Article

Transnational and Translational Aspects of Global Christian Congregational Musicking

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Abstract: What happens to a worship song as it crosses geographical, cultural, and theological borders? How does this reallocation modify the role a song performs—and is performed—in context? This essay examines how religious songs that flow along transnational networks are transformed in the process of localization. It focuses particularly on how translation, conceived of broadly to encompass verbal and non-verbal aspects, happens within these processes. I argue that, while lyric translation remains a core component of these phenomena, it is but one of the multiple processes of localization that occur when a song travels. Throughout such processes, theology is (re)interpreted and songs are performed differently even as local congregations perceive their engagement with these repertoires as a type of connection to broader worshiping networks. Towards this end, it follows “Mighty to Save”, an Australian worship song, on its transnational path to re-localization within the context of Brazilian *gospel*. Analyses of the lyrical and musical translations and transformations the song is subjected to can shed further light upon the complex dynamic of transnational flows of religious repertoires in today’s interconnected world.

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1. Introduction

The year is 2015. I am leading worship at the Encontro Jovem Nacional, an event that has gathered about 2500 Lutheran youth in Joinville, in the southern state of Santa Catarina, Brazil. All participants have converged to a sports gymnasium for an evening of song and preaching. Backstage in the green room, we go through the setlist and check our gear. After a word of prayer, we make our way to the stage, grab our instruments, and launch into a rendition of “Poder pra salvar”, a Portuguese translation of the Hillsong hit “Mighty to Save”. Without hesitation, the youth pick up the song and quickly overwhelm the band; “Poder pra salvar” is a current favorite in youth gatherings throughout the Lutheran world, and most attendees are familiar not only with one or more of the Brazilian versions, but with the English-language original as well.

Along with two other worship leaders, I had been preparing for this event for well over a year. Before rehearsing, we spent a significant amount of time curating the conference repertoire and carefully revising Portuguese translations of worship songs from abroad, which are sometimes clunky either in content or poetry. As we revised the lyrics and re-translated a significant portion of our repertoire, certain questions kept resurfacing. What happens to a worship song as it crosses geographical, cultural, and theological borders? How does this reallocation modify the role a song performs—and is performed—in context? Or, as Helen Julia Minors (2014, p. xx) asks in the introduction to *Music, Text and Translation*, “how is music affected by text translation? And how does music influence the translation of the text it sets?”.

The information revolution of the twentieth century, further exacerbated by the increased digital mediation elicited by the COVID-19 pandemic, make such questions as relevant today as they have ever been. Mediated exchanges of religious musical artifacts have intensified across the globe to the point where we can often take for granted “the interconnectedness of music, media and Christianity” (Nekola and Wagner 2015, p. 1). At this intersection between music, media, and Christianity, two interrelated aspects related to the global flow of worship repertoires stand out: those of transnationalization and translation.

In this essay, I seek to examine how songs that flow along transnational networks are transformed in the process. I examine the underlying dynamics of transnational adaptations of contemporary worship music, asking what these transformations elicit for those engaging in congregational music-making, which Ingalls et al. (2018, p. 15) define as “a multidimensional social activity encompassing a wide range of materials to interpret, including creative practices, social practices, social processes, institutional dynamics, beliefs, and values, and elements of material culture”. Recent scholarship has shed light upon these transformations in broad terms. Ingalls et al. (2018, p. 4), for instance, revisit the terminology used to describe “how Christian beliefs and practices are generated, circulate, and become embodied in diverse Christian communities”; terms such as inculturation, indigenization, and others. Here, I use the term “transformations” to indicate in general terms the dynamics of “musical localization” that they offer as a descriptor that encompasses both the “changing circumstances and shifting relationships between various groups and their Others [that] are themselves constants of all cultural life” (Ingalls et al. 2018, p. 14).

My goal is to provide, in a sense, a closer look “under the hood” of these processes whereby songs are transmitted, transplanted, adapted, and otherwise modified as they flow from context to context. While lyric translation remains a core component of these phenomena, it is but one of the multiple processes of localization that occur when a song travels. Other texts are bundled into songs: style, performance aspects, musical rearrangements, genre considerations (both in terms of market and identity), and mediation. As a consequence of the shifts that such aspects undergo along transnational networks, theology is (re)interpreted and performed differently in the context of music localization, as well as the terms in which local congregations perceive their engagement with these repertoires as a type of connection to broader worshiping networks.

My discussion focuses particularly on how notions of translation populate transnational flows. I rely here on Lucile Desblache’s work at the intersection of musicology and translation theory. For Desblache, while for most people “translation involves some linguistic transfer”, it also involves “cultural transformation, political mediation or other content transposition—from one genre into another for instance” (Desblache 2019, p. 67). Desblache’s investigation is not focused on religious musicking, but can undergird our discussion of translation, particularly because of its hospitality to other aspects and texts of religious musicking that, while foundational to music making as an activity, remain underexamined, especially from the theological perspective.

If translation involves both transfer and transformation, it is both a notion and a process. While translators frequently strive under expectations of clarity and preservation of content from one language to another, the idea of a translator as a neutral mediator enabling a pure transmission of content has long been debunked. As Willis Barnstone (1993, p. 3) writes in the introduction to *The Poetics of Translation: History, Theory, Practice*, the act of translation is another Babel: “the eye glances back an instant, uncertain, through time’s distorting glass and then glares ahead, in a new distorting mirror, to see the ever-changing places where new Babels will temporarily be reconstructed”. For Barnstone, translation is an exercise in transformation, and one should acknowledge it as such. This re-examination of notions of translation is especially important in the case of music, according to Desblache: “the fluidity of translation as a notion is particularly necessary in relation to music, and relates to two notions which differ but do not conflict with each other: transfer, which allows existing content to move; and transformation, which brings forth linguistic, cultural,

sensorial, aesthetic, and/or social changes” (Desblache 2019, p. 71). In other words, while some transfer of sense and content does occur, transformations (whether intended or not) also do.

I will examine these dynamics in one example, following a song as it travels along a particular transnational stream from Australia to Brazil: “Mighty to Save” (Hillsong Music 2006), released by the well-known Christian worship powerhouse Hillsong Australia. The song has been performed by various artists in Brazil, and different versions present unique variations that have arisen as Brazilian *evangélicos* incorporate it into their own worship cultures.¹ My comparison of these versions to the original and to each other, based on this broad concept of translation, are followed by considerations on how the particular transformations seen in this case help shed light upon the dynamics of translation and transnationalization of worship repertoires. Let me clarify from the outset that this essay is as much about transnationalization and translation as it is about any particular song. Thus, before proceeding with an analysis of “Mighty to Save” and its Brazilian versions, we must establish the connection between the texts of congregational song, transnationalization, and the role of translation (again, broadly speaking) within this phenomenon.

2. Texts, Transnationalization and Translation in Global Christian Music

Much of Christian theology’s study of the music of the church has focused on words. But there is more to a song (whether religious or not) than the lyrics.² It is a composite, a tapestry of interwoven strands of lyrical content, stylistic choices, and performative aspects (among other texts). Furthermore, texts are more than words; they are discursive protagonists in the construction of meaning, anything that can be read. They are found beyond the lyrics in melody, arrangement elements, musical texture, delivery and vocality, gestures, and other elements interwoven in performance. Or, as Desblache (2019, p. 65) says, “musical texts generally comprise musical elements, such as notes, chord annotations, music transcription, and performed music and non-musical elements (verbal and visual content as well as performative content linked to the way a piece is played, sung, and/or produced)”. Further—and it is important to acknowledge this—the distinction between text and context is diffuse, and the categorization of certain aspects of congregational musicking as *text* or as *context* is, in itself, a decision that reflects on the values of a researcher.

In order to understand how songs change, we must be able to analyze them both musically and theologically as these many texts combine and interact. Mark Parsons (2005, p. 54) argues that “part of the reason for [different approaches in analysis] is the manifold nature of song itself. It is not a monolithic form, but a composite of aspects consisting of text, tone and context”. Parsons reviews various models for the analysis of songs, but concludes that “there will continue to be ambiguity concerning music and its theological significance until theology finds a way to reconcile these approaches” (Parsons 2005, p. 54). Parson’s mention of text, tone, and context resonates with Desblache’s previous description and with Simon Frith’s terminology of words, rhetoric, and voices:

In listening to the lyrics of pop songs we actually hear three things at once: *words*, which appear to give songs and independent source of semantic meaning; *rhetoric*, words being used in a special, musical way, a way which draws attention to features and problems of speech; and *voices*, words being spoken or sung in human tones which are themselves ‘meaningful’, signs of persons and personality. (Frith 1996, p. 159)

From the perspectives of Parsons and Frith, even lyrical analysis itself cannot rely solely on words. Frith recognizes that “once we grasp that the issue in lyrical analysis is not words, but words in performance, then various new analytical possibilities open up” (Frith 1996, p. 166). Moreover, current scholarship pursues the analytical possibilities of sung music beyond the lyrics and into the social realm. As Nina Sun Eidsheim argues, “the broader phenomena of voice, vocal timbre, and timbre are not knowable entities but processes”. Therefore, perceiving vocal timbre entails “dealing with slices of a thick event—a multitude of intermingling phenomena set within a complex dynamic of power and defer-

ral over who gets to assign the meaning that ultimately affects the very medium it seeks to define" (Eidsheim 2019, p. 10). While we will not deal with power dynamics or many of these broader social implications here, it becomes clear that, if performance is a reality in congregational music making, lyrics, style, and other aspects of musicking are bundled into an activity that encompasses but also extends beyond the musical artifact itself.

Furthermore, certain phenomenological dynamics beyond the texts of song itself shape the way participants experience music in context. Elizabeth Margulis, in her examination of musical repetition, describes an affordance to "think along with the music" (Margulis 2013, p. 144), which I combine with Edwin Gordon's concept of audiation as a descriptor of the ability to function musically within the comprehension of musical meaning (Gordon 2007, p. 4). By combining Margulis' description with Gordon's concept, I converge upon the idea of theologization, defining it as a "process whereby congregants weave musical, lyrical, aural, and other texts into webs of meaning through the performance of church music". From this perspective, theologization "is not passive reception; it is conversational interaction with the texts of church music" (Silva Steuernagel 2021b, p. 68). If this is the case, how does theologization occur in the context of music localization across transnationalized networks? Is a worshiper in Brazil, singing a translated version of "Mighty to Save", sharing a theological performance with an Australian churchgoer at Hillsong headquarters? Before answering that question (and a few others), we must examine in more detail the phenomenon of transnationalization itself.

Transnationalization, along with other processes of cultural flow and interaction described by terms such as acculturation and indigenization, has received significant attention throughout the humanities. Ethnomusicologists, anthropologists, liturgical scholars, media scholars, and cultural studies scholars have become increasingly interested in how the cross-fertilization of religious musical repertoires has developed, especially within the context of global networks brought about by the information revolution (Chupungco 2016; Harkness 2014; Ingalls 2016; Johnson 2005; Perkins 2015; Wagner 2014).³ The issue is further complicated by the question of mediation, particularly digital mediation; Wagner and Nekola are among the scholars who have taken the issue of mediation into account (Nekola and Wagner 2015).

Through the ebb and flow of migrations, diasporas, and other events that transplant people and cultural artifacts from place to place, and considering the waves of missionary efforts ingrained in the history of Western Christianity, it seems only natural to look at the issue of how bodies of Christian song proliferate, are adapted and appropriated, and become localized. In relation to religious practices, transnationalization can be defined as a process of de- and re-territorialization aided by the production of origin discourses that afford the re-anchoring of what was deterritorialized in new spaces that may be real or symbolic (Capone 2004, p. 11). Manéli Faramahnd argues that the phenomenon implies a dynamic of deterritorialization and reterritorialization, "and the relationships of governance that cross 'the transnational social field' and its networks of actors" (Farahmand 2016, p. 10). Further, according to Thomas Csordas, this process of transnationalization generates "modalities of religious intersubjectivity that are both experientially compelling and transcend cultural borders and boundaries (while in some cases forging new ones)" (Csordas 2009, p. 1). These modalities are experientially compelling and cross borders because inasmuch as "traversing boundaries is an aspiration to the universal, intersubjectivity is an aspiration to the sacred" (Farahmand 2016, p. 10).

Within the dynamics described by Faramahnd, Csordas, and Capone, transnationalized worship songs are compelling precisely because of these aspirations to the universal and to the sacred; they serve as windows into an imagined (and universal) community of faith that, by sharing in the performance of the song, sings and imagines their way into heaven together. I offer that this is true in the case of the Hillsong project discussed here, which seeks to "practically shape the lives of people in communities around the world" (Hillsong Church n.d.). Roberta King describes the interconnected repertoires that arise from these movements as a Global Christian Music (GCM) which would encompass "any

music found in the Christian Church worldwide" (King 2006, p. 6). Although her discussion focuses primarily on the incorporation of traditional musical elements from around the world into new contexts of worship (most of her examples come from the Global South), King's terminology of GCM can include songs that travel across borders and become part of transnationalized repertoires shared across denominational and geographical lines.

The question that surfaces then is if, in the process of transnationalization of musical repertoire, these projected aspirations to shared intersubjectivities and the universal are preserved (and if so, to what extent), especially in regards to the way translation modifies the kind of theologization that is actuated in the performance itself. As a song is reconfigured and recontextualized, what remains of the originally stated congregational and theological project of its creators? Overall, how do these texts and the context into which they are translated and performed shape the experience, interpretation and construction of meaning in re-localized contexts?

As I mentioned before, my operating concept of translation in this essay is broad and acknowledges texts other than the lyrics. In fact, in the case of music, acknowledging these other texts is an essential part of a wholistic investigation of how songs perform and are performed in context. For Desblache (2019, p. 4), "verbal and rational expressions can and often are complemented by other forms of communication". Drawing from the work of Edouard Glissant, she points to what he calls the "opacity" of non-verbal forms of expression "that frequently defy logic" and are therefore "not tied to one point of view" (Desblache 2019, p. 5). While Western Christianity and its theology—strongly primed towards the attraction of orthodoxies and the apparent clarity of the word—may become uneasy in the presence of such opacity, it nevertheless persists and thrives in Christian congregational musicking, because music is an "art of transformation and communication" that "draws its creative dynamism from tensions between imitation and innovative interpretation or mutation" (Desblache 2019, p. 6). Here, an inherent characteristic of any song form comes to light: that of being a function not exclusively of sound or lyric, but as a composite of both that (in the best cases) becomes something more than the sum of its parts. If that is so, the analysis of a song must factor for the interaction between the parts. From this perspective, acknowledging the opacity inherent to music, which defies the alluring temptation of supposed purity and clarity in translation, frees us to consider the complexity of the task at hand. Once accepted, this premise opens up myriad possibilities. Desblache argues:

Once the premise that music translation goes beyond the transfer of lyrics and words relating to music is accepted, the breadth of ways in which music can and is translated is astounding: a composer can mediate a waltz for the twenty-first century, a musicologist transcribe a medieval score into the tonal system, an audio describer set the visual context for a radio concert, a performer improvise on an established piece, a pianist adapt a salsa rhythm for a dance class, a team of engineers work on which technologies would be most effective for deaf people to perceive music through colours and vibrations, a conductor edit pieces for a concert aimed at children, a music lover with synaesthesia explains how sounds translate into colours, and a choir master arrange a song for a four part chorus. All of these and more relate to the notion of translation. As it moves across cultures and is thought out for different audiences, music is translated. (Desblache 2019, p. 114)

Desblache's description of music "moving across cultures" aligns with the dynamics of transnational flows of worship music in the formation of the GCM networks that King mentions. Desblache (2019, p. 251) argues that in popular music, "singable translations tend to take more distance from the original, musically and semantically". In transnational music networks, the translation of lyrics and music localization are matters of constant concern. Because of the requirement of the other texts involved, especially those connected to tempo and meter, these singable translations end up being adaptations much more than word-for-word content transfers from the original. Desblache calls the resulting artifacts

“transcreations” in which new words deliver new semantic and poetic messages that “may or may not be in line with the original text” (Desblache 2019, p. 248).

Further, as we shall see in the case of “Mighty to Save”, the process of translation results in stylistic modifications that position new versions in alignment or in contrast with the original release. These negotiations include “adopting social or personal trends and loosening some of the more flexible musical parameters such as tempo or timbre” while, at the same time, preserving other traces of the original, such as melody and rhythm, in order to prevent the dissolution of the connection between the two resulting songs” (Desblache 2019, p. 135). Finally, throughout the process, and given the transformations that occur during translation, it is important to acknowledge the shifts in theologization that accompany and result from these changes. Desblache (2019, p. 6) puts it thus: “Music translation can be limited to the transfer of lyrics, but music can influence the interpretation of a text much more broadly”. She acknowledges that modifications in the musical texture, form, style, and others in fact shape how the lyrics are interpreted and engaged with in context.

Having established these three conceptual elements of our discussion: text, transnationalization, and translation, we now turn to Hillsong’s “Mighty to Save” to further nuance how translation processes unfold within the context of transnational worship projects.

3. “Mighty to Save” (Re)contextualized: The Brazilian *gospel* Movement and “Poder pra Salvar”

Hillsong is a Christian Pentecostal church founded in 1983 by Brian and Bobbie Houston, previously affiliated with Australian Christian Churches (ACC), a member of the World Assemblies of God Fellowship. In 2018, Hillsong announced an amicable departure from ACC. As Hillsong grew from a church plant in the 1980s into an international worship influencer, it has re-branded itself as a “global movement positioned at the intersection of Christianity and culture” and has opened campuses in Australia, South and North America, South Africa, and several locations in Europe; the church’s website describes churches in thirty countries spanning six continents (Hillsong Church n.d.). As of July 2021, Hillsong’s website claimed that more than 150,000 weekly worshippers gather at a Hillsong venue each week. It is important to note that these worldwide congregations are not independent, but intimately connected to the Australian mother church. Karl Inge Tangen describes how these connections configure Hillsong and its many satellite churches as a “trans-local church”, making it impossible to draw a sharp line between Sydney and its subsidiaries (Tangen 2012, p. 54).⁴

Hillsong Worship, described on the organization’s website as “the legacy worship expression of Hillsong Church” (Hillsong Church n.d.) was established in 1992 and has released twenty-six albums as well as several singles and EPs. The musical branch of the church also includes Hillsong United and Hillsong Young & Free, focused towards a younger audience. The creation, production, and distribution of worship music and worship music-related digital content is arguably one of Hillsong’s flagship strategies for growth. The church’s musical catalogue is integral to the worshipping life of Hillsong congregations and is supported by albums, tours, conferences, online content, and other media initiatives. As *Christianity Today* contributor Ed Stetzer puts it, “even churches that are not like Hillsong Church—or even dislike the church—use and love their music. That’s a key part of the global growing influence of Hillsong” (Stetzer 2014).

Tanya Riches and Tom Wagner have investigated Hillsong’s development from an Australian megachurch to a global brand, and argue that “as the Australian megachurch Hillsong evolved, it developed a highly sophisticated and responsive method of branding that communicates its theological emphasis, corporate identity, and target audience” (Riches and Wagner 2012, p. 18). The nature of Hillsong’s organization is one of the reasons why “Mighty to Save” was chosen for this investigation. Overall, the organizational structure of Hillsong, its attention to branding, its control over its subsidiaries, along with its aspirations to global influence, frame the transnationalization of their music in a unique way.

The success of Hillsong's "Mighty to Save" is part of the narrative Riches is describing. Written by Reuben Morgan and Ben Fielding, the song is the title track for Hillsong's fifteenth live worship album, eponymously titled *Mighty To Save* (Hillsong Music 2006). The album won "Worship Song of the Year" at the GMA Dove Awards in 2009 (Dove Awards n.d.). By some estimations, in 2010 approximately 45 million people were singing "Mighty to Save" on any given Sunday (Sherman 2010). In an interview with Matt Maher on WorshipTogether.com (Worship Together 2016), Fielding shared the song's origin story: "And then out of nowhere came this melody, and so we sat on that for a bit, and formed this chorus ..." In the interview, Maher identifies the lyrics of the chorus in a passage in the book of Zephaniah.⁵

The song's authors have also suggested in interviews that they were surprised by the song's success. Such commentary establishes the authenticity of the author's intentions by connecting the lyrics to the Bible, and by emphasize the non-intentionality behind the song's international success. This stance, in turn helps frame Hillsong's transnational project in a positive light, a narrative of success that is born out of God's will instead of the aspirations of individual musicians or industry executives. The Hillsong project, and the story of "Mighty to Save" within it, incorporate a number of tropes found in the scholarship I interact with here: the role of media, the globalization of Christianity, and the creation shared, imagined communities of worshipers in transnational networks. A deeper examination of the transnationalization of "Mighty to Save" into the context of Brazilian Christianity can help us understand the translation dynamics that characterize such cultural flows.

Since the late 1980s, the Christian music industry in Brazil has developed into a full-blown phenomenon, with the term *gospel* serving as "an umbrella term to designed 'Christian' music tailored for consumption by *evangélicos*" (Silva Steuernagel 2021a, p. 139). Hillsong's insertion into the Brazilian *gospel* scene can be considered a rather recent development, given that Brazil's modern Christian music industry can be traced to the mid-twentieth century. Although Hillsong opened a church in São Paulo in 2016, their foray into the Brazilian Christian music scene began with a partnership with what is arguably Brazil's most well-known music ministry, *Diante do Trono* (DT). An initiative of Igreja Batista da Lagoinha, a charismatic Baptist church that is one of the largest in the country (Rosas and de Castro 2014, p. 219), DT became widely known throughout Brazil and internationally through a series of well-received worship albums. They appeal to Brazilian *evangélicos* across denominational boundaries and gather hundreds of thousands, and sometimes millions, at their events (Rosas 2015, p. 77). Ana Paula Valadão, the ministry's frontwoman, has partnered with "churches and ecclesiastical projects outside Brazil such as the Gateway Church (Texas/U.S.), the Australian musical group Hillsong and Global Kingdom" (Rosas and de Castro 2014, p. 220).

The partnership between Hillsong and DT began in 2000, when Ana Paula Valadão, *Diante do Trono*'s lead vocalist and most public figure, recorded Darlene Zech's "Shout to The Lord" (Hillsong Music 1996) in Portuguese. In 2012, Hillsong and DT collaborated within the context of Hillsong's Global Project, an initiative aimed at translating and releasing Hillsong music in nine different languages (Neves n.d.). The Portuguese version of the album, released in 2012, included "Poder pra salvar", the official translation of "Mighty to Save". The project was described on the Diante do Trono website as an attempt to "break linguistic and cultural barriers" between nations (Neves n.d.).

Nevertheless, this was not the first recording of "Mighty to Save" in Portuguese.⁶ In 2007, Aline Barros, another major female singer in the *gospel* scene in Brazil, recorded the song on her album *Caminho de Milagres*. In both cases, the instrumentation and arrangement remain faithful to Hillsong's original release.

In order to give a fully developed sense of how translation occurs within the context of music localization of worship songs, three other Brazilian versions of "Mighty to Save" are presented here. These renditions will help to give us a broader panorama of how the song has "travelled" throughout Brazil. Radicais Livres is a youth ministry belonging

to Igreja da Videira, based in the state of Goiânia. Established in 2000, the church relies heavily on music to drive its message, and founded the Radicais Livres music ministry in 2007 to headline its annual conferences, which usually gathers around fifty thousand worshippers and features other national and international attractions from the Christian music scene. The band's goal is to "manifest God's glory in our generation". (Livres 2007). In 2007, the band released a live album entitled *Fome de Ti* that featured a version of "Poder Pra Salvar".

Another Brazilian artist that incorporated "Poder pra salvar" into his repertoire is Thiago Grulha. Representing a younger generation of *gospel* artists, Grulha included the song in his album *Meus Passos no Tempo* (Grulha 2010). Produced by Paulo César Baruk, another leading figure in the *gospel* scene, Grulha's version was also included in *Somos Iguais*, a live album (Grulha 2013). The arrangement in both cases is nearly identical, and the live version will be analyzed here in order to preserve parallels with the majority of other recordings, which are also live.

The last version included in this investigation was recorded by União Coral (Choral Union), an interdenominational group based in the state of São Paulo. União Coral is primarily composed of amateurs who rehearse, record, and perform on the *gospel* circuit of churches and events. The inclusion of the União Coral rendition can be taken as an attempt to demonstrate how "Mighty to Save" has arrived at a grassroots level in Brazilian *evangélico* culture; while the other recordings come from well-established or up-and-coming artists on the national scene, the version presented by União Coral represents an effort by a group operating locally and/orregionally. The version analyzed here is featured on the group's YouTube channel.

We have traced the history of how "Mighty to Save" became "Poder pra salvar" and was introduced to Brazilian audiences. It is now time to turn to the comparative analysis of Hillsong's original release with its Brazilian counterparts in order to understand the impact of transnationalization and the dynamics of translation in this particular case.

4. Comparative Analyses of "Mighty to Save"/"Poder pra Salvar"

I will analyze a number of the song's texts separately, beginning with a comparative analysis of the lyrics. I will then move on to other non-verbal components which have undergone transformations to varying degrees. A framework is needed for the comparative analysis of the song's translated lyrics, which I draw from the work of Peter Low. While I agree with Desblaches that Peter Low's typology of lyrical transformations is of limited use outside the context of song translation practice, I will refer to it in my lyrical analysis of "Poder pra salvar" because his distinction between translation, adaptation and replacement text can help us understand the challenges of translating lyrics to be sung in another language. Low also acknowledges what has already been argued here: that a song is a "verbal-musical hybrid" (Low 2013, p. 229). Further, he recognizes the challenges of translating song lyrics:

because a good song lyric is a complex and poetic text, a good singable translation requires skilful handling of non-semantic aspects, such as rhythm and singability, in order to satisfy its particular *skopos*. Indeed, a semantically exact [translation] would fail to do its job. This juggling of several criteria means that song translations score less highly on semantic transfer than do informative translations. (Low 2013, p. 230)

Low then offers a typology for the classification of such artifacts. The first type is a translation, which from his perspective would present a faithful transfer of content between languages. The second, adaptation, sports some deviation from the original meaning. Finally, a replacement includes new lyrical content. While Low offers an alternative typology that argues for a narrower definition of a song translation and the recognition of adaptations as the normative practice in song translations, he acknowledges, with Desblache and Barnstone, that "a translation dwells in imperfection, using equivalents and shunning mechanical replicas—which is the dream of literalists who believe in truth. It

gives us the other. Or under another name it gives us itself" (Barnstone 1993, p. 266). In other words, while translation is an attempt at conservation during the transfer of content, it gives birth to itself by the inevitability of mutation inherent to it.

This dynamic becomes evident in Table 1, which presents three sets of lyrics for "Mighty To Save". In the first column, the original English version is presented. The middle column features the standard Portuguese version. This is the most frequently sung version of "Poder pra salvar" in Brazil, although different congregations or ensembles might perform minute variations/modifications on the words. The third column offers a literal translation of the Portuguese version back into English.

Table 1. Comparison of lyrics of "Mighty to Save" in English and "Poder pra salvar" in Portuguese.

Title	Original English	Portuguese Version	Literal Translation
	"Mighty to Save"	"Poder Pra Salvar"	Power to Save
Verse 1	Everyone needs compassion A love that's never failing Let mercy fall on me	Todos necessitam de um amor perfeito Perdão e compaixão	Everyone needs A perfect love Forgiveness and compassion
Verse 2	Everyone needs forgiveness The kindness of a Savior The hope of nations	Todos necessitam de graça e esperança De um Deus que salva	Everyone needs Grace and forgiveness A God that saves
Chorus	Savior, he can move the mountains My God is mighty to save He is mighty to save Forever author of salvation He rose and conquered the grave Jesus conquered the grave	Cristo move as montanhas E tem poder pra salvar tem poder pra salvar Pra sempre, Autor da Salvação Jesus a morte venceu Sobre a morte venceu	Christ moves the mountains And has power to save Has power to save Forever Author of Salvation Jesus won over death Won over death
Verse 3	So take me as you find me All my fears and failures Fill my life again	Me aceitas com meus medos falhas e temores Enche meu viver	You accept me with my fears Failures and fears Fill my life
Verse 4	I give my life to follow Everything I believe in Now I surrender	A minha vida entrego pra seguir Teus passos A Ti me rendo	I give my life To follow in your footsteps I surrender to you
Bridge	Shine your light and let the whole world see We're singing for the glory of the risen king Jesus	Possa o mundo ver brilhar a Luz Cantamos para a glória do Senhor Jesus	May the world See the light shine We sing For the glory Of the Lord Jesus

All three of Low's types appear in a comparison of the versified Brazilian version to its literal translation into English. In select passages, lyrics are preserved or translated (in Low's sense of translation as the faithful transfer of content). This is the case in verse 3. While minute variations in meaning between the English and the Portuguese do exist, the overall sense and lyrical distribution of the words is similar. The main differences are the exclusion of "so" and "again" in the Portuguese, and the inclusion of two words that equate to the English "fear": "medos" and "temores". Otherwise, the translation adheres quite closely to the original. The same argument can be made for the translation of the chorus, with the main variation being between the English "conquered the grave" and the Portuguese "a morte venceu", which would translate literally as Jesus having "won over death".

Conversely, there are a number of translation strategies that would fall under Low's category of adaptation. I will subdivide them here into modification and summarization. A good example of the modification strategy is the choice of descriptor to indicate persons of the Trinity; in the English version, God is referred to as "Savior"; in the Brazilian translation, this is modified to "Christ". Although it could be argued that these two words refer to the

same person in the Godhead, I suggest that a different word will emphasize a different aspect of the deity, and that choice of emphasis influences theologization. Such minute modifications are found throughout the translated lyrics. Thus, modification can be taken to signify variations that, while attempting to preserve the immediate meaning of a phrase or term, are transformed to accommodate the resistances across different languages.

Another common adaptation strategy used here is summarization: a group of concepts, words, or ideas is summarized into a condensed statement, making space for other elements (or a different number of syllables, to accommodate proper prosody and hymnic meter). In this process, certain nuances of the original lyrics might be lost. Consider, for example, the idea of the Savior as a “hope of nations” in the second verse. In the Brazilian version, while the idea of a Savior is preserved, the specific reference to the nations does not appear; there is no space for it. The emphasis in Portuguese is on a God of grace that forgives, but the global aspect of that saving work is not emphasized in the same way. If the meaning is there, it is simply implied.

Finally, the strategy of substitution illustrates Low’s category of replacement. Although this might seem quite similar to modification (one could argue that the difference is one of degree and not of genre) substitution is in fact the removal of a word, phrase, or idea and the inclusion of another in its place. This is illustrated in the same passage we have just examined in verse two. The original reads: “Everyone needs forgiveness/The kindness of a Savior”. In the translation, this becomes: “Everyone needs/Grace and forgiveness”. In the Brazilian version, the idea of “grace” substitutes the original evocation of “kindness”, even as “forgiveness” is preserved. We will come back to the question of the impact of these strategies in my conclusion, where the question of the theological impact of the substitution of “kindness” with “grace” will be addressed. For now, it is sufficient to highlight that procedures of modification, summarization, and substitution illustrate the elusiveness of any notion of a direct transmission or transfer of lyrical content from English to Portuguese.

One final dynamic has further impact on the translation of songs. Poet and academic H. L. Hix speaks of “translation inertia” in his preface to *The Gospel* (Hix 2020). He describes it as “the tendency, strongest in often-translated and widely-read texts” to “replicate in later translations word choices from earlier translations because they are now familiar, rather than because they are still apt” (Hix 2020, p. xix). I suggest that a similar dynamic influences the translation of worship songs into other languages. As in the gospel translation issues that Hix is referencing, one might speak of a jargon of worship that develops within a religious context. In Brazil, this jargon may include vocabulary from bible translations such as the one by João Ferreira de Almeida, a sixteenth-century Dutch Reformed pastor from Portugal. Almeida’s work has been revised and re-revised numerous times, but continues to shape the way Brazilian *evangélicos* speak of God and the Christian faith.

The translation of “Mighty to Save” demonstrates this inertia in several spots. One example occurs in the bridge (Table 1). The English version invites worshipers to “shine your light and let the whole world see”. One interpretation of these verses is that it is an encouragement to Christian witness; this interpretation is further reinforced by the next verse, which states that the reason for worshipers to sing the song is to glorify God. Here, witness and worship are gathered in a congregational invitation that focuses on the worshipers and not on God. A comparison with the Portuguese version seems to point towards an analogy of Jesus being the light that is being sung about. For Brazilian worshipers, this is a common thematic and poetic trope in worship because of the strength of the rhyme between “luz” and “Jesus”. It is a combination that appears in multiple other songs, and this association shines through in the act of translation. It is an example of Hix’s idea of translation inertia: as certain thematic and poetic combinations proliferate in and between worship contexts, they also surface in new translations, feeding back into the inertia itself. In the process, the theological senses that are being performed by participants change because of these translational dynamics.

In summary, our analysis of the lyrical translation of “Mighty to Save” into Portuguese demonstrates that it is a process of compromise that includes the interpretation of ideas,

lyrical demands of language, rhythm, prose, and personal choices of the translator. Such choices respond to a language's particular resistances and to the cultural and theological context in which the translation is performed. This is a dynamic that scholars have identified elsewhere; Jadwiga Suwaj, analyzing Polish translations of Hillsong music, describes how in most cases translators strive to preserve the sense of the lyrics instead of preserving word-for-word patterns (Suwaj 2014, p. 340). In any case, lyric translation remains one of the main concerns in studying transnationalized repertoire: whatever theologization might in fact be occurring in a new context, lyrical modifications illustrate how varied this process takes shape across borders and cultural circumscriptions. The question, then, is not "if" something changes in the lyrics; it is, in fact, what these changes mean and what impact they might have in the performance and reception of songs that have been re-localized.

We now turn to the non-verbal performative aspects of translation in transnationalized worship music, focusing on a comparison of the form of each arrangement over and against the Hillsong version. Tables 2–7 outline the sections of "Mighty to Save"/"Poder pra salvar" in all versions examined in this essay. The left column identifies the section of the song, while the right column outlines arrangement notes, stylistic observations, and instrumentation. When no modification occurs between sections, the right column remains blank. Meter, tempo, and key are given for each version.

Table 2. Form and arrangement outline of "Mighty to Save" in its original version.

Hillsong Australia— <i>Mighty to Save</i> (2006) Live Version A Major/72 bpm—4/4	
	Arrangement Observations
Introduction	Guitar riff
Verse 1 + 2	
Chorus	Voices and acoustic guitar, no rhythm section
Interlude	Similar to introduction
Verse 3 + 4	
Chorus	Full Band
Interlude	Includes guitar anti-solo
Bridge	
Chorus	Voices, no harmony, drum backbeat
Chorus	Full band
Bridge	
Bridge	Voices, choir, drum backbeat
Bridge	Full band
Bridge	Full band → ritardando → full band fermata topped with vocal improvisation

A comparative analysis of these versions yields a plethora of considerations. The first is that there is not a significant amount of variation between the versions, especially in terms of key and tempo. Although variations do occur, they are mostly related to form and texture. Form varies based the number of repetitions of choruses and bridges performed. in each version, and the texture changes because of the way each ensemble manages the contrast between full band sections and more transparent sections, in which voices (either congregational, harmonized, or featuring a choir) are evidenced. It is important to note that all these elements are present in Hillsong's original arrangement. Also worthy of note is the strong resemblance between Hillsong Australia's original version, Aline Barros' version, and the Hillsong Brasil/Diante do Trono release. The only variation in form is the

repetition (or lack thereof) of the first appearance of the chorus. All three of these versions rely on the same guitar riff in the introduction, similar full band/a capella contrast sections, and end in similar fashion.

Table 3. Form and arrangement outline of Aline Barros’s version of “Poder pra salvar”.

Aline Barros— <i>Caminho de Milagres</i> (Barros 2007) Live Version B Major/75 bpm	
Arrangement Observations	
Introduction	Riff is identical to the original; improvised vocal lines
Verse 1 + 2	Slight variations on original melody
Chorus	Voices and acoustic guitar, no rhythm section
Interlude	Similar to introduction
Verse 3 + 4	Same rhythmic pattern, heavy rhythm guitar
Chorus	Full band; heavy overdriven guitars
Chorus	
Interlude	
Bridge	
Chorus	Voices, no rhythm section.
Chorus	Full band.
Bridge	Voices and choir, no rhythm section
Bridge	Full band → ritardando → full band fermata

Table 4. Form and arrangement outline of Radicais Livres’ version of “Poder pra salvar”.

Radicais Livres Band— <i>Fome de Ti</i> (2007) Live Version A Major/73 bpm—4/4	
Arrangement Observations	
Introduction	Riff is similar to the original but modified with heavier guitar backing
Verse 1 + 2	Rhythmic pattern very similar to the original
Chorus	Voices and acoustic guitar, no rhythm section
Interlude	Similar to introduction
Verse 3 + 4	Same rhythmic pattern, heavy rhythm guitar
Chorus	Full band; heavy overdriven guitars
Chorus	
Interlude	
Bridge	
Chorus	
Chorus	
Bridge	Voices, no rhythm section
Bridge	Full band → ritardando → full band fermata

Table 5. Form and arrangement outline of Hillsong Brasil/Diante do Trono’s version of “Poder pra salvar”.

Diante do Trono (2012)—Hillsong Global Project Live Version A Major/74 bpm	
Arrangement Observations	
Introduction	Riff is identical to the original
Verse 1 + 2	
Chorus	Voices and acoustic guitar, no rhythm section
Interlude	Similar to introduction
Verse 3 + 4	
Chorus	
Interlude	Includes guitar anti-solo
Bridge	
Chorus	Voices, no harmony, drum backbeat
Chorus	Full band
Bridge	
Bridge	Full band → ritardando → full band fermata topped with vocal improvisation

Table 6. Form and arrangement outline of Thiago Grulha’s version of “Poder pra salvar”.

Thiago Grulha (2013)—Somos Iguais Live Version A Major/73 bpm—4/4	
Arrangement Observations	
Introduction	Different riff that the original Hillsong version. Backed by a synth pad
Verse 1 + 2	No rhythm section
Chorus	Voices, no rhythm section
Interlude	Vocal counter-melody responds to riff
Verse 3 + 4	With rhythm section, different pattern
Chorus	Full band; heavy overdriven guitars
Bridge	
Chorus	Voice and pads, no rhythm section
Chorus	Full band
Outro	Variation on the standard harmonic progression

The second consideration is that variation appears more explicit in later versions of the song. Although the Radicais Livres version (Livres 2007) is rather succinct compared to its contemporaries (it came out the same year Aline Barros’ version did, a year after the original album was released in English), its arrangement does not deviate significantly from the original in terms of form. But there is a variation of texture brought about through the addition of a heavier electric guitar sound in certain sections. On the other hand, Thiago Grulha’s version (Grulha 2013) varies the introductory guitar riff, adds a countermelody in the interlude, leaves out a significant number of repetitions, and substitutes the ending for an instrumental coda. The União Coral version (Coral 2014) features even more variation. The melody is heavily harmonized, the meter is altered in the first half of the song, and the ending is similar to Grulha’s. A possible conclusion is that, as time goes by, artists and groups feel more comfortable in deviating from the original arrangement as they further localize the song. Such processes of appropriation afford liberties that might have been frowned upon in early versions.

Table 7. Form and arrangement outline of União Coral’s version of “Poder pra salvar”.

Uniao Coral (2014)	
D Major/75 bpm/Compound Meter (12/8) → Moves to 4/4 on Second Chorus	
Arrangement Observations	
Introduction	Same riff as original
Verse 1 + 2	Vocals with synth and guitar, opens to SAT harmony towards the end
Chorus	Harmonized vocals, no rhythm section
Interlude	Riff is transferred to vocals (ooh)
Verse 3 + 4	With rhythm section; two-part harmony
Chorus	Full band; overdriven guitars and congas
Bridge	
Chorus	Female solo + piano + solo lead guitar
Chorus	Full band + fully harmonized vocals
Interlude	Same as interlude, with riff on the vocals, light rhythm section
Outro	Crescendo variation on interlude with full band and open vocal harmonies. Lightens up to acoustic guitar and pads.

Finally, we arrive at considerations of style and performance, focusing on instrumentation, vocal delivery (vocality) and vocal harmonization. Interestingly, there is very little variation in tempo between the various versions presented here, both in relation to the original and to each other. While Hillsong’s original version is performed at 72 bpm, the fastest of the Brazilian versions is played at 75 bpm. This is also the case in relation to tonality. Most versions remain in A Major, the original key, except for Aline Barros’, which is performed a whole tone up in B Major, and União Coral’s version in D Major. It is my view that the tonality is determined by the vocal range of the melody, which ranges from E4 to E5 in the original version (an octave). This extension falls significantly out of congregational range if raised drastically; likewise, transposing the song down more than 3 whole steps would place most of it in a lower register, removing the clarity and brightness, especially, of the chorus and bridge. So, while Aline Barros’ variation does not significantly impact the vocal delivery in performance, I suggest that the reason União Coral’s version is a perfect fourth above the original is because of the need to accommodate more complex vocal harmonies, stacked as it is with three or four notes at a time.

Another characteristic that appears in several of the Brazilian versions is the use of overdriven guitars (both lead and rhythmic). While the Radicais Livres version is the “heaviest” of the renditions, Grulha’s and União Coral’s versions also make use of similar timbres. While overdriven guitars are present in the original arrangement, they are mixed with the rest of the band in a blended, polished mix. But in these three versions, the guitar is enhanced in the mix, suggesting a preference towards this particular timbre. While it is difficult to explain precisely why, one possibility is the close ties between the development of Brazil’s *gospel* sound, the rise of Christian rock within this context,⁷ and the preference for the sound of “modern worship” that resulted from what Ingalls calls the “British Invasion” of worship music in the United States (Ingalls 2016), making its way into Brazil from there.

My final consideration refers specifically to the use of the voice in the Brazilian renditions of “Poder Pra Salvar”. Tracing the characteristics of vocal delivery, of what Allan Moore calls the “vocality” of the singer (Moore 1998, 2012), it is possible to identify a string of variations that attest, at the same time, to the integrative nature of Brazilian *gospel* and to the establishment of explicit cultural markers within the performance of transnationalized repertoire (at least to the listener trained to identify these markers).

While I agree with Eidsheim that “there is no unified or stable voice” (Eidsheim 2019, p. 9) and that we must acknowledge collective and cultural aspects in any examination of the voice, as well as be aware of what she calls “the micropolitics of listening (Eidsheim 2019, p. 33), it

may be possible to investigate in further detail the vocal dynamics that reflect the localization process in the case of “Poder pra salvar”. Brazilian *gospel* reflects, in a sense, what many Brazilians would perceive to be their intense, embodied, quasi-visceral engagement with music and with worship (Burdick 2013). Brazilian culture emphasizes engagement, contact, and intensity within the context of music making (and in many other dimensions as well).

The way in which this particular idea has influenced the vocality of Brazilian *gospel* is clear in the analysis of these renditions of “Poder pra salvar”, and demonstrates how the process of transnationalization affords generative affective combinations of texts, context, and theologization. John Burdick (2013, p. 137) describes how black *gospel* generates hyperattention to the physical organs of the vocal apparatus. The distinctions between Darlene Zschech’s and Reuben Morgan’s vocal delivery in the live recording of the *Mighty To Save* and the vocality of Aline Barros are immediately discernible. Similar characteristics are found in the voice of Ana Paula and André Valadão in the *Hillsong Global Project* (n.d.) recording (to a slightly lesser degree). These particular characteristics include a slightly over-exaggeration of certain phonetic combinations (particularly the “s” and “t” sounds, which are delivered with a fuller sound than in spoken Portuguese), the deliberate straining of the vocal chords and tensing of the neck muscles to evidence emotional engagement, and frequent use of ornamentation, appended melodic fragments, and spontaneous vocal interjections interspersed with the original melody. This particular combination of traits is stylistically characteristic of Brazilian *gospel* which, besides inevitably being rooted in the African heritage of the slave trade, also inherited the pop-romantic sensibilities of North American popular music (Reck 2011, p. 49).

Burdick’s argument about vocality appears more explicitly in Grulha and União Coral’s versions. While Grulha begins his rendition with a light, highly technical (and ornamented) approach, he progressively incorporates the characteristics described here, combining the African American preference for vocal virtuosity with similar traits as demonstrated by other *gospel* singers like Barros and Valadão. União Coral’s version goes even further. We have already seen how the option to harmonize many portions of their arrangement necessitated a transposition to a different key. The arrangement features highly ornamented solo vocal sections, two-part harmonies heavily laden with vocal flourishes, and three- and four-part harmonies that connect their arrangement directly to the tradition Burdick is describing in his study. From this perspective, “Mighty to Save” goes from Australian Pentecostal to Brazilian *gospel* featuring variations that connect it to a musical heritage (and practice tradition) diverse from that of its original context. Other elements in the arrangement, such as the use of congas in the chorus and a compound (12/8) “swing” in the first half of the arrangement, coupled with ensemble vocalizations that directly evoke the sound of the work of artists such as Kirk Franklin, support this idea.

In summary, in the process of localization of “Mighty to Save” as “Poder pra salvar” in Brazil, transformations occur in various aspects of the song. They appear in the translation issues identified here, and result in theological variations that are not explicit in the original version. In addition, while the musical arrangements themselves seem to adhere to the original in early versions, they become increasingly diverse as time goes by and the song is incorporated into regional and local contexts. Consequently, interpretations of the song begin to reflect performative characteristics of these contexts. Such transformations appear in the vocal delivery of the song, as well as in several other musical aspects.

5. Conclusions

The goal of this investigation was to examine how transnationalized musical repertoire changes in a new context, focusing on how translation, theological reinterpretation, and musical rearrangement modify the place these songs occupy in the process of music localization. Tracing the variations of “Mighty to Save”, appropriated into the Brazilian *gospel* scene as “Poder Pra Salvar”, I offer three final considerations.

The first consideration refers to modes of analysis. In his discussion of complex and increasing interaction between cultures, Appadurai (1996, p. 47) argues that “the relationship of these various flows to one another as they constellate into particular events and social forms will be radically context-dependent”. Within such a scenario, monotextual analysis does not seem to respond to the multi-layered, ever-shifting constellations of imagined realities that characterize practices of Christian worship. A factor that further complicates this issue is the ever-increasing speed with which these interactions take place, and also with which modifications and variations occur to any musical artifact embroiled in such interactions. Therefore, any scholarly investigation of transnationalized worship music necessarily happens at a crossroads between different modes of expression, appropriation, and other forms of cultural/economic/social/political interaction.

A second consideration derives directly from the first: as new investigations are performed, their findings can help researchers understand what *types* of theologization are being performed in different contexts. If previous scholarship relied heavily on assumptions of the inviolability of the colonial project to justify its findings, contemporary scholarship must understand the construction of meaning in context to legitimize its conclusion. In other words, it is not safe to presume any kind of transmission or transfer of religious meaning from originating context to (re)localized context, especially given the elusive nature of translation. One must look at the musical artifact within its new context as a new ecology for theologization; a context in which theological ideas edited into the transnationalized artifact elicit responses that are indigenous in their reaction to said ideas. The idea of “grace” in “Poder pra salvar” serves as an example. The term itself is not part of the original lyrics of “Mighty To Save”, but its incorporation into the song’s Portuguese version results in the creation of new theological sense. To put it another way: there are significant differences in the way a Pentecostal, a Presbyterian, a Baptist, a Charismatic or a Brazilian Lutheran *sing* about grace and conceive it theologically. Any of these imagined singers can easily relate to Brazilian *gospel* culture in one way or another, but what they are theologizing into the experience of imagined community is vastly diverse. The result is a kaleidoscope of theologized worshipsapes.

A final consideration refers to the very concept of transnationalization. As we have seen, as a musical artifact develops over time and is further localized, it creates its own space, depending less and less on its original transnationalized narrative along with that narrative’s non-verbal accoutrements. While I agree with Csordas’ parsing of *how* religion travels (Csordas 2009), I believe that the question of time needs to be reflected more clearly in the analysis of transnationalized, translated worship songs. As time goes by, it seems that musical artifacts move beyond from the function of being a portal into their original imagined communities of worship. They contribute to the establishment of new ecologies of theologization that feature fresh, localized connections, and that incorporate local expressions of musical piety that do not rely on the reputation (or theological perspective) of their originating proponents.

Anna Nekola says that “music functions in congregational worship in many ways: as a vehicle for content, a site of sensory engagement, a means of connection to tradition, a place for personal expression and a channel for emotion” (Nekola 2015, p. 2). All these dimensions are addressed in the multi-textual configuration analyzed here: while songs are certainly vehicles for content (and we have seen how translation modifies this content even as it contextualizes it), they also connect congregations to their tradition even as they dialogue with congregational comprehensions of what it means to be a Brazilian *evangélico*. In this sense, a multimodal analysis of the texts involved appears to be a more comprehensive approach to investigate the phenomenon of congregational song as an act of theologization, informed by the texts that constitute the very phenomenology of the experience.

This examination of how “Mighty to Save” has crossed boundaries into Brazil, becoming “Poder Pra Salvar”, can thus contribute to scholarly discussions about the transnationalization, translation, and music localization of religious repertoires across the globe.

In the context of the increased transportability of cultural artifacts in today's world, and in connection with the complex realities of interactions between countries, cultures, religions, ideologies, and people groups in a broad sense, such discussions shed light on the ever-shifting constellations of Christian worship music.

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Notes

- ¹ It is possible to define Brazilian *evangélicos* as “Christians who identify in contrast to Catholicism”, including “Pentecostals, Neopentecostals, historic Protestant denominations (immigrant based and missionary established), and nowadays might tentatively include Seventh-Day Adventists and Mormons” (Silva Steuernagel 2021a, p. 148, fn. 8).
- ² I will use the term “lyrics” to refer to the *words* of a song.
- ³ I avoid here using the term “globalization” due to its potential implications as a continuation of Western, capitalist, imperialistic projects.
- ⁴ Tangen (2012, pp. 53–54) describes how each church plant is overseen by founder Brian Houston and a board of elders from Sydney.
- ⁵ Zephaniah 3:17 (NIV): “The Lord your God is with you, the Mighty Warrior who saves. He will take great delight in you; in his love he will no longer rebuke you, but will rejoice over you with singing”.
- ⁶ Identifying the authorship of the Brazilian version of “Mighty to Save” proved difficult; while SongSelect.com identifies Cia. Do Louvor as authors of the translation, this needs further verification; a few internet resources mentioned that Aline Barros herself would be the author of the translation. In any case, the versions recorded by her and by Diante do Trono are lyrically identical.
- ⁷ This particular development has been traced by a number of Brazilian scholars. Among these, the work of Marcos Ferreira Silva (2014), and that of Airton Jungblut (2007), mention the importance of rock very early in the development of Brazilian gospel.

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