

*Daniel JONES**, *Santiago CUNIAL***

***PROTESTANT CHURCHES, THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS
(1976-1983) AND THE SUPPORT FOR SAME-SEX MARRIAGE (2010)
IN ARGENTINA¹***

Abstract: Religious actors regularly participate in political debates in Latin America. In Argentina, Historical Protestant Churches have been politically involved in several debates since the 1970s. This article compares two processes in which Historical Protestant Churches took part: the defense of Human Rights (1976-1983) and the support for Same-Sex Marriage (2010) in Argentina. It is based on a research about the relationships between evangelicals, politics and sexuality in Argentina, which focuses on diverse documentary sources (religious and secular press, churches' declarations) and interviews with key informants (especially, evangelical leaders). The article analyzes the performance of these churches because they took an alternative position to most religious actors in Argentina -including the Catholic Church and its hierarchy- and because they led the ecumenical and interreligious alliances that supported these causes.

The main hypothesis is that the performance of these churches in both contexts share significant characteristics that allow us to understand patterns of political participation of religious actors. First, they backed these causes through public statements and activities by their institutional bodies and leaders. Second, they built alliances with other religious and non-religious actors in order to defend the rights of groups that were politically persecuted or marginalized by the State. By doing so, they led the ecumenical and interreligious space that supported these causes.

The recognition of Protestant Churches by social movements and State agencies has increased the visibility of these religious actors in the public sphere and the legitimacy of its political interventions. Without overestimating the influence of the Historical Protestant Churches in

* CONICET, Argentina (danielprotestantes@gmail.com).

** CONICET, Argentina (cunialsantiago@gmail.com).

¹ This article was written within the project UBACYT 20020120200132, which is based at the Gino Germani Research Institute (University of Buenos Aires, Argentina).

Argentina, we believe it is pertinent to point out their roles in the processes described, because in recent decades they have positioned themselves as authorized voices in the political spectrum in favor of the recognition of rights. This place must be considered when analyzing other discussions in Argentina, such as the legalization of abortion..

Keywords: Protestant churches, politics, Human Rights, Same-Sex Marriage, Argentina.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this paper is to describe patterns of non-partisan political participation of religious actors. This phenomenon has been scarcely analyzed by studies on religion and politics in Argentina. Most of them have focused on the Catholic Church: for example, some have examined the latter's role during the last military dictatorship in Argentina², while others have analyzed its participation in the democratic debate on Same-Sex Marriage (SSM)³. Studies on Protestants and Evangelicals⁴ and politics in Argentina have focused on the establishment of a

²Rubén Dri, *Teología y Dominación* (Buenos Aires: Biblos, 1987); Emilio Mignone, *Iglesia y Dictadura* (Buenos Aires: La Página, 1999); Juan Esquivel, "Iglesia Católica, política y sociedad: un estudio de las relaciones entre la elite eclesiástica argentina, el Estado y la sociedad en perspectiva histórica," in *Informe final del concurso: Democracia, derechos sociales y equidad; y Estado, política y conflictos sociales* (Buenos Aires: Programa Regional de Becas CLACSO, 2000); Horacio Verbitsky, *Doble juego: la Argentina católica y militar* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2006); Luis Miguel Donatello, "Sobre algunos conceptos para comprender las relaciones entre religión y guerrilla en la Argentina de los '60 y '70," *Nuevo Mundo, Mundos Nuevos* July, 12 (2008), accessed June 22, 2014, <http://nuevomundo.revues.org/38972>

³Juan Vaggione, "Sexual rights and religion: same-sex marriage and lawmakers' catholic identity in Argentina," *University of Miami Law Review*, 65 (2011): 935-54; Karina Felitti, "Estrategias de comunicación del activismo católico conservador frente al aborto y el matrimonio igualitario en la Argentina," *Sociedad y Religión. Sociología, Antropología e Historia de la Religión en el Cono Sur* 21 (2011): 92-122.

⁴The terms "Evangelical" and "Protestant" (Pablo Andiñach, Daniel Bruno, *Iglesias Evangélicas y derechos humanos en la Argentina (1976-1998)* (Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 2001)) embrace churches inheritors of the Christian tradition established by the Protestant Reform of the Sixteenth Century and its subsequent revivals. In Argentina, the term "Historical Protestant Churches" refers to those churches which are ecumenical and connected to ethnic communities and to the entry of the missionaries to Argentina, in the nineteenth century (Pablo Deiros, *Historia del cristianismo en América Latina* (Texas: Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana, 1982)). These churches have a more progressive

social movement in favor of a new law of cults⁵; the identification of Pentecostal communities with Peronism⁶; the political forms of Neo-Pentecostalism among middle classes⁷; and the participation of evangelicals in confessional and non-confessional political parties⁸.

This article compares two processes in which Historical Protestant Churches took part: the defense of Human Rights (HR) against the violations perpetrated by the State during the military dictatorship between 1976 and 1983; and the support for the passing of the SSM act in 2010. It is based on a research about the relationships between evangelicals, politics and sexuality in Argentina, which focuses on diverse documentary sources (religious and secular press, declarations of the churches) and interviews with key informants (especially, evangelical leaders). We focus on the performance of the Historical Protestant Churches because they took an alternative position to most religious actors in Argentina, including the Catholic Church and its hierarchy, and because they led the ecumenical and interreligious alliances that supported these causes⁹. Historical Protestant Churches in Argentina are rarely studied and there are no articles that

and liberal character (José Míguez Bonino, *Rostros del protestantismo latinoamericano* (Buenos Aires: Nueva Creación, 1995)) than Baptists, Free Brothers and Pentecostal churches, which tend to be more conservative in political and moral terms.

⁵Matthew Marostica, *Pentecostal and politics: the creation of the Evangelical Christian Movement in Argentina, 1983-1993* (University of California: Diss. Berkeley, 1997); Hilario Wynarczyk, *Ciudadanos de dos mundos. El Movimiento evangélico en la vida pública argentina 1980-2001* (San Martín: UNSAM EDITA, 2009).

⁶Pablo Semán, "El Pentecostalismo y la religiosidad de los sectores populares," in *Desde Abajo. La transformación de las identidades sociales*, ed. Maristella Svampa (Buenos Aires: Biblos-Universidad Nacional General Sarmiento, 2000).

⁷Joaquín Algranti, *Política y Religión en los márgenes. Nuevas formas de participación social de las mega-iglesias evangélicas en la Argentina* (Buenos Aires: Ediciones Ciccus, 2010).

⁸Hilario Wynarczyk, *Sal y luz a las naciones. Evangélicos y política en la Argentina (1980-2001)* (Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2010); Marcos Carbonelli, *Mediaciones con lo político. Análisis de la participación de actores evangélicos en partidos políticos en el AMBA* (Universidad Nacional de San Martín: Diss. Buenos Aires, 2011).

⁹Having indicated which was the criterion to investigate the Historical Protestant Churches in these processes, we need to point out that they are a small group within the evangelical field. According to a representative survey conducted all over Argentina in 2008, 9% of the population is evangelical, of which 88% comes from the Pentecostal tradition, while the remaining 12% is part of the Lutheran, Methodist or Baptist churches, among others (calculation by the authors based on Fortunato Mallimaci, Juan Esquivel, Mariela Irrazábal, *Primera encuesta nacional sobre Creencias y Actitudes religiosas. Informe de Investigación* (Buenos Aires: CEIL-PIETTE/CONICET, 2008).

link their participation in both processes, or that systematize their modes of political intervention¹⁰.

The analysis of these phenomena helps us understand the diversity and complexity of the activities of religious actors in contemporary political processes in Argentina, since it leaves aside the most studied religious actor of the country - the Catholic Church - and the most visible and politically conservative evangelical actors. Our main hypothesis is that the performance of the Historical Protestant Churches in both contexts shares significant characteristics that allow us to recognize patterns of political participation of religious actors, particularly in the defense and/or promotion of the rights of the groups that were politically persecuted or marginalized by the State. These churches adopted a clear public position and built alliances with religious and non-religious actors, in which they played a leadership role.

We begin the article by describing the Historical Protestant Churches in Argentina and the political processes in which they were involved: the defense of human rights during the military dictatorship between 1976 and 1983 and the support for the passing of the Same Sex Marriage act in 2010. We then describe the relevant characteristics of the performances of these churches in both processes. We conclude the article by reflecting on the role of these religious actors in the debates about human and sexual rights.

THE EVANGELICAL FIELD IN ARGENTINA

The growth of the evangelical churches in the past 50 years has transformed the Latin American religious field. Although the predominance of the

¹⁰About the evangelical churches during the last military dictatorship, see: José Míguez Bonino, "Presencia y ausencia protestante en la Argentina del proceso militar 1976-1983," *Cristianismo y Sociedad* 83 (1985): 81-85; Walter Techera, *Entre la resistencia y la sumisión: el discurso de las iglesias protestantes frente a la realidad socio-política argentina (1955-1982)* (Diss. Buenos Aires: ISEDET, 1995); Alberto Roldán, "Comprensión de la realidad social en el discurso teológico de los hermanos libres en la Argentina (1882-1955)," *Cuadernos de Teología* 15 (1996): 23-53; Andiñach, Bruno, *Iglesias Evangélicas y derechos humanos en la Argentina (1976-1998)*; Mónica Di Risio, *"En el Cielo como en la Tierra" Las iglesias protestantes y la última dictadura militar argentina* (Diss. Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires, 2011). About their performance in the debate on Same Sex Marriage, see: Daniel Jones, Marcos Carbonelli, "Evangélicos y derechos sexuales y reproductivos: actores y lógicas políticas en la Argentina contemporánea," *Ciências Sociais Unisinos* 48 (2012): 225-34; and Daniel Jones, Juan Vaggione, "Los vínculos entre religión y política a la luz del debate sobre matrimonio para parejas del mismo sexo en Argentina," *Civitas* 12 (2012): 522-37.

Catholic Church persists¹¹, evangelicals are the first religious minority in the region: 6.4% of the population in Paraguay, 9.6% in Ecuador, 10% in Colombia, 10.1% in Venezuela, 12.5% in Peru, 13.7% in Bolivia, 15.5% in Chile and 23% in Brazil¹².

In Argentina, this growth was resisted by the dictatorships of the 1960s and 1970s, when the Catholic hierarchy had a strong State support. Since the arrival of democracy in 1983, the evangelical movement demanded a new legal status¹³ and its political mobilization established it as a collective subject with its own voice and influence in the public space¹⁴.

The evangelical field in Argentina presents a broad ideological diversity. Wynarczyk¹⁵ identifies two poles within the Evangelical field: one *historical liberationist* and one *biblical conservative*. The first one includes churches that belong to the so-called “historical Protestantism”, established in Argentina between 1825 and 1850 to assist European immigrants in a spiritually way (Lutheran, Reformed, and Methodist churches, among others). They are associated with the Argentinian Federation of Evangelical Churches (FAIE, due to its initials in Spanish)¹⁶, the Latin American Council of Churches and the World Council of Churches. The biblical conservative pole includes a Pentecostal subsector that established the Pentecostal Evangelical Federation in 1977, and a subsector (mainly Free Brothers and Baptists) that congregated in the Christian Alliance of Evangelical Churches in Argentina, in 1982.

The liberationist pole has been ecumenical, close to the “social gospel” and gradually opened to the issues of sexuality, while the conservative pole has remained close to the United States’ religious right¹⁷, both in its anticommunism during the Cold War and on issues of sexual morality. These ideological trends have crystallized in the different positions of the institutions of the two poles as

¹¹Fortunato Mallimaci, Verónica Giménez Béliveau, “Creencia e increencia en el Cono Sur de América. Entre la religiosidad difusa, la pluralización del campo religioso y las relaciones con lo público y lo político,” *Revista Argentina de Sociología* 9 (2007): 44-63.

¹²Elaboration by the authors based on Pew Research Centre, *The global religious landscape. A report on the size and distribution of the world’s major religious groups as of 2010* (Washington: Pew Research Center’s Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2012).

¹³Wynarczyk, *Ciudadanos de dos mundos. El Movimiento evangélico en la vida pública argentina 1980-2001*.

¹⁴Carbonelli, *Mediaciones con lo político. Análisis de la participación de actores evangélicos en partidos políticos en el AMBA*.

¹⁵Wynarczyk, *Ciudadanos de dos mundos. El Movimiento evangélico en la vida pública argentina 1980-2001*.

¹⁶All the acronyms included respond to their initials in Spanish.

¹⁷Susana Bianchi, *Historia de las religiones en la Argentina: Las minorías religiosas* (Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2004), 244-45.

regards the defense of human rights in the last dictatorship and on topics such as sex education, abortion and SSM during the democratic period¹⁸.

We focus our analysis on the Argentinian Methodist Evangelical Church¹⁹ (IEMA), because of its leadership in the Protestantism in Argentina and of its chief role in the defense of Human Rights. In addition, we analyze the Evangelical Church of the River Plate (IERP) and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church (IELU), which also participated in both processes.

THE MILITARY DICTATORSHIP

The March 24, 1976 coup led to a military dictatorship that promoted the National Security Doctrine to justify the State Terrorism²⁰. Under the slogan of “the battle against subversion”, the dictatorship brought together union leaders, politicians, business and religious sectors and legitimized itself²¹. Besides, the Catholic Church “became a significant player that legitimized the coup and the actions of the government”²². In consequence, the regime has been defined as civil, military and religious²³.

Despite this initial legitimacy of the dictatorship, different sectors of the civil society created several Human Rights associations: the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights (APDH), the Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights (MEDH), Grandmothers and Mothers of Plaza de Mayo, the Peace and Justice Service (SERPAJ) and the Center for Legal and Social Studies (CELS), among

¹⁸Daniel Jones, Ana Laura Azparren, Luciana Polischuk, “Evangélicos, sexualidad y política: las instituciones evangélicas en los debates públicos sobre Unión Civil y Educación Sexual en la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (2003-2004),” in *El activismo religioso conservador en Latinoamérica*, ed. Juan Vaggione (Ferreya Editor, Córdoba, 2010); Daniel Jones, Ana Laura Azparren, Santiago Cunial, “Derechos reproductivos y actores religiosos: los evangélicos frente al debate sobre la despenalización del aborto en la Argentina contemporánea (1994-2011),” *Espacio Abierto. Cuaderno Venezolano de Sociología* 22 (2013): 110-33.

¹⁹For a description of the history and the origins of Methodism in Argentina, see Floreal Forni, Fortunato Mallimaci, Luis Cárdenas, *Guía de la diversidad religiosa de Buenos Aires* (Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2003).

²⁰Marcos Novaro, Vicente Palermo, *La dictadura militar 1976-1983. Del golpe de estado a la restauración democrática* (Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2003).

²¹Horacio Quiroga, *El tiempo del "proceso". Conflictos y coincidencias entre civiles y militares 1976-1983* (Rosario: Homo Sapiens Ediciones - Editorial Fundación Ross, 2004).

²²Di Risio, “En el Cielo como en la Tierra” *Las iglesias protestantes y la última dictadura militar argentina*, 28.

others. Historical Protestant Churches became relevant actors in the defense of Human Rights, as they reported disappearances and assisted the victims of the state terrorism.

In 1979, the dictatorship began to wear down, due to the failure of its economic policies and divisions of the military leadership²⁴. This erosion manifested both in the progressive opening of the public spaces and in the claims of the civil society²⁵. In 1979 the first general strike took place and the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights of the Organization of American States visited the country. These events weakened the regime. The 1982 defeat in the Malvinas War against the UK brought down the dictatorship and began a democratic transition to the 1983 presidential elections, won by Raúl Alfonsín.

THE DEBATE AROUND THE SAME SEX MARRIAGE ACT

With the return of democracy, a process of legal discussion that expanded to family, reproductive and sexual rights began: from shared parental authority (1985) and divorce (1987), to sexual health and responsible procreation (2002), sexual education (2006) and gender identity (2012). One of the legislative projects that provoked major controversies was the Same Sex Marriage act, enacted on July 15, 2010.

Since 2007, sexual diversity organizations developed several strategies to place their demand on the institutional policy agenda and on the public arena: presentation of bills to the Parliament; *judicialization*²⁶ of the refusals to same-sex couples to be married because of its discriminatory character²⁷; establishing the debate in the public agenda through the use of mass media and LGBT Pride

²³Fortunato Mallimaci, "La dictadura argentina: terrorismo de estado e imaginario de la muerte," *La memoria de la dictadura. 'Nocturno de Chile', Roberto Bolaño. 'Interrupciones', Juan Gelman*, ed. Fernando Moreno (Paris: Ellipses Edition, 2006).

²⁴Quiroga, *El tiempo del "proceso". Conflictos y coincidencias entre civiles y militares 1976-1983*.

²⁵Diedo Benítez, César Mónaco, "La dictadura militar, 1976-1983," in *Problemas socioeconómicos contemporáneos*, ed. Gabriel Kessler, Mariana Luzzi, (Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional General Sarmiento, 2007), 17.

²⁶The term *judicialization of politics* refers to the spread of the reliance on courts and judicial means for addressing core moral predicaments, public policy questions and political controversies (Ran Hirschl, "The Judicialization of Politics," in *Oxford Handbook of Law and Politics*, ed. Gregory Caldeira, Daniel Kelemen, Keith Whittington (New York: Oxford University Press, 2008)).

²⁷"Alex y José pusieron fecha", *Página 12*, November 16, 2009.

parades²⁸; collaboration with State agencies; and the establishment of alliances with the legislators from different parties²⁹.

Between 2009 and 2010, the Chamber of Deputies Committees discussed a number of bills in order to include the marriage of the same-sex couples in the Civil Code³⁰ (Hiller). The main opponents of the law were the Catholic Church hierarchy and the conservative evangelical sectors. These actors promoted a referendum, demonstrations across the country and in front of the National Congress in Buenos Aires the day before the treatment of the Bill in the Senate. The last concentration was attended by 50,000 to 60,000 people³¹.

Despite this mobilization against the project, the discussion on Same Sex Marriage in Argentina showed two new phenomena: first, conservative groups did not express the only religious position on the issue; second, the sexual diversity movement formed alliances with progressive religious actors to promote the bill.

PROTESTANT ACTIVISM AND LEADERSHIP AMONG POLITICAL AND RELIGIOUS ALLIANCES. THE DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS

The actions of the Historical Protestant Churches in defense of Human Rights in Argentina fall within their increasing political participation since the 1960s. One of the most significant events in this process was the creation of the Christian Movement of Students, which was ideologically linked with various leftist movements and which became the cradle of several evangelical public figures (such as the theologian José Míguez Bonino and the academician Mauricio López³²)³³.

²⁸“La Marcha del Orgullo Gay, una fiesta con fuerte reclamo”, *Clarín*, August 11, 2009.

²⁹Javier Corrales, Mario Pecheny, “Six Reasons Why Argentina Legalized Gay Marriage First,” *Quarterly Americas* (2010).

³⁰Renata Hiller, “Matrimonio igualitario y espacio público en Argentina,” in *Matrimonio igualitario en la Argentina: perspectivas sociales, políticas y jurídicas*, Laura Clérico and Martín Aldao coord. (Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 2010).

³¹“Fuerte rechazo frente al Congreso”, *La Nación*, July 14, 2010.

³²José Míguez Bonino (1924-2012) was a Methodist pastor, advocate for Human Rights and a liberationist theologian recognized all over the world. He contributed in the creation of the APDH. He was elected as a conventional to participate in the Constitutional reform of 1994, together with the Catholic Bishop Jaime De Nevaes, as the two clerics present at the Convention (“El adiós al pastor Míguez Bonino,” *Página 12*, July 02, 2012). Mauricio Lopez was a prestigious intellectual and professor of sociology and philosophy. He was a member of the Free Brothers Church. He was kidnapped and disappeared during the dictatorship, on January 1, 1977, while he was working with the Methodist Church in Mendoza.

Another precedent is the participation of the Historical Protestant Churches in ecumenical processes, expressed in different Human Rights associations across Latin America. In 1961 the Fellowship of Reconciliation and Peace was formed. In this organization participated the Uruguayan Pastor Earl Smith, the Methodist Bishop Carlos Gattinoni and the laical Catholic Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, both Argentinians. The Fellowship “was the basis for organizing appropriate responses a decade and a half later, when violence harassed the Argentinian society”³⁴.

In the 70s, the civil society structured the resistance to Latin American dictatorships violating the Human Rights through organizations composed by Protestant actors. In Argentina, the Argentinian Commission for Refugees (CAREF) was created in October 1973. It was initially formed by the churches Argentinian Methodist Evangelical Church, Evangelical Church of the River Plate and United Evangelical Lutheran Church. The Commission was a World Council of Churches’ initiative, to assist the political refugees from the dictatorships in Chile and Uruguay:

“We began working with the Uruguayans. This is the way I entered. One day they phoned me and they told me: ‘Look! The World Council of Churches sent us 15 thousand dollars. Only 15 thousand dollars! So we need someone here who can manage the money because it is for the refugees, the Uruguayan refugees’.”³⁵

“For us, the Methodist Church, the defense of human rights began when the Chilean refugees started to come to Argentina, running away from Chile. [...] This commitment began for us in 1973. And it was an ecumenical commitment, too. It was a commitment of the Argentinian churches which were part of the World Council of Churches.”³⁶

The activity carried out by the Argentinian Commission for Refugees was the fundamental background for the Historical Protestant Churches to redefine their

³³Wynarczyk, *Ciudadanos de dos mundos. El Movimiento evangélico en la vida pública argentina 1980-2001*.

³⁴Andiñach, Bruno, *Iglesias Evangélicas y derechos humanos en la Argentina (1976-1998)*, 31.

³⁵Emilio Monti, Bishop of Argentinian Methodist Evangelical Church and President of FAIE (1996-2004), May 03, 2011.

³⁶Aldo Etchegoyen, Pastor and emeritus Bishop of the Argentinian Methodist Evangelical Church (1989-2001), President of the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, April 19, 2011.

identity in the battle for Human Rights:

“For the first time in their history, these churches suffered threats and direct attacks due to their socio-political commitment. (...) It was not a conflict with the authorities as a part of the struggle to maintain their religious identity. (...) Since that moment, a change in the ecumenical identity of the Historical Protestant Churches can be noticed. They do not meet just around religious or dogmatic definitions, but rather from an active commitment with the victims of Human Rights violations.”³⁷

At the end of 1975, on the eve of the military coup in Argentina, Protestant, Jew and Catholic leaders formed, along with politicians, labor leaders and artists, the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights (APDH)³⁸. The APDH and several Human Rights organizations used Methodist buildings as meeting points³⁹. They did so because they were some of the few institutions that lent their buildings and because they were relatively safe spaces for the refugees and for the relatives of the disappeared persons, against the threat of State repression. For example, the Methodist Church lent a temple for the “National Meeting for Human Rights”, organized by the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights in September, 1976⁴⁰. It also offered its buildings to Mothers of Plaza de Mayo so that they could meet there and received them in their seventh General Assembly in 1981⁴¹. At the same time, the Plenary Assembly of the Catholic Episcopate refused to receive them⁴². The Methodist Church’s institutional support was also crystallized in their official publications. For example, they reproduced an article written by the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights, which warned about the State repression and pointed out 1200 forced disappearances⁴³. Hence, the Historical Protestant Churches operated as a *condition of possibility* for the emergence and consolidation of the

³⁷Techera, *Entre la resistencia y la sumisión: el discurso de las iglesias protestantes frente a la realidad socio-política argentina (1955-1982)*, 241-42.

³⁸Míguez Bonino, “Presencia y ausencia protestante en la Argentina,” 83.

³⁹Andiñach, Bruno, *Iglesias Evangélicas y derechos humanos en la Argentina (1976-1998)*, 33.

⁴⁰El Estandarte Evangélico, 1976b: 4, quoted in Di Risio, “En el Cielo como en la Tierra” *Las iglesias protestantes y la última dictadura militar argentina*, 112.

⁴¹El Estandarte Evangélico, 1981d: 8, quoted in Di Risio, “En el Cielo como en la Tierra” *Las iglesias protestantes y la última dictadura militar argentina*, 129.

⁴²Novaro, Palermo, *La dictadura militar 1976-1983. Del golpe de estado a la restauración democrática*, 315.

⁴³El Estandarte Evangélico, 1978g: 11, quoted in Di Risio, “En el Cielo como en la Tierra” *Las iglesias protestantes y la última dictadura militar argentina*, 126-27.

Human Rights movement in Argentina, including non-religious organizations: “In the basement of another Methodist church, it was organized the movement which gave birth to both 'Mothers of Plaza de Mayo' and 'Relatives of the disappeared'.”⁴⁴.

The Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights (MEDH) was founded in February 1976. Several protestant churches participated in its creation, such as the Argentinian Methodist Evangelical Church, Evangelical Church of the River Plate, United Evangelical Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Church of the Disciples of Christ (IDC), the Waldensian Evangelical Church of the River Plate, the Reformed Churches from Argentina (IRA) and the Pentecostal Church of God. The Catholic Diocese of Quilmes, in Buenos Aires, and the ones from Viedma and Neuquén (in Patagonia) also participated in its creation⁴⁵.

Soon after the coup d'état, these churches contacted the military authorities to express their concern about the violence and the clandestine detentions. A number of Historical Protestant Churches signed a letter and sent it to the president imposed by the dictatorship, Jorge Rafael Videla⁴⁶. Then, in a meeting with many religious groups: “General Videla was informed of the concern about the high number of prisoners without a fair trial or accurate confirmation, (...) as well as about the lack of information provided to relatives of the detainees, who have no idea where they are”⁴⁷. In this context, both the Synod of the Evangelical Church of the River Plate and the General Assembly of the Argentinian Methodist Evangelical Church, their main spheres of government, spoke “in favor of life”. As Di Risio pointed out:

“In the statements of the Historical Protestant Churches, a specific way of linkage between the religious power and the political power, in relation to violations of human rights, will be defined. It will be an attempt to explain an objective situation (kidnappings and disappearances), and delegate the responsibility to the government, although in a non-confrontational style”⁴⁸.

⁴⁴Andiñach, Bruno, *Iglesias Evangélicas y derechos humanos en la Argentina (1976-1998)*, 35-36.

⁴⁵The web page of the Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights, accessed on April 28, 2013, <http://www.derechos.net/medh/>.

⁴⁶The Evangelical Church of the River Plate, the Evangelical Church of the Disciples of Christ, FAIE, the Reformed Churches from Argentina and the Argentinian Methodist Evangelical Church: 1976, quoted in Di Risio, “*En el Cielo como en la Tierra*” *Las iglesias protestantes y la última dictadura militar argentina*, 111.

⁴⁷El Estandarte Evangélico, 1976c: 1, quoted in Di Risio, “*En el Cielo como en la Tierra*” *Las iglesias protestantes y la última dictadura militar argentina*, 114.

⁴⁸Di Risio, “*En el Cielo como en la Tierra*” *Las iglesias protestantes y la última dictadura militar argentina*, 125.

Such a style was due to the fact that, in the first moment, the Historical Protestant Churches “did not have a position of full rejection to the military coup”⁴⁹. However, they supported actions in favor of human rights. Through their congregations and the Argentinian Commission for Refugees, the Permanent Assembly for Human Rights and the Ecumenical Movement for Human Rights, they helped prisoners, refugees and their families in legal, material, psychological and pastoral ways. In contrast to what happened in Chile and Brazil - where the Catholic Church led the complaints to the dictatorships⁵⁰-, in Argentina, the Historical Protestant Churches assumed the leadership of the ecumenical and interreligious space, since they were the only religious institutions that publicly positioned themselves in defense of Human Rights.

This highlights a fundamental difference with Catholicism⁵¹, in which just some individual figures positioned themselves against the government⁵². But they did so in personal terms rather than as representatives of the hierarchy of the Catholic Church, which supported the dictatorship⁵³. The efforts of the Protestant leaders to coordinate actions with the Catholic hierarchy were fruitless: their Advisory Council of Churches met with the Argentinian Episcopal Conference on July 17, 1979, but they did not obtain their collaboration⁵⁴.

⁴⁹Techera, *Entre la resistencia y la sumisión: el discurso de las iglesias protestantes frente a la realidad socio-política argentina (1955-1982)*, 261.

⁵⁰Scott Mainwaring, *The Catholic Church and Politics in Brazil, 1916-1985* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986); Carla Peñaloza Palma, *Memorias de la vida y la muerte. De la represión a la justicia en Chile, 1973-2010* (Diss. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2011).

⁵¹Also in relation to the Argentinian Judaism. The Rabbi Daniel Goldman of the Bet-El community says that: “Except for exceptional cases such as [Rabbi Marshall] Meyer, [Rabbi Robert] Graetz and the formation by certain individuals of the Jewish Movement for Human Rights, the Jewish leadership was far from playing an active defense of its members who were persecuted by the dictatorship” (“La colectividad judía debate su rol en la última dictadura militar”, *Clarín*, March 23, 2008).

⁵²Such as the lays Pérez Esquivel and Mignone, and the Bishops Novak, Hesayne and Nevares.

⁵³“It can not be said that some bishops, or, on some occasions, also the authorities of the Episcopate and the nuncio, have not made some complaints to the government [...] But the impression is that it was not enough in proportion to the size and the inhuman characteristics of the military repression. Maybe a clear, strong and public complaint of the Catholic Church could have induced the government, whose legitimacy was derived in large parts from his claim of being the guard of a 'Catholic country', to respect human lives. However, that complaint has never been pronounced in such terms” (Roberto Di Stefano, Loris Zanatta, *Historia de la Iglesia Argentina. Desde la conquista hasta fines del siglo XX* (Buenos Aires: Mondadori, 2000): 546.

⁵⁴Techera, *Entre la resistencia y la sumisión: el discurso de las iglesias protestantes frente a la realidad socio-política argentina (1955-1982)*, 326.

“The anti-military activism of some sectors of Protestantism had its price: disappeared people, deaths and exiled in a relatively high proportion”⁵⁵, considering the size of these churches. Repression was also directed to their buildings and the activities developed there: on September 6, 1975, a bomb exploded in the Methodist Church of Mendoza, headquarter of the Ecumenical Committee for Social Action. This institution used to work with the Chilean refugees, and it was the residence of Pastor Federico Pagura⁵⁶. On October 4, 1976, the First Methodist Church of Rosario, headquarter of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, was raided⁵⁷. On November 22, 1980, three bombs burned the library of the ISEDET, where Human Rights agencies were supposed to meet⁵⁸. The fact that the repression fell not only upon the members of these churches, but also upon their buildings, illustrates the importance acquired by the Historical Protestant Churches in denouncing the military regime.

THE SUPPORT FOR SAME-SEX MARRIAGE

The alliance between the Historical Protestant Churches and religious and non-religious actors was repeated to support the Same-Sex Marriage in 2010. It was crystallized in institutional statements, interventions in the parliamentary discussions and public events.

With the antecedent that two Protestant churches had declared themselves in favor of the Civil Union Act for same-sex couples in the City of Buenos Aires⁵⁹, the Argentinian Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Trans (FALGBT)⁶⁰ approached some religious groups to achieve their support for the marriage draft. Already with half parliamentary sanction, on May 16, 2010, a letter from the Methodist Bishop was published. In this document, although the Bishop clarifies

⁵⁵Míguez Bonino, “Presencia y ausencia protestante en la Argentina”, 85.

⁵⁶Di Risio, “*En el Cielo como en la Tierra*” *Las iglesias protestantes y la última dictadura militar argentina*, 103.

⁵⁷Andiñach, Bruno, *Iglesias Evangélicas y derechos humanos en la Argentina (1976-1998)*, 36.

⁵⁸Di Risio, “*En el Cielo como en la Tierra*” *Las iglesias protestantes y la última dictadura militar argentina*, 106.

⁵⁹The United Evangelical Lutheran Church (July 24, 2003). Diálogo abierto: Ley n° 1004 de Unión Civil del Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires. Comunicado de Prensa de IELU, accessed on July 15, 2014, <http://www.ielu.org/>; the Evangelical Church of the River Plate (July 25, 2003). “Por un país donde ‘quepan todos y todas’”. A raíz de la promulgación de la Ley de Unión Civil (Ley n° 1004) por el Gobierno de la CABA, accessed on July 15, 2014, http://www.iglesiaevangelica.org/men_hemosdicho.htm#civil.

⁶⁰The FALGBT was established in 2006 as a new national space of coordination between different groups of lesbians, gays, bisexuals and trans people. It led the demand for SSM in Argentina.

that “our church has not taken a position on the issue so far”, he differs from most of the religious institutions that have declared their total opposition to Same Sex Marriage:

“1. The Methodist Church has claimed that it is our duty to work to achieve a community where every human being has access to conditions that facilitate a truly human life. (...) 2. Therefore, our understanding of what affects human life will be marked by the respect and preservation of the dignity of all human beings. 3. We affirm that a democratic and pluralist state should be opened to hear the voices of everyone and make free decisions. (...) 6. The review of the Marriage Act challenges us as Christians to listen and understand before judging and condemning. Therefore we do not adhere, as a church, to any secular or religious campaign that reinforces discriminatory attitudes.”⁶¹.

On May 31, a statement in favor of the passing of the project was disclosed. The document was signed by the Presidents of two Protestant churches, the Evangelical Church of the River Plate and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, and it stated that:

“1. (...) Those who say that sexual orientation is a conditioning factor of the relationship between a person and God, for example by excluding homosexuals - for being such- from the love and grace of God, are committing a grave error. (...) 3. The marriage contract is an exclusively civil institution, which is attached to the changes and transformations of the historical and specific situation of the societies in which it was developed. (...) 4. We recognize to the State its legitimate power to legislate in order to ensure equal rights and responsibilities of all citizens. (...) In this sense we appreciate any initiative to repair situations of injustice and discrimination suffered by minorities in our society. (...) This is the case of the bill on the institution of marriage between persons of the same sex that is being debated in the Argentinian Parliament.”⁶².

⁶¹Argentinian Methodist Evangelical Church (May 16, 2010) Declaración sobre la Ley de Matrimonios. Carta del Obispo de la IEMA Frank De Nully Brown, accessed on July 15, 2014, http://www.iglesiametodista.org.ar/texto_completo.shtml?x=58126.

⁶²The Evangelical Church of the River Plate and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church (2010). Declaración de las Iglesias: Evangélica del Río de la Plata (IERP) y Evangélica

As it had happened during the dictatorship, Protestant churches were a basis for this social movement. During the discussion about the Same Sex Marriage, Methodist temples served as spaces for the coordination between the Protestants and the movement for sexual diversity. This means that a form of participation of these churches in both processes was to make their buildings available for meetings with social movements in defense of and/or for the expansion of rights. On May 29, 2010, there was a meeting between the leaders of the Argentinian Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Trans and several Protestant churches in the Methodist Church of Flores (Buenos Aires)⁶³. On June 16, an interreligious public act was carried out in the same temple. In this event, the authorities of the Argentinian Methodist Evangelical Church, the Evangelical Church of the River Plate and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church, together with the referents of other Protestant churches and different religious cults, spoke in favor of the project⁶⁴. Similarly, Protestant leaders participated in the TV spot “Faith says ‘yes’ to equality”⁶⁵ and the Argentinian Methodist Evangelical Church and the United Evangelical Lutheran Church representatives attempted to express their opinions at the Committee on General Legislation of the Senate, on June 28, but they were denied by its President, Senator Liliana Negre de Alonso (allied to the Opus Dei)⁶⁶. Both the public event and the spot reflected the interreligious institutional cooperation intended to influence the public opinion and legislators in favor of this demand.

From Catholicism, the most important voices in favor of the project were two groups of priests, dissidents in relation to the institutional hierarchy⁶⁷, while

Luterana Unida (IELU), accessed on July 15, 2014, http://www.iglesiaevangelica.org/men_hemosdicho.html.

⁶³Roberto González, Secretary of religious diversity of the Argentinian Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Trans, May 08, 2011.

⁶⁴“La Fe a Favor del Matrimonio de Parejas del Mismo Sexo”, *Prensa Ecuémica* June 21, 2010; “Apoyo de pastores, sacerdotes católicos y rabinos al matrimonio homosexual,” *Pulso Cristiano* June 17, 2010.

⁶⁵The TV spot is available at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hK2ns7TmImc>, accessed on July 15, 2014.

⁶⁶“Acto de censura y discriminación”, *Página 12*, July 01, 2010,.

⁶⁷Two groups of priests declared themselves in favor of the project: one from the province of Córdoba and another that belongs to the Diocese of Quilmes in Buenos Aires (See Grupo Sacerdotal Enrique Angelelli de Córdoba (May 19, 2010). Aporte al debate sobre modificaciones a la ley de matrimonio civil, <http://elcentroglttb.blogspot.com/2010/05/grupo-de-sacerdotes-enrique-angelelli.html>, accessed on July 15, 2014; and Presbítero Ignacio Blanco, Marcelo Ciaramella, Eduardo De La Serna, Preguntas que nos surgen en la situación actual, *Página 12*, July 9, 2010, accessed on July 9, 2010, www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/sociedad/3-149180-2010-07-09.html.

only two rabbis from Judaism publically supported it⁶⁸. In other words, in these religious traditions, there were no institutions (either diocese or community) that issued the approval of the Same Sex Marriage act, but only isolated groups or referents. In the evangelical world, on the other hand, there were a number of official institutional positions, both for and against the project. This was partly the consequence of the fact that, unlike Catholicism, “the tradition of dissent of the Puritan ethic always implied the existence of different views of the world, which are crystallized in the fragmentation of denominations”⁶⁹.

As in the defense of Human Rights during the dictatorship, we observe a Protestant leadership of the interreligious alliance in favor of this cause. On the one hand, as regards the religious actors, the only churches which declared themselves in favor of the Same Sex Marriage were the Historical Protestant ones (the Evangelical Church of the River Plate, the United Evangelical Lutheran Church and the Argentinian Methodist Evangelical Church). On the other hand, the Protestant leadership of the progressive religious space was recognized by the movement of sexual diversity, which invited them to participate in a first meeting to seek their political support. This leadership was validated by these churches by lending their temples for public events and by sending representatives to the Committee on General Legislation, in order to accompany the project.

Once the Same Sex Marriage project passed, Protestant participation was recognized by the movement of sexual diversity and State agencies. On December 16, 2010, the Secretariat of Religious Diversity of the Argentinian Federation of Lesbians, Gays, Bisexuals and Trans organized a gratitude ceremony for the authorities of the Historical Protestant Churches and requested their support for the Gender Identity bill⁷⁰. On September 8, 2011, a celebration for the 175 years of Methodism in Argentina was organized by the Secretariat of Cults of the Nation,

⁶⁸Two rabbis from the Bet El community, the Conservative movement of the Argentinian Judaism, declared themselves in favor of the project: Daniel Goldman did so at the Committee on General Legislation of the Senate (June 28, 2010) while Silvina Chemen expressed her support for the project during the interreligious act (June 16, 2010) and in the spot “Faith says ‘yes’ to equality”. The legitimacy of their position was based on their intention “to reclaim a tradition of fighting for the rights of gays, framed in a broader struggle for human rights” (Damián Setton, Vanesa Lerner, “La problemática LGBT en el Movimiento Conservador Judío,” in *VII Jornadas de Ciencias Sociales y Religión. Modernidad, secularización y religiones en Argentina* (Buenos Aires, 2012)), that was preceded by the actions of Rabbi Marshall Meyer during the military dictatorship.

⁶⁹Angela Paiva, Católico, protestante, cidadão: una comparação entre Brasil e Estados Unidos (Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG, 2003): 218.

⁷⁰Centro Cristiano de la Comunidad GLTTB, Matrimonio Igualitario y apoyo religioso en Argentina, March 23, 2011, accessed on July 15, 2014, <http://elcentroglttb.blogspot.mx/2011/03/matrimonio-igualitario-y-apoyo.html>.

with national authorities, representatives of different cults⁷¹ and representatives of the Human Rights movement. During the ceremony, the Methodist Church was recognized for its interventions in the country's public life, and a commemorative video highlighted its defense of Human Rights during the dictatorship and its support for the SSM act. On May, 2012, the state recognized this church by inviting its bishop, Frank De Nully Brown, to participate in a public policy project on religious diversity and beliefs⁷².

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

The aim of the article was to analytically reconstruct the positions and modalities of political participation of the religious actors, a phenomenon that has been slightly discussed in the literature on religion and politics in Argentina. In order to do so, we compared two processes in which the Historical Protestant Churches took part: the defense of Human Rights against the violations perpetrated by the state during the military dictatorship, between 1976 and 1983; and the support for the Same Sex Marriage act, in 2010. We focused on the performance of these churches, because they took an alternative position to most religious actors in Argentina - including the Catholic Church - and because they led the ecumenical and interreligious spaces that supported these causes.

The performances of the Historical Protestant Churches in both processes shared two main characteristics. First, there was an official ecclesiastical position to support these causes through public statements and activities of the government bodies of these churches and of their leaders. Second, these Protestant churches constructed alliances with other religious and non-religious actors, to defend and promote the rights of the persecuted or politically marginalized groups. In this context, we observe a Protestant leadership of the interreligious and ecumenical actions in favor of these demands.

Since the '70s, leaders and institutions related to the Historical Protestantism joined figures of other faiths and political and union leaders, forming a movement to denounce violations of Human Rights committed by the dictatorship. This involvement was recognized by the recently restored democracy in 1983: the President Raúl Alfonsín appointed the emeritus Methodist Bishop Carlos Gattinoni as a member of the National Commission on the Disappearance of Persons (CONADEP) (along with the Catholic Bishop Jaime Nevares and the Jewish Rabbi Marshall Meyer). The position taken by the leaders and the

⁷¹"Homenaje oficial por los 175 años metodistas en la Argentina", *Pulso Cristiano* September 15, 2011.

⁷²INADI (May 16, 2012), Proyecto Diversidad Religiosa y Creencias, <http://inadi.gob.ar/2012/05/diversidad-religiosa-y-creencias/>, accessed on July 15, 2014.

institutions of the Historical Protestantism during the dictatorship and the transition to democracy (in Human Rights organizations) led them to be publicly considered as referents and/or potential allies in the struggle for the rights of persecuted or politically marginalized groups.

The political articulation of the Historical Protestant Churches with religious and non-religious actors was repeated in the discussion on Same Sex Marriage in 2010. The progressive image of these churches (due to their defense of Human Rights) made the movement of sexual diversity propose them an alliance (an unthinkable proposal for other religious institutions). At the same time, the public commitment of the Historical Protestant Churches with this law resulted in a closer relationship between their leaders and the civil society, since it broke down several prejudices about what can be expected of these churches in the debates on sexuality, family and rights⁷³. As what happened with the defense of Human Rights, these Protestant churches led the religious mobilization in favor of Same Sex Marriage. They did so through institutional statements (unlike other credos, where only isolated figures or dissident groups declared themselves in favor of the law) and by providing spaces for public activities and/or policy coordination.

The recognition by the social movements and by the state agencies has increased the visibility of these religious actors in the public sphere and the legitimacy of its political interventions. Without overestimating the influence of the Historical Protestant Churches in Argentina, we believe it is pertinent to point out their roles in the processes described, because in recent decades they have positioned themselves as authorized voices in the political spectrum in favor of the recognition of Human Rights. This place must be considered when analyzing other discussions in Argentina, such as the legalization of abortion.

REFERENCES

Algranti, Joaquín. *Política y Religión en los márgenes. Nuevas formas de participación social de las mega-iglesias evangélicas en la Argentina*. Buenos Aires: Ediciones Ciccus, 2010.

Andiñach, Pablo and Daniel Bruno. *Iglesias Evangélicas y derechos humanos en la Argentina (1976-1998)*. Buenos Aires: La Aurora, 2001.

Benítez, Diedo and César Mónaco. "La dictadura militar, 1976-1983". Comp. Gabriel Kessler and Mariana Luzzi. *Problemas socioeconómicos contemporáneos*. Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional General Sarmiento, 2007.

Bianchi, Susana. *Historia de las religiones en la Argentina: Las minorías religiosas*. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2004.

⁷³Alan Eldrid, Pastor and President of the United Evangelical Lutheran Church (2004-2011), April 26, 2011.

Carbonelli, Marcos. *Mediaciones con lo político. Análisis de la participación de actores evangélicos en partidos políticos en el AMBA*. Diss. Buenos Aires: Universidad Nacional de San Martín, 2011.

Corrales, Javier and Mario Pecheny. "Six Reasons Why Argentina Legalized Gay Marriage First." *Quarterly Americas* (2010). Available at: <http://americasquarterly.org/node/1753>.

Deiros, Pablo. *Historia del cristianismo en América Latina*. Texas: Fraternidad Teológica Latinoamericana, 1982.

Di Risio, Mónica. "En el Cielo como en la Tierra." *Las iglesias protestantes y la última dictadura militar argentina*. Diss. Buenos Aires: Universidad de Buenos Aires, 2011.

Di Stefano, Roberto and Loris Zanatta. *Historia de la Iglesia Argentina. Desde la conquista hasta fines del siglo XX*. Buenos Aires: Mondadori, 2000.

Donatello, Luis. "Sobre algunos conceptos para comprender las relaciones entre religión y guerrilla en la Argentina de los '60 y '70." *Nuevo Mundo, Mundos Nuevos* (2008). Available at: <http://nuevomundo.revues.org/index38972.html>.

Dri, Rubén. *Teología y Dominación*. Buenos Aires: Biblos, 1987.

Esquivel, Juan. "Iglesia Católica, política y sociedad: un estudio de las relaciones entre la elite eclesiástica argentina, el Estado y la sociedad en perspectiva histórica." *Informe final del concurso: Democracia, derechos sociales y equidad; y Estado, política y conflictos sociales*. Buenos Aires: Programa Regional de Becas CLACSO Programa Regional de Becas CLACSO, 2000. Available at: <http://biblioteca.clacso.edu.ar/subida/uploads/FTP-test/clacso/becas/uploads/20110112035544/esquivel.pdf>.

Felitti, Karina. "Estrategias de comunicación del activismo católico conservador frente al aborto y el matrimonio igualitario en la Argentina." *Sociedad y Religión. Sociología, Antropología e Historia de la Religión en el Cono Sur* 21 (2011): 92-122.

Forni, Floreal, Fortunato Mallimaci and Luis Cárdenas. *Guía de la diversidad religiosa de Buenos Aires*. Buenos Aires: Biblos, 2003.

Hiller, Renata. "Matrimonio igualitario y espacio público en Argentina." Coord. Laura Clérico and Martín Aldao. *Matrimonio igualitario en la Argentina: perspectivas sociales, políticas y jurídicas*. Buenos Aires: Eudeba, 2010.

Hirschl, Ran. "The Judicialization of Politics." Eds. Gregory Caldeira, Daniel Kelemen and Keith Whittington. *Oxford Handbook of Law and Politics*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2008.

Jones, Daniel, Ana Laura Azparren and Luciana Polischuk. "Evangélicos, sexualidad y política: las instituciones evangélicas en los debates públicos sobre Unión Civil y Educación Sexual en la Ciudad Autónoma de Buenos Aires (2003-2004)." Comp. Juan Vaggione. *El activismo religioso conservador en Latinoamérica*. Córdoba: Ferreyra Editor, 2010.

Jones, Daniel and Marcos Carbonelli. "Evangélicos y derechos sexuales y

reproductivos: actores y lógicas políticas en la Argentina contemporánea.” *Ciências Sociais Unisinos* 48 (2012): 225-34.

Jones, Daniel and Juan Vaggione. “Los vínculos entre religión y política a la luz del debate sobre matrimonio para parejas del mismo sexo en Argentina.” *Civitas* 12 (2012): 522-37.

Jones, Daniel, Ana Laura Azparren and Santiago Cunial. “Derechos reproductivos y actores religiosos: los evangélicos frente al debate sobre la despenalización del aborto en la Argentina contemporánea (1994-2011).” *Espacio Abierto. Cuaderno Venezolano de Sociología* 22 (2013): 110-33.

Mainwaring, Scott. *The Catholic Church and Politics in Brazil, 1916-1985*. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1986.

Mallimaci, Fortunato. “La dictadura argentina: terrorismo de estado e imaginario de la muerte.” Coord. Fernando Moreno. *La memoria de la dictadura. ‘Nocturno de Chile’, Roberto Bolaño. ‘Interrupciones’, Juan Gelman*. París: Ellipses Edition, 2006.

Mallimaci, Fortunato and Verónica Giménez Béliveau. “Creencia e increencia en el Cono Sur de América. Entre la religiosidad difusa, la pluralización del campo religioso y las relaciones con lo público y lo político.” *Revista Argentina de Sociología* 9 (2007): 44-63.

Mallimaci, Fortunato, Juan Esquivel and Mariela Irrazábal. *Primera encuesta nacional sobre Creencias y Actitudes religiosas. Informe de Investigación*. Buenos Aires: CEIL-PIETTE/CONICET, 2008. Available at: www.ceil-piette.gob.ar/areasinv/religion/relproy/encuesta1.pdf.

Marostica, Matthew. *Pentecostal and politics: the creation of the Evangelical Christian Movement in Argentina, 1983-1993*. Diss. Berkeley: University of California, 1997.

Mignone, Emilio. *Iglesia y Dictadura*. Buenos Aires: La Página, 1999.

Míguez Bonino, José. “Presencia y ausencia protestante en la Argentina del proceso militar 1976-1983.” *Cristianismo y Sociedad* 83 (1985): 81-85.

---. *Rostros del protestantismo latinoamericano*. Buenos Aires: Nueva Creación, 1995.

Novaro, Marcos and Vicente Palermo. *La dictadura militar 1976-1983. Del golpe de estado a la restauración democrática*. Buenos Aires: Paidós, 2003.

Paiva, Angela. *Católico, protestante, cidadão: uma comparação entre Brasil e Estados Unidos*. Belo Horizonte: Editora UFMG, 2003.

Peñaloza Palma, Carla. *Memorias de la vida y la muerte. De la represión a la justicia en Chile, 1973-2010*. Diss. Barcelona: Universitat de Barcelona, 2011.

Pew Research Centre. *The global religious landscape. A report on the size and distribution of the world's major religious groups as of 2010*. Washington: Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, 2012. Available at: <http://www.pewforum.org/files/2014/01/global-religion-full.pdf>.

Quiroga, Horacio. *El tiempo del "proceso". Conflictos y coincidencias entre civiles y militares 1976-1983*. Rosario: Homo Sapiens Ediciones - Editorial Fundación Ross, 2004.

Roldán, Alberto. "Comprensión de la realidad social en el discurso teológico de los hermanos libres en la Argentina (1882-1955)." *Cuadernos de Teología* 15 (1996): 23-53.

Semán, Pablo. "El Pentecostalismo y la religiosidad de los sectores populares." Comp. Maristella Svampa. *Desde Abajo. La transformación de las identidades sociales*. Buenos Aires: Biblos-Universidad Nacional General Sarmiento, 2000.

Setton, Damián and Vanesa Lerner. "La problemática LGBT en el Movimiento Conservador Judío." *VII Jornadas de Ciencias Sociales y Religión. Modernidad, secularización y religiones en Argentina*. Buenos Aires, 2012.

Techera, Walter. *Entre la resistencia y la sumisión: el discurso de las iglesias protestantes frente a la realidad socio-política argentina (1955-1982)*. Diss. Buenos Aires: ISEDET, 1995.

Vaggione, Juan. "Sexual rights and religion: same-sex marriage and lawmakers' catholic identity in Argentina." *University of Miami Law Review* 65 (2011): 935-54.

Verbitsky, Horacio. *Doble juego: la Argentina católica y militar*. Buenos Aires: Sudamericana, 2006.

Wynarczyk, Hilario. *Ciudadanos de dos mundos. El Movimiento evangélico en la vida pública argentina 1980-2001*. San Martín: UNSAM EDITA, 2009.

---. *Sal y luz a las naciones. Evangélicos y política en la Argentina (1980-2001)*. Buenos Aires: Siglo XXI, 2010.

Documental sources

Centro Cristiano de la Comunidad GLTTB (March 23, 2011). *Matrimonio Igualitario y apoyo religioso en Argentina*. Available at: <http://elcentroglttb.blogspot.mx/2011/03/matrimonio-igualitario-y-apoyo.html>.

GRUPO SACERDOTAL ENRIQUE ANGELELLI de Córdoba (May 19, 2010). *Aporte al debate sobre modificaciones a la ley de matrimonio civil*. Available at: <http://elcentroglttb.blogspot.com/2010/05/grupo-de-sacerdotes-enrique-angelelli.html>.

IELU (July 24, 2003). *Diálogo abierto: Ley n° 1004 de Unión Civil del Gobierno de la Ciudad de Buenos Aires*. Comunicado de Prensa de IELU. Available at: <http://www.ielu.org/>.

IEMA (May 16, 2010) *Declaración sobre la Ley de Matrimonios*. Carta del Obispo de la IEMA Frank De Nully Brown. Available at: http://www.iglesiametodista.org.ar/texto_completo.shtml?x=58126.

IERP (July 25, 2003). "Por un país donde 'quepan todos y todas'". A raíz de la promulgación de la Ley de Unión Civil (Ley n° 1004) por el Gobierno de la CABA. Available at: http://www.iglesiaevangelica.org/men_hemosdicho.htm#civil.

IERP and IELU (2010). Declaración de las Iglesias: Evangélica del Río de la Plata (IERP) y Evangélica Luterana Unida (IELU). Available at: http://www.iglesiaevangelica.org/men_hemosdicho.html.

INADI (May 16, 2012). Proyecto Diversidad Religiosa y Creencias. Available at: <http://inadi.gob.ar/2012/05/diversidad-religiosa-y-creencias/>.

Presbítero Ignacio Blanco, Marcelo Ciaramella, Eduardo De La Serna (July 9, 2010). Preguntas que nos surgen en la situación actual. Available at: www.pagina12.com.ar/diario/sociedad/3-149180-2010-07-09.html.

Newspaper articles:

Clarín. March 23, 2008. “La colectividad judía debate su rol en la última dictadura militar”.

Clarín. August 11, 2009. “La Marcha del Orgullo Gay, una fiesta con fuerte reclamo”.

La Nación. July 14, 2010. “Fuerte rechazo frente al Congreso”.

Página 12. November 16, 2009. “Alex y José pusieron fecha”.

Página 12. July 01, 2010. “Acto de censura y discriminación”.

Página 12. July 02, 2012. “El adiós al pastor Miguez Bonino”.

Prensa Ecuémica. June 21, 2010. “La Fe a Favor del Matrimonio de Parejas del Mismo Sexo”.

Pulso Cristiano. June 17, 2010. “Apoyo de pastores, sacerdotes católicos y rabinos al matrimonio homosexual”.

Pulso Cristiano. September 15, 2011. “Homenaje oficial por los 175 años metodistas en la Argentina”.

Web pages:

MEDH web page. April 28, 2013. <http://www.derechos.net/medh/>.

Interviews:

Alan Eldrid. Pastor and President of IELU (2004-2011). April 26, 2011.

Aldo Etchegoyen. Pastor and emeritus Bishop of IEMA (1989-2001); President of APDH. April 19, 2011.

Emilio Monti. Bishop of IEMA and President of FAIE (1996-2004). May 03, 2011.

Roberto González. Secretary of religious diversity of FALGBT. May 08, 2011.