN8Sd856N6Z2J3t8KH4xQnBuTI 
27/06/2021	"We deserved to pass. It was a pity. But we never should kneel, unless to God or the Fatherland!"	Ventura suggests that he only submit himself to the will of God and the fatherland.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02Gf2m9bbez7JwgPjfaC9PHmGUCwX41gLvsh3LjaT5CVBibaFuz23xkKQvFrjyWF6I 
02/09/2021	"That's why it is fundamental that we become aware of Islamic fundamentalism dangers. It was here, in Lisbon, not in a distant place! The excessive Islamization of Europe represents a menace to all of us and we should not forget that, while we are receiving hordes of Afghan people!"	Ventura links the Islamic religion with criminality.	Islam	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0LUkv3H4SDQpHTxegHnuKIFv1qQ4UIBJAuWDofJh4Hp45tprU8x5ovPAZi6Y2cEFI 
03/09/2021	"Today we went to Martim Moniz and Mouraria to condemn the	Ventura links the Islamic religion with so-called	Islam	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0221jpWVbyaFQ5g43E7qu8aH15ir3u5mBzfVZuKur5gmo9SMikv9YVgd4J41w8cPl




	excessive Islamization and its dangers. We listen to the street vendors, residents and tourists. The support in the street is visible and unquestionable! Let's battle in the local elections!"	dangers.		
16/09/2021	"We are and we will continue to be a supportive people, but we cannot allow this uncontrolled intifada and Islamic immigration to Europe. It is our civilization that is in danger!"	Ventura warns about Islamic immigration as a cause of European civilization's destruction.	Islam	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0YWWhYXa5RWX1obCMEWMipXMVQuQM8cx9gCC4rV7utxUcgCaFXMCsj8oejw7qwwuTI 
17/10/2021	"Yesterday, in the beautiful village of Portel, with the Constable Saint, one of the greatest Portuguese that ever lived, I reaffirmed my commitment of never giving up to fight for the dignity of this country!"	Ventura with one of the most praised figures of Portuguese history that was also sanctified.	Christianism as an identitarian marker	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02yFzMCvpUk3URCypNu7hSLbPC4GNpxzvqncv2kgKcyKxGomv4s5AKgV7C7Ci6p1YqI 
24/12/2021	"A Holy Christmas for everybody. May the families reunite together and celebrate. May the light shine on Portugal! May God protect us!"	Ventura posts a Christian message, at Christmas.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0xcHeG7a8KivPFv8hMds3XY9xe4hvZYu6bQPEpKRnMU1LTbCBhUYicpF8mfcBWLdYI 


22/12/2021	"Farewell to Madeira. Alongside this wonderful Christmas crib, at Funchal. Today the left-wing forces in Europe want to destroy our Christian identity. We will not allow it!"	Ventura links European identity with Christianity.	Christianism as an identitarian marker	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0PNBar1j8xd4wJ3hRBdryahfti8R6pv2p6dSETc8jB8rmdy162jCPiuByo2UKSnTl 
05/12/2021	"I managed to visit St. Stephen's Basilica, in Bologna, before starting a new electoral campaign. It is an enormous inspiration: built over pagan temples, it is a symbol of Christianity and Western civilization victories. I didn't come to ask for results, but to ask for Light and Faith never leave me!"	Ventura shows his Christian faith and links Western civilization with Christianity.	Christianism as an identitarian marker	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0wNY5kxIFPCKs5dMNPmTEru1ykyhPTPb23L8MprpmqnTnzXVBMT7jGc57F5X23gbl 
05/12/2021	"Any attempt to end Christmas or please the Muslims or the extreme left-wing will have our opposition! Who doesn't like our culture and tradition can go to Afghanistan or Saudi Arabia!"	Ventura opposes Muslims and their alleged dislike of Portuguese culture and traditions.	Islam	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid01QaJaW1SK7Psw1Q1FvSgpdgpGw26mYeKdbC1QNKohBUfggbuv5BwZWNgQ4GKxgzl 
15/01/2022	"On my anniversary, I thank God for my life and the privilege that He gave me to fight this battle for Portugal!"	Ventura shows his faith in God being by his side in the political struggle.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02gpT6bKTzakvFFa3LLTcCQ4grrSuerMjGtaFsW59HY16QnWVojrJcwbxVQHQb3l 
20/02/2022	"Europe is in great danger and only CHEGA dares to say it. The others hide in political correctness and put us all in danger!"	Ventura claims that Chega is the only party to the courage to denounce the risks of Islamic immigration.	Islam	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid024j173cbGWKgcY8bkNB3GPDxU281jzCPLRutYRkjpFZUG8yafeTbmvrW2c7EKf8l 

06/02/2022	"Almudena Cathedral, in Madrid, started to be built 100 years before I was born and, for me, it is an important prayer and thought place. I'm here, side by side with Saint Josemaría Escrivá, to thank the results and mission that was given to me!"	Ventura thanks God for the results and mission regarding his political mission, standing side by side with a Saint and founder of Opus Dei.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02pyTX5DuMWlYmM2xfhQ9YqV8CrBrlbts1FXVWYre9czb1MH9bnKxK4L6MxU8ec3Vl 
23/03/2022	"No, Mr. Prime Minister, we cannot compare Ukrainian refugees that are trying to escape from bombs and from an illegal invasion of their territory to the ones that come to Lisbon to buy our nationality or that want to transform our city into a caliphate, where women are objects and have to wear burka'. These are the words that António Costa had to listen to in the Parliament!"	Ventura views the European and Christian immigration (from Ukraine) as positive, in contrast with the alleged dangerous immigration that comes from Muslim countries.	Islam	https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=769137334061045 
11/03/2022	"I finished the visit to the Portuguese community in the UK, at Westminster Abbey. A historical and magical place, where we remember the great European values! We must not forget, in these hard times!"	Ventura links Christianity with European identity.	Christianism as an identitarian marker	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02YHQELdFcHaCn6giBdZlbf52x3cQFak5Y2zcsH2GfStH9iE2WmQ24NcYwgd3G9yl 
24/04/2022	"Our values, our identity and our history must be defended. The Judeo-Christian tradition of Europe cannot be destroyed! We don't want Europe with illegal immigrants and exploiters of the state! This is what I and Orbán have in common. And we will talk about it."	Ventura vows for the preservation of Judeo-Christian tradition against the immigrants of other ethnicities (where it includes different religions).	Christianism as an identitarian marker	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0WxJARAVbQRK8JcnNGs7QEQtYsNUGrVWmBzK8cYBX6Hwo98TPeCFz3bcbj8QxI 
17/04/2022	"A day that we must not forget, when life beat death! The clear day when we remember the reasons for our struggle. The Light and Hope that feed us! I wish you all a Holy Eastern!"	Ventura shows his faith in God being by his side in the political struggle.	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0dHuE4wkHBJL1bxUhCq57T3fwYg3DbGx2so8zQFhk8etB8FR5UcFvFV7x7QA62Ml 

15/05/2022	"Family International Day. The Family is one of our foundations, it is in the origins of Portugal and Europe, under the Judaeo-Christian tradition. Defend the Family is to defend Portugal and our tradition."	Ventura praises the Judaeo-Christian traditional family heritage.	Christianism as an identitarian marker	https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=1028613614727902 
13/05/2022	"Take care of us, Queen of Portugal!"	Ventura highlights Our Lady of Fátima as the queen of Portugal.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02XGRvttcV3P2GCihkmbpL6N7Sqv8QKs9mD6GQWGVpp7w63NHVfamdQW4rh7R1I 
16/08/2022	"The Director of the Catholic Mission for Migrations said that CHEGA is racist and xenophobic. These statements insult the hundred thousand catholic CHEGA supporters and party members. We demand equal rights and duties for all minorities and we will keep demanding!"	Ventura argues against a Catholic organization claiming that it is insulting to the great number of Chega supporters, which are catholic.	Christian identity	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0vFmz4V5CP52ubVXcjZpAjuj19ARBP9H9AATFSMzduN4QzcFfWUdx82GvtWccChg3GI 
14/08/2022	"637 years ago the Saint Nuno Álvares Pereira led an army of brave people, at Aljubarrota, to fight for the independence of our Fatherland. Today it is Chega and André Ventura who do the same work every day."	Ventura praises and compares himself with a warrior Christian Saint who ensured the independence of Portugal on the battlefield.	Christianism as an identitarian marker	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0kgTRmHafDdc69ascGLSkwr7KAzuGmNMweJU8YqHX41s4LRdW5gfRh6pp5yk6UqHl 
13/09/2022	"For those who say that there is no risk of massive and uncontrolled immigration, especially from Islamic countries, I suggest to view and listen what CHEGA has been saying about Portugal!"	Ventura links criminality with Islamic religion.	Islam	https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=648749399806719 
04/09/2022	"In every vacation I seek God, I think	Ventura stresses the	Divine Mission	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0YsFzDcgJsPwMAryhGiasU6YYmgPioGw95t71ZCSpUNK4536QnkX27ndiySxukQBtl

	<p>about what I did wrong and thank about what I did right! I question myself and I question Him if I have conditions to continue the mission and the work that I was entrusted, if I am humble enough to represent those who don't have a voice. Saint Paul once said: 'It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me'. I'm not worthy of those words, but would like to have a bit of them to fight for all of us!"</p>	<p>importance of God in his personal and political life, while stating that his political mission is trusted by God.</p>		 <p>André Ventura · 14 de novembro de 2022 · 627 comentários · 199 partilhas</p>
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09/10/2022	<p>"In Almudena Cathedral, in Madrid, I kneel myself in front of John Paul II. I miss this great Pope and his values. I miss the energy and Faith that he gave us!"</p>	<p>Ventura shows himself praying.</p>	<p>Christian identity</p>	<p>https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02oSaLitsvwwVqNjx1s2go3DWyabApzohurshTtXszDHfh6vbyY7oQ2FoDsQQr6NkXl</p>  <p>André Ventura · 10 de outubro de 2022 · 348 comentários · 103 partilhas</p>
04/10/2022	<p>"Before returning to Lisbon, I had time to step on the holy ground of Saint Peter Square. It is always so intense, powerful and good!"</p>	<p>Ventura highlights his faith.</p>	<p>Christian identity</p>	<p>https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid08VBjUKfRETBxGbZvKJgiUVQbEfwaDriEUm2x7UF6sHDY6L4MejDNktWa7EqKGkbl</p>  <p>André Ventura · 04 de outubro de 2022 · 135 comentários · 30 partilhas</p>
14/11/2022	<p>"I have never been in an orthodox church. In Bucharest, in the Cathedral which is also the house of the Romanian Patriarch, I had the opportunity to visit one. God is there. And He is so important in our struggle!"</p>	<p>Ventura embraces other churches of the Christian faith, like the Orthodox Church. Also, states the importance of God in the political struggle.</p>	<p>Ecumenism</p>	<p>https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid08Cw9dGv21ePwxhthrdeMrblacFyNdg1uBMC9WFgC3SB1G3h2QbY3DxfE2BocCpRil</p>  <p>André Ventura · 14 de novembro de 2022 · 168 comentários · 41 partilhas</p>

10/11/2022	"Sanctuary of the world, symbol of Portugal!"	Ventura links a Catholic sight to a Portuguese identitarian element.	Christianism as an identitarian marker	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid02XkpktpV7haQDaHCooZ6Qw7MICP2uBA7ZuC8XvRW7gJWHppMDfWkPNqCPrEXX8zUA/ 
31/12/2022	"With the death of Pope Benedict XVI, a part of the church dies, the part that doesn't forget its origins and identity, and that doesn't want to be sold to fake modernism. May God give him peace."	Ventura praises the conservative and identitarian side of the Catholic Church.	Christianism as an identitarian marker	https://www.facebook.com/AndreAmaralVentura/posts/pfbid0Jb7rQnXK3WjVp6VG61LpheJ56cono3Xj1G7FHZm9qAVvGBDsMR6hAWsvLXZa82eml 