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DOSSIÊ ESPECIAL

IMAGINED JUDAISM AND THE POLITICAL MORALIZATION OF THE WEST: PHILOSEMITISM IN JAVIER MILEI'S DISCOURSE

JUDAÍSMO IMAGINADO Y LA MORALIZACIÓN POLÍTICA DE OCCIDENTE: EL FILOSEMITISMO EN EL DISCURSO DE JAVIER MILEI

JUDAÍSMO IMAGINADO E A MORALIZAÇÃO POLÍTICA DO OCIDENTE: O FILOSSEMITISMO NO DISCURSO DE JAVIER MILEI

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Abstract
This article examines how Argentine president Javier Milei reconfigures Judaism, Moses, and the State of Israel into a symbolic repertoire through which he moralizes the West and legitimizes his political project. Drawing on a full corpus of presidential speeches (2023–2025), and using a qualitative design that combines directed content analysis with grounded theory, the study reconstructs the emergent categories that organize Milei's discourse: imagined Judaism, the Moses cluster, and Israel as civilizational exemplum. Contrary to European and Brazilian cases in which right-wing philosemitism subordinates Judaism to Christian conservative identity, Milei inverts this relation. His discourse elevates Judaism to the status of civilizational origin and moral template, transforming biblical motifs into a political rationality that sanctifies free-market capitalism, frames Israel as the distilled West, and positions Argentina as a redeemed disciple within a global struggle between good and evil. By analyzing these symbolic operations through the lenses of philosemitism, performativity, and governmentality, the article shows how Jewish otherness is preserved and mobilized as a source of moral authority. The findings illuminate the distinctive workings of philosemitic imaginaries within the contemporary global right and contribute to broader debates on moralized geopolitics.

Keywords
Philosemitism; Javier Milei; Judaism; far-right populism; Argentina.

Resumen
Este artículo examina cómo el presidente argentino Javier Milei reconfigura el judaísmo, Moisés y el Estado de Israel en un repertorio simbólico a través del cual moraliza a Occidente y legitima su proyecto político. A partir de un corpus completo de discursos presidenciales (2023–2025) y mediante un diseño cualitativo que combina análisis de contenido dirigido con teoría fundamentada, el estudio reconstruye las categorías emergentes que organizan el discurso de Milei: judaísmo imaginado, el clúster de Moisés e Israel como *exemplum* civilizatorio. A diferencia de los casos europeos y brasileños en los que el filosemitismo de derecha subordina el judaísmo a una identidad cristiana conservadora, Milei invierte esta relación. Su discurso eleva al judaísmo al estatus de origen civilizatorio y modelo moral, transformando temas bíblicos en una racionalidad política que santifica el capitalismo de libre mercado, presenta a Israel como la destilación de Occidente y posiciona a la Argentina como un discípulo redimido dentro de una lucha global entre el bien y el mal. Al analizar estas operaciones simbólicas desde las perspectivas del filosemitismo, la performatividad y la gubernamentalidad, el artículo muestra cómo la otredad judía es preservada y movilizada como fuente de autoridad moral. Los hallazgos iluminan el funcionamiento distintivo de los imaginarios filosemitas dentro de la derecha global contemporánea y contribuyen a debates más amplios sobre la geopolítica moralizada.

Palabras clave
Filosemitismo; Javier Milei; Judaísmo; populismo de extrema derecha; Argentina.

Resumo
Este artigo examina como o presidente argentino Javier Milei reconfigura o judaísmo, Moisés e o Estado de Israel em um repertório simbólico por meio do qual moraliza o Ocidente e legitima seu projeto político. Com base em um corpus completo de discursos presidenciais (2023–2025) e utilizando um desenho qualitativo que combina análise de conteúdo direcionada com teoria fundamentada, o estudo reconstrói as categorias emergentes que organizam o discurso de Milei: judaísmo imaginado, o cluster de Moisés e Israel como exemplum civilizatório. Ao contrário dos casos europeus e brasileiros, nos quais o filossemitismo da direita subordina o judaísmo a uma identidade cristã conservadora, Milei inverte essa relação. Seu discurso eleva o judaísmo ao status de origem civilizatória e modelo moral, transformando motivos bíblicos em uma racionalidade política que santifica o capitalismo de livre mercado, apresenta Israel como a destilação do Ocidente e posiciona a Argentina como um discípulo redimido dentro de uma luta global entre o bem e o mal. Ao analisar essas operações simbólicas pelas lentes do filossemitismo, da performatividade e da governamentalidade, o artigo mostra como a alteridade judaica é preservada e mobilizada como fonte de autoridade moral. Os achados iluminam o funcionamento distintivo dos imaginários filossemítas dentro da direita global contemporânea e contribuem para debates mais amplos sobre geopolítica moralizada.

Palavras-chave
Filossemitismo; Javier Milei, Judaísmo; populismo de extrema-direita; Argentina.

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Introduction

In Latin America's emerging far right, Israel and "the Jewish" have become privileged moral and geopolitical signifiers. Studies on Brazil have shown how Bolsonarism fused Christian conservatism, nationalism, and philosemitism, turning Israel into a moral emblem of civilization and resilience.[1] In Argentina, similar processes accompany the ascent of Javier Milei, whose appropriation of Jewish symbols—ritual, biblical, and political—reconfigures the relationship between religion, economy, and national destiny, while diverging significantly from the Brazilian case.

While Gherman & Klein have described the Brazilian New Right's use of an "imagined Judaism" subordinated to conservative Christian identity, Milei's discourse deploys a distinct symbolic operation.[2] Rather than integrating Judaism into a Christian moral universe, he constructs it as a civilizational foundation and moral template. This elevation involves not only a selective abstraction of Jewish tradition but also a process of symbolic intensification that borders on what Rullansky has described as grotesque Judaism: an aesthetic and moral hyperbolization in which Judaic motifs are amplified, purified, and stylized into exemplary forms.[3] Integrating these insights, the article examines how Milei assembles an imagined Judaism that functions simultaneously as a reservoir of virtue, a script for conduct, and a technology of government within a moralized vision of the West.

Moreover, existing analyses of Milei's philosemitism and pro-Israel stance have mostly examined his foreign policy alignment or ideological affinities with the Israeli right.[4] These approaches have described Milei's gestures—his visit to the Western Wall, his statements on moving the Argentine embassy to Jerusalem, or his admiration for Netanyahu—as indicators of diplomatic proximity and civilizational identification.

Alongside this geopolitical strand, a growing body of literature has explored Milei's appropriation of Jewish symbols and narratives within Argentina's domestic arena. A recent array of publications have brought together interrogations on the political, ethical, and theological implications of Milei's turn toward Judaism. For instance, Lewin denounces the "cosmetic faith"[5] that instrumentalizes Jewish identity for political legitimation, while Marcoff and Naidorf & Naidorf emphasize the ethical dissonance between Milei's libertarianism and the collective morality of the Torah.[6] Moreover, Sperling and Romano question the theological coherence and affective sincerity of his conversion narrative.[7] For their part, Rolandi & Rullansky

[1] Burity, *The Brazilian conservative wave, the Bolsonaro administration, and religious actors*; Bonfim, *O espírito santo e o "rei do fim do mundo"*; Ehrlich, *Judeus contra Bolsonaro*; Gherman; Klein, *Aquela Noite*; Gherman, *O não judeu judeu*.
[2] Gherman; Klein, *Entre "conversos" e "desconversos"*; Gherman; Klein, *Aquela Noite*.
[3] Rullansky, *El judaísmo grotesco de Milei*.
[4] Fabani, *Milei, hiperoccidentalismo y quiebre de la política de equidistancia*; Setton, *The State of Israel in the Construction of Argentine Politics through a Prophetic Lens*.
[5] Lewin, *Con el shofar y la motosierra*, p. 98.
[6] Marcoff, *Tzedaká*; Naidorf; Naidorf, *La libertad como categoría equívoca*.
[7] Sperling, *Lo religioso, lo político y lo literário*; Romano, *Milei, el judaísmo y yo*.

show how Milei transforms the private dimension of belief into a performative display of faith in the public sphere.[8]

From a comparative perspective, Ginzberg and Rein situate Milei within a broader transnational phenomenon of right-wing populist leaders—such as Trump and Bolsonaro—who reactivate biblical archetypes not in relation to Jewish communities themselves but as sources of symbolic legitimacy within nationalist imaginaries. Their analysis traces the migration of religious figures like Moses from liberation theology to conservative moralization. Yet, as they note, the Argentine case displays a unique fusion of theological and economic vocabularies, in which Jewish motifs intertwine with market ethics to produce an aura of sanctified rationality.[9]

From this angle, Milei's discourse enacts what Tokatlián calls hyper-Westernism—a moralized and theological re-investment in "the West" as sacred civilization, where Israel becomes its metaphorical Jerusalem and Argentina its newly converted disciple. In this vision, the West is not merely a geopolitical orientation but a moral community of the just, animated by divine election and purified through sacrifice. This political rationality represents a novelty with regards to former right wing and neoliberal political experiences in Argentina, which did not rely on a moralization of economics or a spiritualizing of geopolitical alignments, and that certainly did not invoke Judaism to do so.[10]

While these works have illuminated the moral, doctrinal, and communal tensions surrounding Milei's relationship to Judaism, they have rarely examined how this symbolic repertoire gives meaning to his alignment with Israel. This article builds precisely on that gap, analyzing how references to Moses, the Maccabees, and the Torah operate as discursive bridges that link Milei's spiritual self-fashioning with his geopolitical positioning. Through these symbolic mediations, the Jewish tradition becomes the moral grammar that legitimizes Israel as a model of virtue, resilience, and divine election—and, simultaneously, as the spiritual anchor of Argentina's insertion into the West.

From this angle, Milei's discourse enacts what could be called a form of hyper-Westernism: a moralized and theological re-investment in "the West" as sacred civilization, where Israel becomes its metaphorical Jerusalem and Argentina its newly converted disciple. Through this configuration, Milei translates neoliberal values—discipline, sacrifice, merit—into spiritual virtues, turning the language of economics into a catechism of freedom and divine election.

The last two and a half decades saw a rise in the study of the relationship between the far right and philosemitism as a developing phenomena in Europe and, to a lesser extent, in the United States. This scholarship addressed how parties that have historically been antisemitic have progressively embraced a discourse of admiration and even affection toward Jews and Israel. Most scholars interpret this shift as a strategic attempt to take part in democratic elections in spite of their illiberal values: an attempt to both broaden their constituency and gain electoral support.[11] Amid growing radicalization against Muslim immigration, Jews and Israel

[8] Rolandi; Rullansky, *Entre lo público y lo privado*.
[9] Ginzberg; Rein, *A model to emulate? The figure of Moses in Latin American politics and ethics*.
[10] Tokatlián, *Hiperoccidentalismo, Milei y el interés nacional*.
[11] Kahmann, *'The most ardent pro-Israel party'*; Kahn, *Antisemitism, holocaust denial, and Germany's far right*; Rosenberg, *Taking the "race" out of master race*.

have been increasingly portrayed by far right leaders as a fence or frontier against the Arab and Muslim worlds.[12] This marks a shift from an ethnic and racist discourse toward a religious and cultural nationalist one, in which Jews are temporarily seen as partners in the fight against Islam. However, Jews occupy a precarious position: they are included within the *demos* only as long as they remain useful to this narrative and do not threaten the native culture, yet, this allegedly abandoned hatred does not coy far right intellectuals to preserve antisemitic symbols, imagery and values beneath a philosemitic *façade*[13].

As Wertheim suggests, the imaginary of the Jew can serve to legitimize values, ideas, and goals precisely by preserving the Jew's otherness. While including the Jew as part of the West, this intact and extraordinary otherness becomes the foundation upon which a corpus of ideas and values is legitimized.[14] This article aims to contribute to the understanding of this complex and transnational trend, seeking to explore how philosemitism can function as a moral disposition that legitimizes geopolitical alignments in Latin America, where sustaining an anti-Muslim rhetoric may neither be a central objective nor serve electoral purposes due to sociodemographic and cultural factors: mainly, because the region is far from being a key receptor of Muslim immigrants and refugees.

While philosemitism may help Milei deflect accusations of Nazism, this political identity is likewise far less central in the Global South than it is in the post-Holocaust Global North. In this same sense, the figure of the Jew imagined by the far right in the Global North differs from the one envisioned within a distinct sociopolitical context such as Argentina, serving a different political purpose. Likewise, the notion of a Western alliance imagined between European and U.S. far-right parties and Israel acquires its own particular characteristics in Milei's discourse. Similarly to what Gherman and Klein identify in the case of the New Right in Brazil, Javier Milei articulates what can be understood as an "imagined Judaism", which includes an "imagined Israel."[15] In his discourse, Jews, embodied in the State of Israel, are cast as a civilizational bulwark against both Islam and the political Left, and are constructed as intrinsically aligned with conservative, right-wing ideology and as carriers of "true" moral values. Yet, unlike in the Brazilian case, Milei's imagined Judaism does not seek to integrate Judaism into a renewed Christian identity. Rather, it positions Judaism as a civilizational precursor, although invoked through the language of "Judeo-Christian values", seeks to reinforce the moral architecture of the West, without granting it a substantive role within Christianity itself.

This article addresses that gap. Rather than asking why Milei aligns with Israel, it asks how he constructs an imagined relationship among Judaism, Israel, and the West—and what this imagination does politically. What kind of Judaism does Milei produce when he speaks of Israel as a beacon of freedom and virtue? How do moral and civilizational codes converge in this construction? And what role does

[12] Kahmann, *'The most ardent pro-Israel party'*; Rose, *The new philosemitism*; Subotic, *Antisemitism in the global populist international*; Rosenberg, *Taking the "race" out of master race*.
[13] Rose, *The new philosemitism*; Subotic, *Antisemitism in the global populist international*; Rosenberg, *Taking the "race" out of master race*.
[14] Wertheim, *Introduction: The Jew as Legitimation, Jewish-Gentile Relations Beyond Antisemitism and Philosemitism*.
[15] Gherman; Klein, *Entre "conversos" e "desconversos"*; Gherman; Klein, *Aquela Noite*.

Argentina occupy within the West that Milei envisions through that moral geography?

Research methods

From a post-structuralist perspective, discourse is approached as a performative practice of government.[16] By examining Milei's public statements as president, we show that he does not merely borrow religious or cultural imagery; rather, he constructs an imagined Judaism that helps make sense of both of his public persona and his acts of government. Scriptural figures such as Moses or the Maccabees—together with allusions to innovation, divine election, and the moral superiority of "Western civilization"—are reassembled into a symbolic repertoire. Through this synthesis, Milei converts Judaism into a language of virtue and discipline—a political rationality that moralizes order, legitimizes authority, and situates Argentina within a sacred geography of the West.

This configuration resonates with recent literature on right-wing philosemitism and the moralization of geopolitics.[17] Yet, unlike other leaders such as Trump or Bolsonaro, Milei's use of Jewish imagery is not merely diplomatic or identitarian. It operates as a mode of self-government and public pedagogy, through which he models a redeemed, entrepreneurial, and righteous subject: the chosen citizen of a chosen nation. The article thus examines the symbolic operations that make Judaism not only an object of fascination but also a performative resource for the moral legitimation of political authority.

Our aim is not to determine whether Milei's philosemitism is genuine or not, but rather to analyze it as a resource for political legitimation. We draw on Karp and Sutcliffe's definition of philosemitism as the "notion of the Jews as a resolutely distinct people, with distinctively admirable characteristics".[18] Such representations contain complex and ambivalent elements of both admiration and disdain without necessarily amounting to antisemitism. Following Wertheim,[19] the otherness of the Jew can be articulated and preserved in order to legitimize certain non-Jewish ideas and values, often taking the form of admiration of the Jewish people.[20] Most scholarship on philosemitism debates its potential harms or its proximity to antisemitism: whether it constitutes a façade for antisemitism or a variant of it.[21] Our aim is different: we seek to understand how Milei constructs the image of the Jew he admires, and how that image operates as a legitimizing and performative resource within his discourse.

The article's general objective is to explain how Milei imagines a moral and geopolitical community of the West through his symbolic appropriation of Judaism

[16] Foucault, *Governmentality*; Miller; Rose, *Political power beyond the State*.
Brown, *Undoing the demos*.

[17] Wertheim, *Geert Wilders and the Nationalist-Populist Turn Toward the Jews in Europe*; Tokatlian, *Hiperoccidentalismo, Milei y el interés nacional*; Ginzberg; Rein, *A model to emulate? The figure of Moses in Latin American politics and ethics*.

[18] Karp; Sutcliffe, *Introduction: A Brief History of Philosemitism*, p. 7.

[19] Although Wertheim draws on Zygmunt Bauman's notion of "allosemitism", understood as the practice of preserving Jewish otherness—whether through negative or positive constructions—we focus here specifically on philosemitism, since Milei's discourse expresses strong admiration for the Jewish people.

[20] Wertheim, *Introduction: The Jew as Legitimation, Jewish-Gentile Relations Beyond Antisemitism and Philosemitism*.

[21] Samuels, *Philosemitism*.

and Israel, and to assess how this construction shapes Argentina's projected place within that order. The contribution is twofold. Empirically, it reconstructs the discursive architecture through which Milei articulates religion, virtue, and civilization. Conceptually, it bridges studies on right-wing philosemitism with analyses of political performativity, showing how belief functions as a symbolic technology of rule within populist moral economies.

The corpus includes all public speeches delivered by Milei in his capacity as President of Argentina from December 2023 to the present. They originate from diverse settings—public ceremonies, international summits, press conferences, interviews, and national addresses—but all correspond to his activity as head of state. The period was selected because it comprises the entirety of Milei's presidency to date, allowing for a comprehensive reconstruction of his emergent governing discourse. Given that the research seeks to reconstruct structures of meaning rather than quantify references, a qualitative strategy was adopted, combining directed content analysis,[22] with grounded theory,[23] which together allow for theoretical guidance while remaining open to new conceptual categories emerging from the data.

Directed content analysis is appropriate when a theoretical field already offers lenses but requires refinement. Here, key notions from discourse theory and governmentality—freedom, morality, and performative legitimacy—served as anchors for an initial coding framework. Through iterative reading, manifest content (explicit references to Israel, Judaism, or biblical imagery) was distinguished from latent content (moral oppositions, metaphors, affective frames). The comparison between these levels made it possible to capture how theological and political languages intertwine in Milei's construction of authority.

The grounded theory component ensured a continuous dialogue between theory and data, allowing new categories to emerge through constant comparison techniques, involving coding through open, axial and selective stages. The process concluded when additional material ceased to modify the coding structure, indicating theoretical saturation. Although grounded theory is often associated with inductivism, here it is used heuristically to support a post-structuralist reconstruction of discursive regularities, not to generate mid-range causal theory. This design suits the research question because it enables a systematic yet flexible reconstruction of Milei's imagined order, showing how belief, virtue, and geopolitics are woven into a political moral narrative.

Milei's image of the West: free-market capitalism in the image and likeness of God

Javier Milei is explicit about the West he envisions: a civilization grounded on free-market capitalism, with a State reduced to the basic functions of preserving life, freedom and property. Presenting himself as a political outsider, an economic technician,[24] his understanding of the role of the State and his normative idea of a

[22] Neuendorf, *The content analysis guidebook*; Hsieh; Shannon, *Three approaches to qualitative content analysis*.
[23] Glaser; Strauss, *The discovery of Grounded Theory*.
[24] Ariza, *La 'casta' y los 'argentinos de bien'*.

liberal capitalism, as we have analyzed in his speeches, is sustained in his discourse through constant references to classic liberal authors like John Locke and Adam Smith, but also Chicago and Austrian-school thinkers, including Milton Friedman, Friedrich Hayek, Hans-Hermann Hoppe, Ludwig von Mises and Murray Rothbard. These readings are further complemented by others, notably Israel Kirzner and Jesús de la Huerta Soto, who defend capitalism not only on economic grounds, but as a system deeply embedded in Christian values. These authors see capitalism as a direct product of biblical revelation, a claim Milei cites approvingly.

The Argentinian president intensely displays these rationalities (classical, neoliberal, and religious) within the corpus analyzed. In the speech delivered at the Inauguration of the Pentecostal Church "*Iglesia del Portal del Cielo*" in Resistencia, Chaco, he located the first economic lesson in the Book of Genesis: "God gives Abraham, when he settles in Canaan, two commands: to multiply and to cultivate the land".[25] Within this framing, the Torah is constructed as establishing life, liberty, and private property as inalienable rights granted by God. The moral foundations of capitalism—"work as vocation, individual responsibility, foresight, respect for the law"[26] — thus acquire a Judeo-Christian grounding. Even when he echoes Weberian themes, Milei presents these principles as "revealed moral and ethical principles,"[27] deviation from which is portrayed as leading nations into "poverty, illness, crime, and misery."[28] In this sense, capitalism becomes part of what we describe as Milei's *imagined Judaism*: a symbolic reconstruction of Jewish tradition that supports his vision of the West.

This symbolic framework also organizes how morality and economic performance are linked. In a speech at the America Business Forum in Miami, he portrayed capitalism as inherently good, as it would represent "the shape that takes real freedom in this world"[29] insisting that its legitimacy derives from "our Western values [...] which are the Judeo-Christian values".[30] A few months before, at the 2025 Paraguay Conservative Political Action Conference (CPAC) (September 16th, 2025), he similarly argued that prosperity follows not from economic expertise but from "holding the correct moral values, that means, to govern with moral and ethical criteria, according to the Western values, that means, the Judeo-Christian culture behind the basis of the liberalism grounds".[31] In his view, moral and economic orders are intertwined: for the West to arise economically, it is necessary that it embraces moral values revealed by God. The coding process identifies a recurring narrative cluster through which Milei's political rationality establishes a sharply defined distinction between what counts as morally right and wrong, insisting that there are "no third ways on this road".[32] Our analysis reconstructs the discursive pattern through which Milei portrays only one path to national greatness and rejects alternatives as fundamentally misguided. This framing generates a language of confrontation: certain ideas and actors are cast as threats to the West's economic

[25] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en la inauguración de la Iglesia Portal del Cielo, en Chaco*, s/p.
[26] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en la inauguración de la Iglesia Portal del Cielo, en Chaco*, s/p.
[27] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en la inauguración de la Iglesia Portal del Cielo, en Chaco*, s/p.
[28] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en la inauguración de la Iglesia Portal del Cielo, en* Chaco, s/p.
[29] Milei, *Discurso del presidente Javier Milei en el America Business Forum de Miami*, s/p.
[30] Milei, *Discurso del presidente Javier Milei en el America Business Forum de Miami*, s/p.
[31] Milei, *Discurso del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en el CPAC Paraguay 2025*, s/p.
[32] Milei, *Discurso del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en el CPAC Paraguay 2025*, s/p.

and moral foundations, which he treats as inseparable dimensions of a single civilizational order. In what follows, we will examine how this results in the articulation of war-like ideas set upon a distinctly moral battleground.

This antagonistic view is especially clear in his speech in Jerusalem, after discussing a Memorandum of Democracy and Freedom between Israel and Argentina with Benjamin Netanyahu. Milei depicted the West as under attack from two different "barbaric" fronts. One external threat is defined as the "despotism of those who hate freedom",[33] being terrorists the clearest example of this. The internal front consists of the "ideas and political discourses that corrupt the moral compass of the free nations and relativise or excuse the danger that the real enemies of freedom represent",[34] which he groups under the label "woke ideology". Milei attributes this ideology to global elites, explicitly excluding the United States and Israel, who have, furthermore, refused to support Israel's struggle against Hamas.

Throughout several discourses within the corpus, Milei constructs this "internal threat" as a broad and elastic category encompassing a diverse array of actors ranging from LGBTQ+ activists to Hamas, from pro-Palestinian students to traditional political elites. He describes these ideas as "mental parasites"[35] lodged in the brain "by force of decades of collectivist indoctrination".[36] These ideas, he argues, are a façade designed to legitimize an interventionist State that attacks the three core natural rights of liberal capitalism: life, freedom, and private property. The critique of the free market and the defense of social justice are a disguise "to justify State intervention".[37] Social justice is framed as an "anti-Judeo-Christian idea",[38] a form of coercion that arbitrarily and violently redistributes the fruits of individual labor. Woke-like ideology is therefore portrayed as an attempt to destroy Western civilization by subverting its values, effectively bringing communism to the West. In this vein, Milei understands the battle against the left and the "woke" as a moral struggle aimed at restoring an order grounded not only in moral but in revealed values that underlie free-market capitalism. "They want to replace our God in heaven for their damned State God".[39]

The internal and external fronts—the "woke" and the terrorists—are linked in a vicious circle in the Jerusalem Memorandum speech. The "woke," by destroying morality, confidence and tradition from within, opened the way for the external enemy to destroy the West. As he puts it: "One, motivated by murderous fundamentalism; the other possessed by a suicidal relativism, which sacrifices the

[33] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, tras el intercambio de textos sobre el memorando de la democracia y la libertad, junto al primer ministro Benjamín Netanyahu, en Jerusalén, Israel*, s/p.

[34] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, tras el intercambio de textos sobre el memorando de la democracia y la libertad, junto al primer ministro Benjamín Netanyahu, en Jerusalén, Israel*, s/p.

[35] Although Javier Milei presents his discourse as a revival of a long-standing idea of cultural struggle, his narrative is strongly influenced by contemporary right-wing ideologues. Notably, the notion of "mental parasites" is directly borrowed from the Chilean thinker Axel Kaiser, particularly from his book Parásitos mentales (Mental Parasites, in English). In this investigation, however, the focus remains on how Milei deploys the framework of cultural struggle specifically in relation to the idea of the West that he constructs, and the ways in which he moralizes Jewish tradition to sustain that construction.
For a deeper examination of Kaiser's work and its influence, see Morales Martin (2024). For analyses of the production, circulation, and uptake of cultural-battle narratives within Argentina, see Saferstein (2024; 2023).

[36] Milei, *Palabras del presidente Javier Milei en la presentación de los "Voceros de la Libertad" de la Fundación Faro*, s/p.

[37] Milei, *Discurso del presidente Javier Milei en el America Business Forum de Miami*, s/p.

[38] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en la inauguración de la Iglesia Portal del Cielo, en Chaco*, s/p.

[39] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en la inauguración de la Iglesia Portal del Cielo, en Chaco*, s/p.

future on the altar of sentimentality".[40] In this sense, supporting Israel becomes an important task to defend the West: it is therefore necessary to wage war against such enemies, as he believes is exemplified in the Israel–Palestine conflict. This section has shown how his reconstruction of Judaism underpins his vision of capitalism and the West. To understand this connection, we must examine how he moralizes Jewish tradition, how this is embedded in his depiction of capitalism and the West as outlined above, and how it relates to the current situation in Israel.

A struggle against the 'evil socialist-woke': Judaism as the moral justification for an alliance with the U.S. and Israel in a global war to defend the "West"

As already stated, Milei's image of the West is deeply moralized and intertwined with a religious worldview. Although he presents the West as rooted in what he calls "Judeo-Christian" values, his emphasis falls on the relevance of Judaism and his profound admiration for the Jewish people. His own slogan, "*Las fuerzas del cielo*", is taken from Maccabees 3:19: "the victory in the battle does not depend on the quantity of soldiers, but on the forces that come from the skies".[41] Milei even closes all his speeches with the phrase: "May God bless us all, may the forces from the sky accompany us, long live freedom, *carajo*!".[42] This leads us to ask: What image of Judaism does he construct? How does it relate to the idea of Israel that he promotes? In what ways is this intertwined with his broader conception of the West, and how does it provide moral foundations for it?

The current Argentinian president presents a fusion of neoliberal and conservative views in his public discourse.[43] Within this synthesis, a set of religious notions and ideas also converges, as previously discussed in relation to his vision of the West: references to the Torah and to the alleged Judeo-Christian foundations of Western civilization. Although Milei situates the Jewish people firmly within that civilizational tradition, he simultaneously preserves their otherness, which functions as a symbolic resource that helps legitimize his idealized conception of the West.[44]

In our reconstruction of his discourse, this recurrent emphasis on the Jewish people emerged during the coding process as a distinct pattern that we identify as an instance of *imagined Judaism*. Across the corpus analyzed, references to Judaism appeared not merely as isolated citations but as a stable discursive node that linked morality, civilization, and political order. This emergent category—derived through iterative comparison between speeches—captures how Milei reassembles Jewish tradition into a moral template for the West. Once again, this configuration echoes what Gherman and Klein observe in the Brazilian New Right,[45] albeit without the strong imprint of Neopentecostalism in Javier Milei's discourse. Milei can thus be situated within a broader New Right that mobilizes an *imagined*

[40] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, tras el intercambio de textos sobre el memorando de la democracia y la libertad, junto al primer ministro Benjamín Netanyahu, en Jerusalén, Israel*, s/p.
[41] Milei, *Discurso del presidente Javier Milei en la Knéset, el parlamento del Estado de Israel, en Jerusalén*, s/p.
[42] Milei, *Discurso del presidente Javier Milei en el America Business Forum de Miami*, s/p.
[43] Morresi; Vicente, *Rayos en cielo encapotado*.
[44] Wertheim, *Introduction: The Jew as Legitimation, Jewish-Gentile Relations Beyond Antisemitism and* Philosemitism.
[45] Gherman; Klein, *Entre "conversos" e "desconversos"*; Gherman; Klein, *Aquela Noite*.

Judaism, in which Jews and the State of Israel are cast as civilizational barriers against Islam and the Left. However, unlike in the Brazilian case, Christian identity, and its articulation with this imagined Judaism, does not constitute the core of the civilizational narrative; rather, it functions as an accessory element, secondary to a more diffuse moral and civilizational framing of the West, within which Jewish texts and economic theory appear more closely intertwined.

We argue that he advances a distinctly philosemitic view of the Jewish people, presenting them as a nation that ought to be admired and regarded as a role model. In Milei's discourse, the Jewish people appear as miraculous, heroic, and unwavering defenders of freedom and against evil; as the people that truly continuously live up to God's commandments. He constructs an image of them as having endured, and continuing to endure in contemporary Israel, the assaults of those who seek to undermine the true teachings and values of God. This appears not only in his references to Jewish texts, but also in his interpretation of Israel's present. The Jewish nation, through the values it embodies and defends, represents, for him, the core and moral foundation of the West.

Taken together, these statements illustrate a recurring discursive pattern that crystallized during axial coding: Jewish people are constructed simultaneously as the exemplary bearers of divine values and as a distinct, admirable "other" whose very difference legitimizes Milei's imagined West. Rather than dissolving Jewish distinctiveness into a generic civilizational narrative, the discourse preserves and celebrates that distinctiveness—deploying it as a symbolic resource for moral and political authority.

In this sense, Milei articulates a distinctly philosemitic framework: Jewish people are portrayed as an integral consistent unity, endowed with exceptional qualities that amount to a radical otherness.[46] This celebrated otherness is then mobilized to legitimize a particular moral and civilizational core.[47] Even as Jewish tradition is incorporated into Milei's conception of the West, the otherness of the Jewish nation remains intact—indeed, it is emphasized as extraordinary and exemplary.[48]

This operation can be read as part of the elaboration of a political rationality: through the elevation of Jewish otherness, the discourse performs a moral pedagogy that models the virtues a Western subject ought to embody, providing a symbolic reservoir of discipline and divine legitimacy that, disregarding how contemporary Jewish communities read the scriptures and produce meaning on their own traditions, Milei displays in order to legitimize political alignments with right wing leaders and movements, and justify decision-making.

His admiration to the Jewish people is expressed in explicitly moral terms, materializing most clearly in his repeated use of the figure of Moses. Within the coding process, references to Moses repeatedly emerged as a narrative anchor through which Milei frames Judaism as the origin of a divinely sanctioned moral order. The Jewish people, as receivers of the tablets of the Law, are depicted by Javier Milei as having been endowed with the moral foundations of capitalism: the defense of life, property, and freedom as natural rights. Judaism is imagined as the

[46] Karp; Sutcliffe, *Introduction: A Brief History of Philosemitism*.
[47] Wertheim, *Introduction: The Jew as Legitimation, Jewish-Gentile Relations Beyond Antisemitism and Philosemitism*.
[48] Wertheim, *Geert Wilders and the Nationalist-Populist Turn Toward the Jews in Europe*.

first true word of God, and the Jewish people as its guardians. These references were not isolated; they appeared across speeches in different venues and moments, suggesting saturation of this category within the corpus. As an emergent pattern, *imagined Judaism* thus links the figure of the Jewish people to an ethic of struggle, endurance, and obedience to divine law—an ethic that, in Milei's discourse, grounds the very possibility of Western freedom.

Within this narrative, Moses emerges as the leader who guides the Hebrews out of slavery and toward the promised land, as much as Milei would lead the Argentine people out of the woke agenda, Peronism's welfarism and the State interventionist model. In his rationality, Milei, as Moses, overcomes the resistance of Pharaoh, corrupt old politics, through the intervention of "forces that came from the sky, guided by our Lord".[49] According to Milei, Moses' teachings highlight "the importance of reliving each day the truths that allowed him to reach his destination".[50] The story also illustrates, in this reading, the fight of those moral yet less powerful, the private sector, against an oppressive ruler, an active Welfarist State, who exploits those who follow the word of God.

Milei also invokes the Exodus to argue that not everyone is ready to be liberated or to hear the truth. During the official ceremony for the International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust, on January 27th, 2025, he paraphrased from the Torah: "And the people did not listen to Moses due to the narrowness of their spirit and due to their hard work".[51] Before this citation, he attempted to defend Elon Musk from accusations of being a "Nazi" following the controversy sparked after having publicly raised his arm in the Nazi salute fashion, which he later presented as a "Roman Salute".[52]

Moreover, after paraphrasing the Torah, he commended Donald Trump for his efforts to negotiate the return of the hostages taken on October 7th. In this context, the figure of Moses conveys not only the struggle for freedom, which for Milei extends from the Exodus to the Shoah, but also the idea that liberation is not immediately accepted by all. Freedom, therefore, must continuously be fought for. This sequence expands the symbolism of Moses beyond a leader resisting external threats, such as the Egyptians, to one who also confronts internal resistance from those who prefer the comfort of servitude over the challenge of embracing the truth. In Milei's rationality, this internal resistance maps onto contemporary figures who, in his view, refuse to support the cultural battle he proposes; that refuse to support the Trump-led USA and Israel.

This sequence illustrates how Moses operates as a discursive dispositif between temporalities and needs: in other words, between the biblical account, the Jewish people's historical traumas, and Milei's understanding of contemporary geopolitics. Through constant comparison of the speeches, an axial pattern

[49] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, luego de recibir el Premio Escuela de Salamanca, desde el Centro Riojano, España*, s/p.

[50] Milei, *Discurso del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en el CPAC Paraguay 2025*, s/p.

[51] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en el acto oficial del Día Internacional en Memoria de las Víctimas del Holocausto*, s/p.

[52] On the evening of Donald Trump's inauguration as president, on January 20th, 2025, during the event held at Washington's Capital One Arena, Elon Musk made a gesture he described as "Roman," though many interpreted it as a "Nazi" salute, generating significant controversy. See: Leparmentier, *Nazi salute or not? US divided over Musk's gesture at Trump's inauguration ceremony*.

emerged: Moses appears not as a mere metaphor nor as strictly religious reference, be it legendary or not, but as a performative model through which Milei frames obedience to divine truth as the condition of political freedom in the present. By iteratively invoking Moses, the discourse recodes ancient narrative into a contemporary moral imperative. Moses performs a pedagogical function in its discourse, which enacts a moralized vision of political struggle that constructs an idealized Western subject, rather than providing doctrinal content This operation is reminiscent of how governmentality aims to mold the conduct expected of political subjects by affirming moral associations between what it is presented as a righteous defense of individual rights, freedom and Western culture. While also this narrative cluster exemplifies how discursive governmentality can stage religious history as an ever-present guide for contemporary political action.

In this sense, Milei interprets and resignifies Jewish traditions, finding in them a source of alleged moral inappellability through which it is possible to discoursively sanctify his cultural battle and his political and economic program. A political victory, Milei claims, "is not the end of the struggle for ideas, but the beginning of a new struggle to defend them".[53] Freedom is "the light that allows us to sweep away the darkness of those who want to enslave us".[54] The cultural battle—which he calls the "eternal exodus, the reencounter with God"[55]—is the path through which the West must restore its moral order by recovering the values that ground liberal freedom. This struggle is framed as taking place on two fronts, as discussed in the previous section.

In this same symbolic field, the Jewish people are repeatedly portrayed as engaged in a continuous struggle for freedom against enemies: "more powerful than them, which has forged in this people a heroic spirit, a warrior spirit".[56] For Milei, this is evident not only in the Exodus but also in the Warsaw Ghetto uprising, as he emphasized during the ceremony for International Holocaust Day on May 8th, 2024. What matters in these battles is not only that they were fought in defense of freedom and the good, but that they were waged by the few against the many, as the Maccabees had once fought the Greeks.

Through constant comparison, this narrative of "the few against the many" emerged as another coded pattern linked to both the Moses and Maccabees clusters. The discourse repeatedly frames Jewish history as a sequence of improbable victories that signal divine endorsement; in doing so, it produces a model of political struggle grounded in endurance, righteousness, and chosenness. Within the broader argumentative structure, this becomes a performative justification for Milei's own political project: the cultural war he proposes is framed as the contemporary iteration of this ancient struggle of those who would be both moral yet outnumbered. For Milei, freedom is not merely negative (in the Berlinian sense), nor it strictly resembles the neoliberal entrepreneurial positive reading of freedom; in addition to the latter, for Milei, freedom represents the possibility of choosing good over evil. Freedom becomes a deeply moral notion—rooted in his portrayal of the Jews as

[53] Milei, *Palabras del presidente Javier Milei en la presentación de los "Voceros de la Libertad" de la Fundación Faro*, s/p.
[54] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en la inauguración de la Iglesia Portal del Cielo, en Chaco*, s/p.
[55] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en la inauguración de la Iglesia Portal del Cielo, en Chaco*, s/p.
[56] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en el CCK con motivo del acto por el Día Internacional del Holocausto*, s/p.

those who choose good by adhering to divine commandments as bearers of divine revelation.

This image of the Jewish people extends to the State of Israel. Israel is presented as a miracle on its own, just as the Jewish nation is, and as a model to be universally admired. This is clearly expressed in his speech at the Knesset on June 11th, 2025 where he referred to what he considers three miraculous events concerning Israel and the Jewish people: first, the creation of the State after the Shoah; second, Israel's physical survival in the face of constant attacks from its neighbors; and third, the economic boom that transformed it into a major technological, defense, and economic power. In Milei's narrative, Israel's present is a continuation of the miraculous character of the Jewish nation. Its physical endurance today is not only depicted as a contemporary miracle, but as one that can be traced throughout the religious texts. The miracle of Hanukkah and the previously cited passage from Maccabees are also invoked in this speech as part of the ongoing miracles he sees in Israel's rise. He then describes the Jewish people as immortal because they have "remained true to these timeless principles and values".[57] They have remained faithful, in his view, to the principles and values revealed by God. Therefore, his vision of Israel is profoundly moral: its existence is understood as an outcome ordained by God, and its strength derives from its adherence to God's commandments.

Across the coding process, references to Israel clustered around a consistent set of themes: miracle, endurance, chosenness, and moral exemplarity. Through constant comparison, these recurrent elements coalesced into an axial category that we identify as Israel as a civilizational exemplum. Rather than functioning merely as foreign policy positioning, the discourse constructs Israel as the living embodiment of the values attributed to Judaism—values recast as the foundation of the West. This emergent pattern appeared in speeches delivered in international forums, domestic political events, and ceremonial settings, indicating saturation across the corpus.

More specifically, our analysis shows that the true West is, for Milei, embodied today in Israel. For Milei, defending Israel is therefore a just cause because it is "the cause of freedom".[58] The fight against Hamas becomes a battle against evil and barbarism: "freedom against terror [...] good against evil",[59] on which the future of Western civilization depends. If societies lose the ability to distinguish good from evil, he argues, prosperity, stability, and order collapse. Consequently, every attack on Israel becomes an attack on the West itself, on the good, and even on God's commandments observed by the Jewish people, who in his discourse, have "remained true to these timeless principles and values".[60] In line with what Gherman and Klein[61] argue for the Brazilian case, Javier Milei constructs an "imagined Israel" that functions as a civilizational bulwark against both Islam and the political Left. In this framing, the State of Israel becomes the geopolitical embodiment of his

[57] Milei, *Discurso del presidente Javier Milei en la Knéset, el parlamento del Estado de Israel, en Jerusalén*, s/p.
[58] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación en cena anual de Fundación Federalismo y Libertad*, s/p.
[59] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, tras el intercambio de textos sobre el memorando de la democracia y la libertad, junto al primer ministro Benjamín Netanyahu, en Jerusalén, Israel*, s/p.
[60] Milei, *Discurso del presidente Javier Milei en la Knéset, el parlamento del Estado de Israel, en Jerusalén*, s/p.
[61] Gherman; Klein, *Aquela Noite*.

"imagined Judaism": the territorial and strategic extension of an idealized Jewish people, onto which moral and civilizational attributes are projected.

In Milei's political rationality, Israel is not simply aligned with the West but is framed as its distilled essence. This framing does not describe geopolitical realities; instead, it performs a symbolic condensation through which Israel becomes the moral core of Western civilization. As the coding showed, Milei repeatedly links Israel to divine revelation, economic prosperity, technological progress, and military resilience—attributes positioned as indicators of moral truth. This discursive operation functions as a political rationality: by elevating Israel as the exemplary West, the discourse instructs subjects in what it means to inhabit Western civilization properly.

Moreover, Milei sees present day Israel as the embodiment and continuation of the entire Jewish tradition he imagines and defends. This is illustrated, for Milei, both by the external attack of terrorism the country is undergoing and by the internal attack of the global "woke" ideology that, he argues, seeks to undermine Israel's legitimate cause of self-defense. By situating Israel at the intersection of the two forces previously described, the external terrorist threat and the internal "woke" threat, Milei's narrative performs a governmentality of fear and vigilance: subjects are taught to perceive threats to Israel as threats to Western civilization itself.

These statements reveal a patterned articulation that links Israel's military struggle to a broader economy of moralized geopolitics. Within the discourse, Israel's wars are framed as exemplary enactments of the struggle between good and evil—a framing that aligns biblical history, Jewish endurance, and contemporary conflict within a unified moral narrative. This operation is performative: by declaring Israel's wars to be moral battles that secure the very possibility of Western order, the discourse seeks to govern collective affect, loyalty, and political orientation.

But Israel is also admired by Milei, due to what he calls an economic miracle: from being a small nation with economic difficulties, it became a "global vanguard in economic, commercial, technological and defense matters".[62] For him, Israel represents not only a literal fight for freedom against evil in a total war, but also the realization of a free-market capitalist model achieved by following God's moral commandments. Israel and the Jewish nation thus appear as the highest point of Western civilization because of their fight against evil and because they have attained economic prosperity through adherence to revealed moral values.

This economic dimension appeared repeatedly in the coding as part of the same emergent category. Israel's technological success, entrepreneurial culture, and integration into global markets are framed, on the one hand, as developmental achievements but, more importantly, on the other, as signs of divine favor—evidence that fidelity to revealed values yields prosperity. Through the analytical lens of governmentality, this narrative functions as a moral pedagogy: Israel becomes an exemplary model that demonstrates how nations ought to govern themselves, linking economic conduct to spiritual obedience.

In Milei's discourse, Israel and the Jewish people function simultaneously as a moral example and as a justification for his defense of a particular vision of liberal freedom and capitalism. His philosemitism rests on admiration for a specific

[62] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, tras el intercambio de textos sobre el memorando de la democracia y la libertad, junto al primer ministro Benjamín Netanyahu, en Jerusalén, Israel*, s/p.

economic model that he grounds in a selective reading of the Torah—one he believes is made manifest in Israel's present reality. Israel becomes, for him, the concrete realization of a divine revelation of economic truths that should be adopted worldwide. It thus serves as the moral foundation for capitalist prosperity.

Argentina's role: a triad with the United States and Israel to restore a moral order

The political struggle model that Milei constructs around the imagined Judaism previously discussed — grounded in a moral framework of endurance, righteousness, and chosenness — operates as a key mechanism through which he legitimizes his own political project. He presents his presidency as part of a divine miracle. The fact that he assumed office on December 10th, 2023, during Hanukkah, is framed as a sign revealing his mission. He recalls that Hanukkah commemorates the feat of the Maccabees against the Greeks, and he invokes the already cited phrase: "the victory in the battle does not depend on the quantity of soldiers but on the forces that come from the sky."[63] In this narrative, his leadership becomes the struggle of the few against an enormous hegemonic "woke agenda," operating both within Argentina and across the global stage.

Thus, Argentina assumes a newly central position within the West that Milei imagines. Under his leadership, he sees the possibility of restoring a moral economy in Argentina, enabling the country to project itself as a leader on the global stage. Through constant comparison, our coding revealed the notion of a "cultural battle" as a project aimed at restoring what Milei portrays as the moral greatness of the West. To achieve this restoration, his discourse proposes the formation of a Western front capable of reinstating the moral values he deems necessary to confront both the relativists within the West and the external terrorist threat. In doing so, he advances a distinctly moralized vision of geopolitics.

At the center of this Western front, he places Israel, the United States, and Argentina—nations he presents as defenders of life, freedom, and private property. In this rationality, waging a cultural war requires the reestablishment of Judeo-Christian values as the foundation of Western civilization, to be upheld through an alliance among those nations committed to preserving them.

In this sense, Javier Milei sees himself as a "disseminator of the ideas of freedom",[64] personally responsible, especially in his role as president, for leading this cultural war. In the new global cultural, physical, and economic war he envisions, Argentina is to serve as a lighthouse illuminating Western nations that have lost themselves to woke ideology. For this reason, he argues, Israel's fight against terrorism and the United States' struggle against the "woke" must be supported. Argentina, he claims, is the vanguard of this fight, tasked with opening the eyes of nations captured by pro-State discourses. This role is possible, he insists, because Argentina is undergoing "its own exodus: it is being liberated, after a hundred years, from a political caste that advanced, uncontrolled, on its citizens".[65]

[63] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, luego del acto de jura y asunción presidencial, desde las escalinatas del Honorable Congreso de la Nación*. s/p.

[64] Milei, *Discurso del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en el CPAC Paraguay 2025*, s/p.

[65] Milei, *Discurso del presidente Javier Milei en la Knéset, el parlamento del Estado de Israel, en Jerusalén*, s/p.

Thus, the Moses cluster reappears as a moral template for Argentine politics—illustrating how the country is being liberated in order to return to the righteous path—and for geopolitics as well, by offering a model of how a nation can lead the global struggle of the few against the many. In this framework, the imagined Judaism he constructs once again provides the foundational ground that makes Western freedom possible, beginning with Argentina itself.

Argentina's centrality in this front rests on a dual function. First, the country serves as the "herald of a dystopian future",[66] or, in another metaphor, is the "Ghost of future Christmases of the West, because we have already lived everything you are living and we know how it ends".[67] Having experienced "socialism", Argentina can demonstrate the harms produced by woke ideology in power, becoming a warning to others. In response to this experience, Milei proposes a capitalist model inspired by "the ideas of freedom that made the West great".[68] He claims these ideas also shaped Argentina at the end of the nineteenth century. He seeks a return to the "moral grounds" of what he considers the most prosperous period in the country's history, so that Argentina can once again guide a Western world that must be redirected. Overall, Argentina is portrayed by Milei as a country in which the "woke" agenda had previously triumphed, yet is now returning to the righteous path.

Second, Milei understands both his leadership and Argentina's role in the global order as requiring adherence to God's commandments. In this sense, he sees that Argentina is following the Jewish and Israeli example (although is still learning from it) discussed in the previous section. Milei portrays the Argentina he governs as an ethical nation capable of serving as a role model because his policy decisions are grounded in "moral criteria".[69] This, in his view, makes redirection possible: basing governance on what is morally good allows a clear distinction between right and wrong, leaving no room for ambiguity. This connects directly to his image of the Jewish people and the State of Israel: the only path to prosperity, he argues, requires a free-market capitalism rooted in the truth revealed by God in the scriptures and a steadfast commitment to these values.

However, Argentina cannot fulfill this mission on its own. Its primary allies must be Israel and the United States, led, in his view, by Donald Trump. As he stated in the Argentina–Israel business meeting on November 21st, 2024, "It is our wish that this alliance between Argentina and Israel becomes a model for other nations of the free world also choose life and freedom, condemning firmly and openly the terrorism".[70] He sees this not only because Argentina still has much to learn from the Israeli example, but also because he advocates for an international free league of nations. Such a league would rest on cooperation and trade as fundamental elements of free-market capitalism. Milei therefore defends a liberal conception of international cooperation as necessary for the restoration of the West. Even if Argentina aims to become a vanguard model, it must do so in alliance with those who can contribute to this war against what he considers barbarism.

[66] Milei, *Discurso del presidente Javier Milei en el America Business Forum de Miami*, s/p.
[67] Milei, *Discurso del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, desde el Foro de Davos, Suiza*.
[68] Milei, *Discurso del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en el CPAC Paraguay 2025*, s/p.
[69] Milei, *Discurso del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en el CPAC Paraguay 2025*, s/p.
[70] Milei, *Palabras del presidente de la Nación, Javier Milei, en el encuentro empresarial Argentina-Israel*, s/p.

Conclusions

This article has examined how Javier Milei assembles Judaism, Moses, and the State of Israel into a symbolic repertoire through which he imagines and moralizes the West. We have shown that these references form a structured discursive architecture that grounds a political rationality in revelation, virtue, and civilizational struggle. Grounded theory and constant comparison techniques enabled us to reconstruct the patterned relations through which these elements acquire coherence and authority within Milei's discourse.

In doing so, the article advances current debates on right-wing philosemitism. Existing scholarship, largely centered on Europe and the United States, has tended to conceptualize philosemitism as a matter of identitarian signaling, geopolitical alignment, or selective admiration for Jewish resilience. The present case compels a revision of that framework. Milei's discourse does not merely express affinity toward Judaism or Israel; it reorganizes them into a moral template that defines an imagined West and legitimates a vision of capitalism cast as both economic order and divine command. The category of imagined Judaism, which emerged through inductive coding, captures this symbolic operation: Jewish otherness is preserved, admired, and mobilized as a source of moral authority through which Milei frames the contemporary world.

The analysis also contributes to work on political performativity and governmentality. The recurrent invocation of Moses—identified as a saturated narrative cluster—functions less as theological exegesis than as a script for contemporary conduct: obedience to revealed truth, vigilance in the face of internal and external threats, and perseverance against the many by the few. Likewise, the construction of Israel as a civilizational exemplum performs a pedagogical function. Israel is framed as the distilled expression of Western virtue, economic discipline, and miraculous endurance. Through these operations, Milei's discourse produces a moralized geopolitics in which Argentina is invited to join a sacred community defined by the struggle between good and evil.

Methodologically, the article demonstrates the value of integrating directed content analysis with grounded theory to study symbolic architectures of political discourse. The theoretical lenses of philosemitism, performativity, and governmentality guided the initial coding, but the categories that structured the analysis—imagined Judaism, the Moses cluster, and Israel as exemplum—emerged through constant comparison rather than theoretical imposition. This approach offers a replicable model for examining how contemporary political actors mobilize religious or civilizational repertoires as technologies of rule.

More broadly, the findings show that Milei's discourse does not simply borrow Jewish tradition; it reconfigures that tradition into a normative framework that organizes a moral reading of capitalism, geopolitics, and national destiny. Through this architecture, the war between Israel and Hamas is reframed as the latest iteration of a transhistorical confrontation between civilization and barbarism, truth and relativism. Philosemitism becomes, in this context, not a mask for antisemitism nor a mere expression of admiration, but a symbolic grammar through which political subjects are governed and geopolitical alignments are justified.

The comparison with the Brazilian case makes clear that Milei's configuration constitutes not only a reversal of the symbolic hierarchy identified by Gherman & Klein[71] but also a distinct mode of aesthetic and moral stylization. In elevating Judaism to the status of civilizational origin, Milei produces what can be understood—following Rullansky—as a form of grotesque Judaism: a hyperbolized and purified version of Jewish history and tradition that dramatizes chosenness, endurance, and moral truth.[72] This stylization does not merely signal affinity with Israel; it functions as a political rationality that structures a Judaized West, legitimates geopolitical alignment, and frames Argentina's role within a transhistorical struggle between good and evil. Recognizing this symbolic intensification underscores the need to treat philosemitic imaginaries as heterogeneous formations shaped by different aesthetic grammars and techniques of rule.

By foregrounding this dynamic, the article contributes to a broader reconsideration of how moralized geopolitics circulates within the contemporary global right. Future research might examine the reception of these narratives across different publics—Jewish communities, libertarian networks, evangelical circles, and international audiences—or compare Milei's discourse with other non-Western articulations of a civilizational West grounded in religious revelation. Such inquiries may illuminate how philosemitic imaginaries operate not at the margins but at the center of emerging forms of right-wing political rationality.

[71] Gherman; Klein, *Entre "conversos" e "desconversos"*.
[72] Rullansky, *El judaísmo grotesco de Milei*.

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