

## “O que é meu é da cigana!”: religiosidade travesti em contextos de curimba digital

### “What’s mine belongs to gypsy!”: Transvestite religiosity in digital curimba contexts<sup>1</sup>

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**Resumo:** O artigo interpreta práticas de consumo das tecnologias digitais, em especial do Facebook, na composição das vivências religiosas de matriz afro-brasileira a partir de uma etnografia para a internet (HINE, 2015) com travestis na cidade de Santa Maria, RS, discutindo algumas interseções entre religião, tecnologia e transexualidade. O trabalho aponta que, nessas práticas, se entrecruzam os segredos da curimba, produzidos nos itinerários da fé, com os demais elementos que constituem a vida social das interlocutoras. Além disso, indica como os sentidos da religiosidade do ilê são conduzidos e interpretados através dos regimes de sociabilidade digital.

**Palavras-chave:** travesti; religião; redes sociais digitais.

**Abstract:** This article interprets consumer practices of digital technologies, especially of Facebook, in the formation of religious experiences of Afro-Brazilian matrix. Based on an ethnography for the Internet (HINE, 2015) with transvestites

1 In this article, we have chosen to translate the Portuguese term “travesti” into “transvestite”, because it is the recurrent term in academic translations. However, transvestite is a term that does not fully address the sociocultural realities of the research participants. In general, in English language, transvestite refers to crossdresser. In Brazil, travesti designates trans woman, originally a pejorative term, but it has a political meaning of struggle for recognition. Curimba, in Brazilian Candomblé, designates the group of people responsible for the music of the rituals. The expression is also a synonym of the whole rite or festivity.

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*in the city of Santa Maria, Brazil, the paper discuss some intersections between religion, technology and transsexuality. The work points out that the secrets of curimba, produced in the itineraries of faith, intersect in these practices with the other elements that constitute the interlocutors' social life. In addition, it points out how the regimes of digital sociability conduct and interpret the senses of the ilê religiosity.*

**Keywords:** *travestite; religion; digital social networks.*

## Introduction

This article presents an interpretation of some consumption practices of digital communication, specially in the social media website Facebook, in the composition of religious experiences of the research participants.<sup>4</sup> The field of work revealed elements of the religious universe (linked to batuque, candomblé and Umbanda) in a repertoire of practices that make reference to the world of orishas, to life at the ilês (terreiros) and curimbas, which are ritualistic festivities dedicated to orishas, inserted into the daily life and managed in online interactions.

In the field, I heard<sup>5</sup> one time a conversation between two transvestites that were in the yard of the house of one of my interlocutors.<sup>6</sup> One spoke about the power of her Bará<sup>7</sup>, that he would cross cruises, paths. The sentence called my attention to an important aspect that I still did not consider: religiosity. After that, in another situation, Nicolly<sup>8</sup>, complaining about a rival, said that her pomba gira was stronger, that she was not fooling around and the other should fear that. In a tone of irony, I heard many times sentences that denoted the power of their pombagiras

4 Research made with the Post-Graduate Program in Communication for the PhD thesis about digital trajectories of transvestites in the city of Santa Maria, RS. Work performed with the support of the Coordenação de Aperfeiçoamento de Pessoal de Nível Superior – Brasil (Capes) - Financing Code 001.

5 In some moments, we use first person texts, signaling the ethnographic work. The use of italic mark discourse or expressions taken out of conversations, interviews and posts and that were incorporated in the author’s texts. In the transcriptions, we preserve utterances and writings, protecting sociocultural expressions. In the highlighted speeches, the use of brackets explain some terms, without the need of a footnote.

6 The participants identify themselves as transvestites, which find a synonym in the expression trans woman, regardless of making or not the sex reassignment surgery. They are constituted as subjects in the territory of transidentities, having a gender-divergent identity from the binary device of gendering of bodies (LANZ, 2017). The denomination “transvestite” designates, in this perspective, a complex identification (FERNÁNDEZ, 2004; CAMPUZANO, 2008) located in border transits between the categories of a feminine that is established in the sociosexual division of gender. The emphasis in corporality and in the attributes of this feminine indicates their sociocorporified realities are not built nor can be understood by the prism of homosexualities. These bodies are produced by specific regimens of knowledge/power that go through the body construction until the social and wider symbolic systems which, to a great extent, are responsible for the subalternization, violence and precariousness to which they are subjectified in our society (BENTO, 2006, 2017, PELÚCIO, 2009).

7 Entity of Exu.

8 The names presented are fictional for the preservation of the participants identities.

babadeiras<sup>9</sup> that something bad happened to someone because this person had missed the *amalá*<sup>10</sup> or the *ebó*<sup>11</sup> or yet that someone couldn't be serious because they are nothing but a *boneca de santo*.<sup>12</sup>

The curiosity of these expressions used out of context of religion made me observe the way how the references of religiosity would appear on their Facebook profiles, website that I privilege in the attempt of understanding their digital trajectories, according to some presuppositions of ethnography for the internet (HINE, 2015). The article presents some of the discoveries of a field work that had 16 months of duration, gathering stories, examples and knowledge from four participants. The ethnographic field was composed both by following their daily routines, in the places where they live and go, and their online interactions. Thus, in addition to the participant observation, informal conversations and moments of interview, we add conversations and interaction through or about different apps, sites and platforms. The proposal is to think how the religious practices have dimensions oriented by the material and immaterial consumption of digital technologies. Sustained by an anthropological bias (CAMPBELL, 2001; DOUGLAS; ISHERWOOD, 2004; BARBOSA, 2004), the research understands consumption as a process of mediation between subjects, objects and social practices, not only referring to materialities, but in the development of subjectivities and social experience.

This bias assumes the contextuality of appropriations in the elaboration of consumption practices in the internet as cultural genres (MILLER, 2013), in other words, local appropriations are defined in group dynamics and in different forms of incorporation of those

9 Babadeira comes from the word “babado”, situation that implies some type of impact which you must give a lot of importance. Important episode of daily life. In the context, the word is an adjective of *pombagira*, denoting some type of superiority.

10 Offering to Xangô.

11 Offering to Exu.

12 According to the interlocutors, *bonecas de santo* are sisters of religion (cis and trans women and gay men) that do not comply their obligations seriously. In general, they can pay more for the materials of rituals and are very concerned with aesthetic dispositions, either on clothes, accessories or offerings. *Boneca de santo* refers more to the fake status of the person than the seriousness lived in the religion.

technologies in particular contexts (MILLER, 2011; MILLER *et al.*, 2016). The forms of consumption observed are not characterized by instrumental uses like technologies and the transformation of ritualistic by technical apparatuses (MILLER; SLATER, 2001), but point towards the reformulations of subjective and religious experiences that are sewn into the daily experience.

In the first part of the article, we present some considerations about how this technology is associated to the religious life and other elements of their personal narratives, once the study of social networks on the internet implies not reducing the interaction solely to the environment (RECUERO, 2009). In the second part, we interpret some of the consumption practices of these technologies in the composition of interactions and sociabilities of interlocutors.

### **“Facebook only ties one end” - Between faith and social life**

According to Prandi (2005), the globalization processes seem to have affected in a less intense way religions like Umbanda and Candomblé, which didn’t get in the processes of mass media production and consumption lived by other religions. However, at the same time they keep their ceremonies, initiations, obligations and sacrifices away from the traditional processes of media circulation, the expansion of access of digital communication technologies move the social configurations where religious experience and its transformations are lived (MILLER; HORST, 2015).

The works of Silva (2015a, 2015b) about the appropriations of cell-phones in the São Jorge hill, in Florianópolis, present reflections on the role of technologic mediations in religious experiences. One of the elements refers to the contradictions that would involve the use of cell-phones in capturing images of entities. The author writes that one of her informants had a difficulty of getting a picture of her pombagira, which was against technology. For their informants, the problem was both the

capture of images and its public circulation. The passage of these photography from the private to public dominion would represent, in that context, a possible loss of secrets and authenticity inside the religion.

In the present research, we can follow a social context marked by an intense and significant production of images and messages that evidence the social transformations that follow the consumption of technologies. On Facebook, we develop an enunciative work whose reference is curimba's and gira's religiosity, lived by *ilê*, but crossing material frontiers of these spaces. In the regimens of interaction, Sibilia (2016) observes the passage of cultivating zones of social life that were previously considered private or secret to a regimen that demands narrative skills and aesthetic adventures in form of "media competence". Instead of working as an institutionalized memory of religion, the posted content point towards personal memory and affectionate dynamics socialized that pulverize nuances of religious practices linked to their life stories, mixing faith and social life (TEIXEIRA, 2008; SEFFER, 2012).

These faith itineraries have in common stories marked by the precarization of social life, abandonment of blood family, work and sociability oriented by prostitution, violence and school evasion (SILVA, 1993; BENEDETI, 2005). All their participants say to have looked other religions, mainly catholic and evangelical, being distanced or expelled when they assumed their body and sexuality due to being transgender. It is Kelly's case, 30 years old, a sex worker and 16 years of religion. Like her, the interlocutors have their stories intimately linked to *ilê* as a place of refuge and respect where they were taught to walk the path of faith and understand their own stories.

The starting point of all digital interactions is the experience of curimba. Santos (2013) says that religion like the *candomblé* destinate important practices in function of gender and sexuality of their participants, and can, in many cases, subvert the asymmetries of social generification, valuing female presence (including trans female). As Kelly says, the recognition on behalf of the brotherhood is one of the main capital of religious sociability:

My brothers, when they organize a party, have some adoration to an orisha, they call me, ask me through Facebook, send me a message on Whats, send me an invite: “The 15<sup>th</sup> I will go and I want you to be with your pombagira”. Look, it’s a massive invitation, you know, because it’s good to feel that way, for us that is trans is a huge pleasure [...] to know we are welcome, for us is incredible, you know.

Even holding recognition, it isn’t always a linear process. It can involve anti-ideal markings of gender, sex and erotism, articulation of paradoxes through specific performances of religious work (RIOS, 2011, 2012) or even a reaffirmation of gender inequalities (MESQUITA, 2004). Laura, 32 years old, gives examples that illustrate the way conflictive experiences appear in social experience and how they are mediated through digital interactions. Since she considers herself a jealous woman, she regularly checks her husband’s private Facebook messages, an ogã (a man who plays atabaque) which stayed “in an important place of the tenda”, being “seen and targeted by other [trans] and by amapô [cisgender women]”. She knows her husband profile password and enters many times a day, reading private messages, because she knows the envy and lust over the guy that many women put in her relationship, including religion sisters (cis, trans and gays).

Intrigue, dispute and envy constitute the inventory of these practices are understood in digital experiences. Laura ‘gets ready’ in a group of six people with the same ialorixá. She tells she had many disagreements with her colleagues of initiation that didn’t take seriously the compliance of obligations. Over time, she stopped liking and commenting their pictures and posts, she would take time to answer their messages, avoiding to intensify the contact with “bonecas de santo, girls who only want to show off”. This (digital) cold shoulder was perceived by the others, making their relationships, even inside the terreiro, different than before.

Another story that shows the tension about interactions was mentioned by Nicolly, that used to date a guy whose mother and sisters were evangelical. They disapproved the relationship and posted comments with Bible verses or Bible passages talking about demons (referring to

her religion) and about promiscuity and sin (referring to her identity as trans and a sex worker), or, ironically, commenting expressions like “By Jesus blood!” Or “Lord have mercy!”. Nicolly explains:

Everything was online, to those who would come to my profile. Initially, I didn’t understand and asked my aunt [which was also evangelical] what those numbers were about [the Bible verses] and she told me they were from the Bible. Most of it was from the Apocalypse. I just laughed. I used to find it hilarious to see these awful people because they would call me a Babylon prostitute. *Prosti [prostitute] I already was, but from Babylon, it seems big, right, fancy stuff, Arabian whore [laughs], important stuff.*

As the guy was cute, she was letting go, but, when they broke up, she soon blocked and excluded them from her profile.<sup>13</sup> This process is constituted, in Polivanov (2014) terms, as a “Facebook cleanout”, management of friendships and contacts that assume different expressions from the sociability regimens. To Bianca, 31 years old, this digital cleanout must also be spiritual:

At home, I use seven sticks of quince in the end of the year to sweep everything bad that was left there. On Face as well! I don’t keep anything cluttering, things, people, nothing. Every once in a while we have to sweep away.<sup>14</sup> I delete people that I know have a heavy energy, that [Maria] Mulamba knows they are trouble. Because she says, she keeps saying, keeps showing their faces until you realize that. And I am bad! I click on delete [profile] laughing and calling her [pombagira by singing]: “There she comes, walking down the street. With Tiriri, Marabô and Tranca Rua [other Exus]”. Why would I want these people near me [on my profile], knowing everything that goes on with me?

These disputes mark ambivalences of identity processes that focus dominions like family (blood or chosen), sexuality and intimacy, before fundamentally belonging to the private dominion, but that go through

13 About other forms of discrimination, demonization and death wish of transvestites practicing candomblé and mobilized on digital social media, see Maranhão Filho (2016a).

14 As all as the others, the reference is not only to enemies, but the great number of male profiles interested in sexual encounters. According to them, fake contacts - usually, profiles without a picture or with few information, profiles of men that live far away, considered ugly, fake, poor, etc, but keep adding them as friends - every once in a while “must be swept away”.



composing an expansion of the public field of lived experience (HALL, 2003). As the religious experience comes before her signing up on the website, they say "Facebook only ties one end", in other words, technology interweaves itself to other spheres of social life. Something that is shared online can be interpreted as an element of "an atelier that enables the elaboration of gender identities and transgendered gender expressions" (MARANHÃO FILHO, 2016c, p. 146). Laura explains it this way:

There is a song that explains everything I'm talking about. I have always listened to it and always took to myself, to my things, to everything I have, what I have achieved, my life, everything was for my gypsy. It says something like this: "What is mine belongs to the gypsy, what is hers is not mine!" If you want to know, my Face is like that, it also belongs to her. [...] If it's mine, it's hers, because she gives me life, protects me, because of that I don't see any problem in posting and liking things about the religion.

The identification of the own technology with the orisha constitutes the perception that every spheres of social life is linked to the religious life. Kelly while living a complicated situation during a trip to Montevideo, posted a picture, a selfie taken at the bus while she was traveling, with the following text: "Only two days in this city and my GOD... WHY DOES MY PRESENCE BOTHER THESE DEMONS SO MUCH... CLARITY, MY MOTHER IANSÃ. STRENGTH AGAINST THIS ENVY". In the post, she marks: "feeling GRATEFUL FOR EVERYDAY ✨ SIMPLY FOR THE POSSIBILITY OF SEEING THE LIGHT OF DAY". She explains the post:

Us that work on the streets, go up and down, we don't work alone, there are many trans that, wanting or not, in the trans world, have a lot of envy, a lot of... jealousy, envy, that whole thing. And when I arrived there [Montevideo], you know that new people everywhere earns, you know... Thank god, I've earned a lot. I knocked on more doors than others [made more sexual encounters and, consequently, earned more money] and they began to feel disturbed, make trouble, unfortunately it is what it is, we suffer a lot from that.

This episode indicates how technology is inserted in daily experiences managed by faith. Posts mobilize systems of sociability through an existential character, linked specially to personal sharings. They are not only forms of biographic narration, but ways of being present, controlling fear and uncertainty and manifesting the capacity of moving on through life's obstacles (WINOCUR, 2009). These observations show how the internet collaborates in processes of identity definition and peregrination “both on social context where they experience it, and in symbolic systems through which we give meaning to these own positions” (WOODWARD, 2012, p. 33). In their profiles, they articulate more fixed gender and sexuality positions and more nomadic ones, capable of destabilizing and transgressing norms and regulations of identities (MARANHÃO FILHO, 2016b).

### **“Religion is a whole thing! With the internet, then...”: digital interfaces in religious practices**

Through the creation and maintenance of a profile, according to Recuero (2012), it is possible to manage different social capitals that the actors dispose, mobilized in function of common and shared values. The relationship between profile and identity, in the context of the interactions we've observed, indicates the way how “the face works”, the handling and search for legitimacy of other actors that belong to the social network (RECUERO, 2014) is also negotiated and built with the attributes of orishas or the religious life.

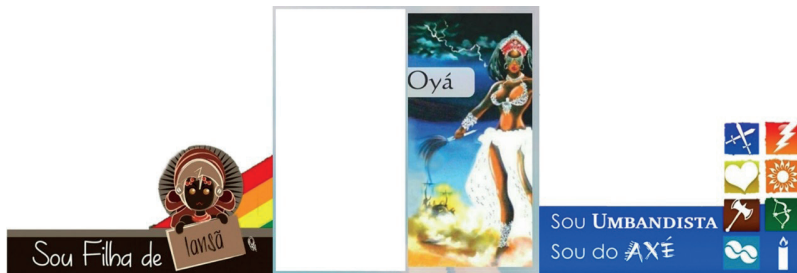
According to Polivanov (2015), the profiles didn't represent the social actors transported for the digital environment, but they signalize the articulation of the discursive and performative persona directed as a way of self-representation. The names they present themselves with, profile pictures and background pictures are elements of this elaboration. Bibiana de Yemanjá, Samara de Oyá, Ialorixá Mary de Oxum<sup>15</sup> are examples of

15 Their first names are fictional to preserve their identities.

the names assumed by the interlocutors, which index their self-representation in the social network to their religious life.

The background images, many times, present illustrations of entities. Nicolly and Kelly use thematic filters in their profile pictures. Nicolly, daughter of Oxum, uses Oxum’s filter. According to her, in addition to the protection in her work life and against envy, the filter represents beauty and sweetness, characteristics of the entity, which she also attributes to herself. In this sense, it is the Orisha’s face that presents the profile and indicates a religious alignment.

Image 1: Orisha’s thematic filters



Source: Facebook. Research data.

Kelly, in turn, uses the filter and other images and posts of her Oyá, Iansã, in form of thanking her for the protection and care she receives. The posts produce values linked to faith, to gratefulness to the entity or as a request for protection:

I post and thank her for the multitude of good things that happened to me, I am always grateful to my great mother Oyá, my mother Iansã, I don’t have a reason to hide it, I speak publicly about who I am and I don’t have any shame to publicly show that. Just like she didn’t have any shame of taking me, assuming me, my mother Oyá.

Laura uses as background image the orishas that rule the years. These are images you can find on the internet and she “religiously” change once a year. In 2015, Ogum and Oxum; in 2016, Oxalá and Iemanjá; in

2017, Oxóssi and Oxum; in 2018, Xangô and Iansã.<sup>16</sup> For her, the posts represent her daily life, the good things that happened to her, the gatherings with friends and family, everything under the orisha's protection: "Someone goes in, opens my Facebook, head first<sup>17</sup> are the orishas. She will think twice before doing anything to me, saying anything to me".

Pictures of parties, rituals and offerings are also published and can receive tags of other people added to their profiles. In general, they are received in an enthusiastic manner through the audience, practicing religion or not. They use tags like #curimba, #roda, #gira, #partiuroda, #boragirá, #magic, #magicnight, #ladyofthenight<sup>18</sup> that, more than attaching some content, represent the insertion of practices of religion in the discursivity network logics.

Other interactions that follow posts are greetings. Laura explains that the same thing that happens in the social network happens in the corrente (circle of mediums incorporated or not) and in the assistance (who is waiting to take a pass): they answer the orisha with their own greeting. While "Salve!" And "Saravá!" Have a generic tone, serving a great number of publications, most posts about orishas are greeted in a proper manner. They write, for example, "Laroiê" and "Adorei as almas" to Exus, "Odoiá" to Iemanjá. The expressions are followed by emojis that relate with the symbolism of the entity. In the inventory of possible graphic resources, Iemanjá seem to be the most popular: wave, fishes, sea animals, coconut tree, island, flowers, crown and stare are almost always acted after the greeting. To answer a greeting means to read the content, generally a prayer, a message of self-esteem, or even that the orisha

16 Updating the data, she says that, in 2019, it might be Ogum, but she needs to see in the whelks. While that doesn't happen, she looks for the images.

17 "Head first" refers both to the protection given by the orisha and the background photo, visual element in the superior part of the page.

18 This tag was also observed in posts of workplaces in prostitution. In general, images with friends, in sexy poses evidencing their body. In this context, they also consider themselves as ladies of the night, urban pombagiras, example of how "religion is capable of including each and every characteristic of humanity in sacrality" (BARROS e BAIRRÃO, 2015, p. 128). But that relation is not established only to the pombagiras, known for the fame of having many lovers. Kelly compares her own life to Oyá's, warrior orisha that, like her, doesn't fear to face life's difficult times.

“went through the timeline” to bless and if they received the axé. That way, we understand in these interactions both sociability and protection.

Some comments and posts about religion are marked by irreverence and humor. Nicolly and Bianca shared a quiz result to know who were their pombagiras, showing agreement to the characteristics revealed in the test. The comments on the posts show how true is the result when representing the characteristics of the person. Another example are the posts with illustrations of a pombagira where they tag “the friend that makes the same mess when they arrive” Less detainers of a concrete religious value, images like the ones we enlisted pointed to a humorous interaction which leads to sociabilities amongst close friends.

Image 2: Religiousness and humor



Source: Facebook. Research data.

In addition to the publication of different contents, technology itself can be interdicted depending on the context, as it is the case in initiations. When Bianca, who works in a beauty parlor, “lied down” to her Oxum, fulfilling her obligations remained in “quarantine” period called euó, when you abstain of many activities, having some interdictions, including sexual and food related interdictions. In this period, which lasted 40 days for her, she guaranteed she didn’t post anything on Facebook, only followed posts in the timeline, and she only used WhatsApp for urgent matters. According to her, this is “a time of self-communion, it’s not like it’s forbidden, but what good do you get from staying at home and getting crazy on the internet?”. Euó interdicts interactions that

may corrupt the self-communion practices, especially those referring to invitations to parties, friendships and drinking sprees, or even interaction marked by sexuality and sex, like the exchange of nudes that may be done through online interactions. The same situation happened to Nicolly, sex worker that remained during eight days in the same type of self-communion, without working. During this period, she stopped using Tinder. As she couldn't get out of the house, she received the visit (without having sex) of one of the men she met through the app and after that he became a client she became friends with, but only because she had told she was going to fulfill her obligation.

It's common sense that judges and interdicts practice of religion lived in the digital world. Kelly explains this relationship:

If the orisha comes to talk to you, give you all their axé, after that you cannot talk about it with someone else. She doesn't know what happened. It is a whole thing until she comes back, you need to go back, sit, get your strength back. And you don't remember a thing. That's the secret. [...] The same goes to the internet, we do not post all the ritual, there's no way. The pictures are about us, the offerings, friends. We show because it's beautiful and to value, but we do not reveal the main thing [...]. It's like seeing a house through the street, you see just a little bit, what happens inside is none of our business.

The post of videos of curimbas also establish interactions that mark online sociability. In a video posted by Bianca, she appears during the process of disincorporating. The camera records, with a certain distance, the incorporated entity going away and being helped by other entities with a blow in her ears. In another video posted by her, it's possible to see her friend's pombagira spinning in the center of a gira with the sound of atabaques. The comments and shares of both videos claim the power of these entities. According to her, the principle that "every house has its rules" stands here. Videos show important moments of curimbas that are shared by beauty and force, although it may seem not to exist a consensus on whether to publish them or not. The production of images of this type, instead of rocking the definitions of sacred, feeds

even further the feelings of belonging and sharing in the network. It is by the fact of these posts are personalized, that helps the identification of the presented persona, that these practices do not discharacterize cultural, personal and group origins, nor the sacred values that technologic changes may dissolve (TRAMONTE, 2002).

About the photos of entities incorporated on curimbas, not only for transvestites, there is a reincidence of positions and body gestures that attest the incorporation and guarantee the maintenance of what is considered sacred. The entities photographed, even in posed pictures, Do not look straight to the camera.<sup>19</sup> In these pictures, published on Facebook, what stands out is that the entities maintain their face looking to the ground and the eyes are always closed, being sitted, standing or in dance movements. At times, pombagiras cover their eyes with fans and Exus cover their eyes with their hats. This shared way of standing, this (non) look socialized by different entities reminds us the analysis of Csordas (2008) about the embodied imagery in experiences of charismatic Christianity in North America, where forms of conception of pre-cultural world are constituted in the socialization of religious processes.<sup>20</sup>

The entities - still in situation of transcendence, in the expression of Csordas, in pre-cultural state (incorporation, transe) – share a statute of body gesture socially informed by the habitus recognized as true (we don’t get to see the eyes). About that, the interlocutors say that the eyes, especially of incorporated entities, need to remain secret. For them, the eye is the body part that most reveals life and misteries. In the eyes we have all the power: “All the ará, the body, is sacred... from our sisters, the gays, the adé [gays], but it’s on the eye that you see all the energy of the person, all the emi [life force given by the orishas]. It’s the eye that keeps the axé”, says Nicolly. This behavior socialized by the orishas work, thinking according to Csordas (2008, p. 108), how shared and socialized

19 We chose not to share images so as not to identify people.

20 When proposing the corporeity as an anthropologic paradigm, Csorda aims to collapse the dualities between subject-object and structure-practice. To do so, it revises the logic of Merleau-Ponty about the constitution of perception and the notion of habitus and the socially informed body of Bourdieu.

experiences that mix with the intentionality of constitution of rituals, “an open human process of assuming and inhabiting the cultural world where our existence transcends, but remains rooted in real situations.” When they don’t look straight to the lens/camera, the photographed body remains “free” and “the mystery of sacred safe”.

The same happens with the images in digital devices.<sup>21</sup> Many entities “run away” from attempts of photography and focus of light: “There are entities that hate this light and the sound of a camera, that they know how to recognize it’s not natural, it’s artificial, then they don’t pose and That’s why they run away”, says Nicolly. The insertion of these images in processes of sharing is seen more naturally by the interlocutors to the extent they work as register of these moments, without, however, tainting the sacred aspects of the rituals. Maybe there lies another guarantee of maintaining sacrality, bearing in mind the scenarios of circulation of these images on the internet.

For the interlocutors that work in prostitution, there are markers between their work and religion. Nicolly’s profile includes content and references both of her work on the streets and in life at the *ilê*. The technical dispositions are the same: photos, posts, tags and comments. However, looking the cellphone for the pictures published by her in her timeline, she says:

I’ll show you something here that I think you didn’t see. Look at this picture, me with the girls knocking on doors. Look at the outfit. Look how many likes, how much? [She asks and answers:] One hundred something. Now look of the comments, who is it... Who is it? Take off the girls and the *mapô* [*amapô*, women] I know. It’s only *ocó* [men]. *Ocó* wanting transvestites. No swipe up [indicating the screen a picture posted days after the first one]. Look at this one. This picture was in an event in *Canoas*, me and my religion sisters. I am so much prettier, look at the clothes, the skirt, my face was so much better. Look, I’m so much sexier than before. Now look at the likes. Only people who know me and the gays that are always there.

21 Nicolly remembers that, in a party of *Ibejis*, the child *orishas* would run away from the attempt of being photographed by an “old” digital camera: “They shouted, hid, cover their ears and say they were scared of the thunder” (which would come after the supposed lightning/flash). She remembers that the assistance for perceiving the (real) innocence of the child *orishas*.



About the reason of difference between interactions with men that only show sexual interest and the interactions mobilized by the “religion pictures”, she laughs and says: “Mana, I’ll tell you, it’s no use, what is sacred is sacred, no matter where it is”. What is evidenced is the fact that what is sacred can be independent of the place and the circumstance of its manifestation. It is not available for everyone (in the example, *ocós* could not perceive the sacred dimension of the body, only the sexual availability). In Csorda’s perspective, if the body transcends (whose cultural referents get suspended), have an informed dimension in the culture, fulfilling a series of socially informed requirements, the same happens to those who receive these messages. To those men, it’s set, in the order of pre-cultural, that they cannot see, even if they look. To select who can see it is about the body that transcends/sacrality (in this case, incorporated entity). These men are not prepared nor they know how to see: They have their eyes closed, because this is not for them. We get used to it and even feel a little bit sorry”. It is necessary, at least, beyond interest, respect to sacrality and a certain sensitivity, product of a work of initiation, persistence and religious pilgrimage.

### **Final considerations**

The article interpreted how the consumption of the social network website Facebook articulates the religious experience of their interlocutors. Curimba is experienced in digital mediations of technology, having as reference both transsexuality, which their bodies live and express in the world, and the religiosity of *ilê*. These practices show in the elaboration of representation of self, in systems of sociability, in daily sociability in network, in mediation of conflicts and sharing the experience of sacrality.

The published content (parties, adorations, prayers, plays) and the self-representation of a public persona identified with *orishas* (the *orisha* is assumed on social media because before it already taken care of the whole person’s life) are the main ways how religiosity appears in the observed interactions. Thus, life at *ilê* can no longer be understood as a

separate sphere from social sociability. It is also lived and led in their own unique dynamics according to each interaction.

The findings of field indicate that, for the interlocutors, the consumption of digital technologies does not taint sacred nor it banalizes the secrets of religion, but it collaborates in the way these concepts are re-interpreted and acted in dynamics of sociability in the social network. The religious references are personalized, keeping a direct correspondence with the profile and the life story that the person itself recognizes and narrates as their own. Through this process, they associate the possibilities of protecting the secrets of curimba before the daily mediatic productions, that give meaning to interactions and follow technologic transformations of modernity.

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