

Constructing and reconstructing the *boundaries* of tradition and modernity. The Catholic Church and the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in the Holy Spirit

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Abstract: The objective of this paper is to reflect on the Catholic Church's answer to modernity through the Movement of Charismatic Renewal in the Holy Spirit; appearing in the years following Vatican Council II, this movement is represented by the catholic hierarchy as a modernization sign of the Church. However, in the practice it is not more than a new form of preserving the ruling tradition in Catholicism. In this exercise I use the *boundary* category to point out that threshold which joins and not the limit which divides.

Key words: boundary, religion, modernity, tradition, charismatic renewal.

Resumen: El objetivo de este documento es reflexionar sobre la respuesta que la Iglesia católica da a la modernidad a través del Movimiento de Renovación Carismática en el Espíritu Santo. Surgido en los años inmediatos del Concilio Vaticano II, este movimiento es presentado por la jerarquía católica como signo de la modernización de esta Iglesia. Sin embargo, en la práctica no es más que una forma novedosa de preservar la tradición que rige al catolicismo. En este ejercicio recurro a la categoría *frontera* concebida como el umbral que une la tradición y la modernidad, y no el límite que las divide.

Palabras clave: frontera, religión, modernidad, tradición y renovación carismática.

Introduction¹

In a previous work (Vázquez, 2000a) I pointed out that, in spite of the ample use of the concept *boundary* in anthropologic literature, it still has problems to be defined. In a similar manner to the referred work, in this I hereby present, *boundary* is a “space” defined not by its physical characteristics nor by political-administrative causes, but by the multiple convergences both real and possible which come together at a determinate moment on it. Among them, of vital importance are the individuals who abide them, yet above all the network of social relations that are established and the fabric of meanings which, from said network, are elaborated to be presented in such space. It is convenient to underscore that difference and not to leave it at the level of the declarative. In a physicist conception and even in a political-administrative vision, said concept appears before these individuals as something given and even permanent, as its configuration does not depend on them but on those who have control of that space. The same occurs to that network of relations. Hence, those individuals play a passive role. Differently from this conception, a conception of the *boundary* supported on that multiplicity of convergences, both real and possible, leads to consider those individuals as acting subjects able to determine their limits, symbolize it, define the sort of relations that link them, set their extension and establish the different times which are synthesized in it.

The inclusion in the analysis of an individual who belongs to some *boundary* allows understanding why this category acquires several meanings, functions and dimensions, which reveal different perspectives, which reveal us different perspectives of social life or its construction. Under these terms, *boundary* is a category of thought (Durkheim, 1992) that encloses a universe of realities, and whose construction is a process which goes from the imagined to the experienced and from the experienced to the imagined again. Mainly in the case of migrants (Odgers, 2001), who perceive in a different manner the border line and face very different realities to those they imagined at the hometowns; for instance, the total or partial denial of their rights. For

¹ I am grateful to Guadalupe Reyes for her accurate comments on a preliminary version of this work.

some it can be the opportunity to emulate their compatriots who dodged the *migra* and along time obtained their legal residence on *the other side*. For others it represents to transpose their poverty and glimpse at opulence. In this case, the border appears before them as the difference between being poor or aspiring to a job which will provide dollars, with which they will buy electronic appliances and even a car. However, independently from their imaginaries, both coincide on the fact that the *boundary* establishes the difference between life and death; this is to say, it implies the assumption of the risk between living and dying.

As a methodological resource, that category demands two conditions closely related to each other; one is the location of the particular object of study in the time and space coordinates; and the other is a limit, or rather the objectivization of the concrete representations of these coordinates. In the same sense, it also alludes to possibilities, to projects of the individuals concurring in that *boundary* and those of the observer who analyzes them. Let us bear in mind that the *boundary* does not exist on its own, it is an intellectual construction of the observer and which draws to facts and processes, interacting individuals, their products and other categories in movement, such as time and space, which the observer uses to explain the portion of reality under analysis.

Conceived in the aforementioned terms, the concept of *boundary* allows the observer, having as starting point the micro and macro dimensions, to think and order social reality (Zemelman, 1997), their actors and the result of their interactions as a changing totality. Mainly, it allows the observer to submerge into that reality and to be part of it, of those actors and those interactions.

At this interpretative level, religion and modernity² constitute a *boundary* seemingly indissoluble. Although they originally appear as concepts opposed

² I find it noteworthy to point out that modernity, modernization and modernism are not synonyms; however, some authors use these concepts indistinctly and provide them with different meanings. In this work I use the category of modernity to refer to that stage of history where individuals organize their society based on reason, aside from religious institutions. Although literature on this topic is abundant, the reader can look at Solé (1976) and Touraine (1994).

by their meanings, nowadays the Catholic Church is making an effort to join them so as to legitimate tradition, by means of the changes it started after the Second Vatican Council. As it will be seen along the text I use the concept *boundary* under two interpretations. One is in the way of the geopolitics; i.e., the line that establishes the limits where a territory or “something” begins and ends, and in that sense separates them; the other, the one I privilege, is in the already stated terms. This is to say, that socially constructed “threshold” that joins and makes a reality different from that other already existing possible. In the case of the Catholic Church, this representation of *boundary* is, at the time, the result of its confrontation with modernity. The movement of Charismatic Renewal in the Holy Spirit is a sample of this Catholic Church’s effort to join tradition and modernity, as well as its confrontation with the latter. Under these circumstances, in the present document I state that this movement, despite its appearance as part of the modernization of the Catholic Church, is rather used for reproducing old fashions and practices of Catholicism, which in order to introduce its members to that modernity were claimed by the Second Vatican Council. In other words, Catholic Church has draw to *charismatic renewal*, which emerged as an expression of its modernization, to recover traditional fashions and practices, so as to reproduce them among its members. Against suppositions by scholars of the movement³, it was a strategy of said Church’s hierarchy to reduce the boundary between tradition and modernity. The empirical evidence that supports this statement comes from the results from a research I carried out in different parishes of Merida at different moments in the last ten years (Vázquez, 2000b and 2002b).

Religion and modernity

Religion and modernity are concepts which for long, and by no few intellectuals, have been considered as antagonists, which by definition repel each other; those who support this do not lack reason. Whereas religion, for

³ María Cristina Díaz de la Serna states that at least in one of the cases she approaches, Renewal is conceptualized “as a process of modern evangelization which has as an object to make aware and educate the believers” (1985: 80).

instance Christianity, refers to tradition⁴, to that which remains and does not change, to the eternal, to that which has always been, is and will be; modernity refers to that which indeed changes, to that which permanently transforms, and even to that which can be ephemeral. For some Christian theologians, Dietrich Bonhoeffer for instance, even if those concepts are not totally antagonistic, at least have some tensions between them (Cogley, 1969). This is to say, there is a *boundary* that limits their respective spheres and consequently, separates them.

Nonetheless, the relation between both concepts, and the realities they imply, is much more complex. Because of this, said *boundary* seems blurred and has problems to be understood. This is to say, it seems transfigured, so it is necessary to redefine it under different criteria. As an instance of such complexity, in some cases, as Berger points out, "... modernization is not only the origin of secularization, but on the contrary has also served as a confirmation for religion" (Berger, 1992: 43). The vision by Bonhoeffer on Christianity is another instance "if faith must make sense now it has to be experienced in a new secular fashion and be integrated to everyday life [...] if Christianity has to make sense into human life, I said, one must restate its mysteries with the philosophical, scientific and cultural language of the day" (Cogley, 1969: 159-160). In other cases modernity was a reaction against the obscurantism which the tenacious control of ideas and the action by Christian hierarchy brought; nonetheless, also conversely, it makes way to the reappearance of religion and mysticism, generally speaking against industrialism, technological development, and the ideas and behaviors conveyed in them (Blancarte, 1993: 36).⁵

Essentially, religion alludes to the divinity which because of its holiness is beyond time and the rest of categories man has created to explain the

⁴ When in this document I refer to the tradition of the Catholic Church, I do it in order to refer to the set of ideas, rites and practices that the Church has profiled and are its magisterium. For a better comprehension see Rahner and Ratzinger (2005).

⁵ In this respect Roberto Blancarte (1993: 36) pinpoints: "the term of modernity is rather ambiguous, as it represents a manifestation of the modern world and at the time a reaction against certain manifestations of it".

surrounding universe as well as explaining himself; for instance, the kindness category or those of space and matter. In this sense, every theology treaty states that, mainly in the case of the Judeo-Christian tradition, the divinity, the holy, the sacred is eternal, does not change, it remains instead. As it is the creator of all things, it has always existed, even before the cosmos it created. Its very essence makes it be outside every temporary operationalization.⁶ Because of this, it is not possible to apply the divinity this category to think of it and understand it. Not to say to conceive and physically represent it (Durkheim, 1992).⁷

On the contrary, time, or better said, the temporary division in days, weeks, months, years, et cetera, similarly to the rest of human understanding categories, has its origin in religious thought (Durkheim, 1992). Around it the individuals organized their labor, playful and leisure activities; above them was religion, which on the one side, gave their lives meaning, and on the other, organized the relations that structured the society they belonged to. In this order, life went on between the religion time, work time, and the celebration time and that of rest. These activities' cyclic repetition, but mainly of the times which contained them, caused the appearance of traditions; which, at the time, worked to legitimize such order, the organization of its activities and the structuring of its society. What is more, traditions expressed the collective memory on religion and the different times that ruled individuals' lives and the ways these related to each other, either they were peers or not, and independently if they were identified with each other.

Until the arrival of Humanism, and after early modernity, in the occidental world there was not any *boundary* between the religious and the secular.

⁶ The phrase used by Catholics and Pentecostals. "Jesus Christ: yesterday, now and forever" (*Jesucristo: ayer, hoy y siempre*), summarizes this.

⁷ On this problem, Durkheim (1992: 22) expresses that the supernatural is one of the notions that characterize the religious, being understood as such "every order of things beyond our understanding; the supernatural is the world of mystery, of the unknowable, of the incomprehensible".

Religion was the rector of time, both sacred and profane (Eliade, 1979),⁸ which at the time ruled individuals' collective lives. To the extent that rationalization, indispensable component of modernity as Touraine would say (Touraine, 1994), took over individuals' social life, religion started to lose centrality thus far it had. Consequently, a *boundary* between religions and man's social life appeared. The ideas which supported religion, as the very idea of God, of soul, of the sacred, of the eternal salvation, etc, as well as the traditions which incarnated it moved to the background. Nowadays, despite time is does not have the same sense it has by then, it still rules the quotidian life of numerous individuals.

Even if it is true that modernity, to the extent it advances, de-traditionalize societies, it is also true that new traditions which appear substitute the previous (Giddens, 1997). For the case of our interest, modernity has given way to traditions which have substituted those that Christianity had created along its history and those in which supported their myths, rites, and thought. By means of them, the new ways of collective memory, of relations among individuals, of the structure the society takes and meanings they give it are expressed.

The crumbling of absolutist monarchies and their replacement by civil regimes opened the boundary between the religious and the secular. The new order broke the monopoly of truth and justice held by the monarch and bishop. Both lost the power to judge their vassals, administrate their lives and demand tributes to fatten their respective arks. The laws of divine inspiration were substituted by the legislation of the nascent republics, which chose democracy as a synonym of equality and liberty. Likewise, these laws stopped legitimizing the superiority of the monarch upon their subordinates. Citizens, and then labor, allowed erasing that difference. Impotent, earthly and ecclesiastical hierarchies witnessed the appearance of the citizen in place of the servant. The new regime, that of modernity, did not mean the perdition of the individual, on the contrary, it meant their salvation from

⁸ In respect to profane time, Mircea Eliade (1979: 64) states that the festivity "is the time created and sanctified by the Gods from their *heroic deeds*".

the darkness which denies them in order to enter into the lights of their humanization (Touraine, 1994).⁹

Altogether with the secularization of society, modernity brought along the secularization of conscience (Berger, 1971); this phenomenon produces a dual effect that only because of exposition reasons I dare divide. One was the ecclesiastical hierarchies' loss of control of their adepts' ideas; mainly in the cases of those who had the highest education levels. For them, the Bible ceased to be the source of ideas which explained the cosmos, divinity, the very ecclesiastical hierarchies, man and their relation with said hierarchy, divinity and cosmos. In these cases, reason and observation became the source of all knowledge. From them, those individuals had the necessary elements to discern what they knew and what they believed.

Encouraged by the new geographic, physical, astronomic, biologic discoveries and the Lutheran Reform, this sort of believers, second effect, could re-signify what thus far was learnt and opt for another system of thought which agreed with reason and observation's dictations. Some found it in the new trends of thought which were coined in the Catholic Church; others found it inside religion, however in a Church or religious group different from theirs. On other cases, they found it outside religion, so they grew distant from it. In all of these cases, the secularization of conscience meant for said individuals the freedom of thought and questioning divinity, its Church and decide the acceptance and rejection of the former or the latter. The aftermath was pluralism, either ideological, in general, or religious, in particular. The *boundary* between the religious and secular became broad.

In the transit toward ideological pluralism, the Catholic Church, which had had the exclusivity of ideas, was confronted by the Churches from the Lutheran Reform that preached a different way to interpret biblical texts and religious traditions, ecclesiastical organizations and religion's socialization. Nonetheless, above things, they preached a new way to relate

⁹ "This is why, modernity which destroys religions, frees the image of the subject, takes of back, since so far it was prisoner of the religious objectivities, of the confusion of the subject and nature, and transfers the subject of God to men" (Touraine, 1994: 228).

with divinity and a new ethics which oriented their relation with nature and man.

America has always been seen as *the continent of hope* for the Catholic Church. Ever since its arrival in the XVI century it saw in this continent the instance to reproduce the spaces it was losing in Europe because of modernity and secularization of conscience. In spite of the Arabian defeat by the Spain kings at the end of the XV century, Islamism was still a danger. Not to mention Judaism and the protestant Reform that came shortly later. Supported by the weapons of the military conquerors and the civil and ideological structure erected, the Catholic Church became a hegemonic institution in later centuries. During this time, differently from Europe, in America, there were virtually no *boundaries* between the religious and the secular. These would be established by the ideas and the facts which originated the independence of the Spanish's colonies in America.

From that moment, the Catholic Church could no longer contain the modernist and secularizer attacks; especially those problems which directly threatened its power. In the case of Mexico, these problems were political and ideological. On the side of the political order, in a strict manner, the most relevant problems it faced were the Constitution of 1857, the Laws decreed by the president Juárez and the unhappy end of the adventure of Maximilian I of Mexico. On the side of the ideological order, the emergent liberalism was the acutest problem it faced. Both cases represented the Church's loss of powers relative to these orders and even its extension to economic order. The Church's loss of political power was blatant in education; ever since, education stopped being an act of faith to become an act of reason.

Before the end of XIX, Catholic Church faced the opening of a new *boundary*; this was religious pluralism. Despite Mexico's independence from Spain, Church had preserved the monopoly of religious ideas. The triumph of the Trigante Army and the ideas of Agustín de Iturbide maintained the religion the Catholic Church preached as the official for all the Mexican people. Moreover, the resulting legislation excluded any other; nevertheless, after the Constitution of 1857 and the Juarista Laws, impotent it saw the penetration of protestant missionaries in Mexico and Latin America. In

some countries such as Peru, it had the State Laws on its side to be the official religion; yet in some other, such a Mexico, it did not. Gradually, protestant Churches became a threat for the hegemony of Catholic Church.

Catholic Church before modernity

Catholic Church could do nothing but to face its new situation in the world and respond the modernity and the secularization of the conscience which worried it in different parts of the world. Before this situation the objective pursuit by Catholic Church was to reformulate the *boundaries* which limited its action and restricted its power. Before the end of the XIX century it restated its relation with society as well as its organization. Modernity brought new actors along, so Church also restated its relation with them; its alliance will no longer be with old European monarchies and nobilities, but with the emergent bourgeoisies (Canto and Pastor, 1997). Later, this alliance would be broadened to the working classes which gained political spaces. Facing the transformation of society, the Church decided to adapt itself to the new conditions; so as to counteract the influence of workers asking for political participation, education and improvement of their working and economic conditions, it responded with what in the next century would be known as the social doctrine of Church. The Encyclicals by Leon XIII, specifically the *Rerum Novarum*, were the compasses which lead the church's way. Socialism was the alternative for working classes, that is why it created its schools, parties and syndicates (Canto and Pastor, 1997).

The advance of modernity in the XX century made the *boundary* between the religious and the secular broader; together with the century the appearance of new technologic advancements and ideologies which confirmed God's death, already claimed by thinkers in the previous century (Armstrong, 1996).¹⁰ The reorganization of society and institutions, after the second great war, accelerated the loss of centrality the Church still had; Mexico and Latin America were not aside from this impact. The most

¹⁰ "Ludwig Feuerbach, Karl Marx, Charles Darwin, Friedrich Nietzsche and Sigmund Freud proposed philosophies and scientific explanations for the reality where there was not space for God" (Armstrong, 1996: 399).

immediate effect was the increment of religious pluralism which, in our country, started in the late XIX century. Protestant Churches which settled in the last years of said century, witnessed a dramatic increment along the first half of the XX century. At the same time, Pentecostal Churches and new religious groups appeared, they broadened this pluralism; their bloom was such that in the second half of the XX century they made the Catholic Church faced an unseen situation; in those decades and up to now, its hierarchy watched how the number of shepherds of these Churches and ministers of these groups increased as its priests decreased.

After the *aggiornamento* of John XXIII, the Second Vatican Council¹¹ constituted the most serious effort of the Church to renew its actions, its teaching, its discourse, its cult, its traditions and its internal structure; i.e., the way the Catholic Church started to look inside itself to restate the *boundaries* of its thought, actions and relations with its members so as to become modern and modernize the representations of its adepts on the divinity that it preached and the ways they related with each other and divinity. With this, not only did it seek to offer the congregation new ways of thinking and acting about religion, but also offer them manners to keep them with it. Hence, at the time it thinned the *boundaries* created between it and the world of life (Schütz and Luckmann, 1977) where its congregation acted, it provided them with alternatives to prevent them from desertion.

The Councilor gathering was prodigal in documents that contributed the new actions Catholic Church would start for the required ends. These documents, which later were added the encyclicals and pastoral letters by Paulo VI, which sketched the New Evangelization headed, not long after, by Pope John Paul II. In this modernizing trend, in the second half of the 1970's decade, appears in the Catholic Church the Movement of Charismatic

¹¹ The Second Ecumenical Vatican Council was inaugurated by Pope John XXIII, on October 11th 1962, and was closed by his successor Pope Paul VI, on December 8th 1965 (Ampudia, 1998). Two dates that mark the antecedents of this council are January 25th 1959, when John XXIII announces his intentions to carry it out, and on December 25th 1961, amidst plenty of solemnity, summons it (Carrillo, 1986).

Renewal in the Holy Spirit¹² or, as it is referred to by its members and general supporters: *charismatic renewal*.

The introduction of the *charismatic renewal* in Mexico established a *boundary* between Catholic Church's tradition and modernity. Masses with songs, music and electric instruments, Caribbean and rock and roll rhythms, movements to these rhythms, songs and music, spontaneous prayers, applause and praises aloud are a tangible testimony of the modernization of a ritual that for most of the churchgoers was stagnant, unattractive and boring. The homilies of priests who privileged the idea of an alive God, the presence of the Holy Spirit which brought peace to those gathered there, the fulfillment of the Biblical promises, the hope of receiving one of the Holy Spirit's gifts and the empirical evidence that the diseased healed moved by their faith made the youths feel identified with this new way of religiousness, made the temples insufficient to contain them as well as fuel the growth of the charismatic renewal movement. The enthusiasm it arose was such that interviewed priests affirmed this movement "was what church was missing to stop the advancement of sects".

Charismatic renewal, following our interpretation horizon, made the Mass acquire a morphology and sense different from those priests usually celebrate and also different from those the flock gives usually them; in this movement, Mass is a festive event which the congregation attends to pray and enjoy themselves dancing and singing, to meet their friends, to make new friends, to forget about quotidian problems, or simply to distract themselves awhile. This is to say, to re-link with divinity, yet with the others too.

Conceived as a festivity, Mass is transfigured into the boundary that joins the sacred with the profane. However theoretically and empirically, the sacred and the profane belong to different spaces, even opposed, during the celebration are not separated or antagonistic any more, but they are one

¹² This movement's antecedent is to be found outside Catholic Church. Its origin is in the United State's Episcopal in the early 1960's. On this origin and its introduction into the Catholic Church see Carrillo (1986) and Ranaghan (1971).

and complementary¹³; for instance, in the Masses in the Christ the King parish, elements proper to catholic liturgy and elements which are not come together simultaneously. Among the former there are the parts of these ceremonies, prayers, consecration; and among the latter, apart from the aforementioned chants, rhythms and applauses, the installation, in the same space, of tables where the images of saints, virgins, rosaries, medals, candles, holy water, hymnbooks, prayers' books and diverse religious objects are sold, which the churchgoers buy in order to use in the ceremony or to be blessed by the priest at the end; thus, that which before belonged to divinity and men, respectively, appears as an indissoluble unity which mutually belongs to both. From this vision, liturgy acquires another expression as the congregation imprints the manifestations of their popular culture. In this transfiguration, Mass is unveiled as the instance where the churchgoers can not only be in touch with God, come clean, heal their diseases and receive the divine grace, but also relate with those there present and all together rejoice in chants, music, dance and other events in such celebration. For example, wave little paper flags or balloons, shout hoorays for Jesus, the Holy Spirit and Mary, and in the opposite sense, express their disavowal for Satan.

Likewise, by means of the celebration a *boundary* that summarizes the time of the sacred and the profane in the time of the reconfigured rite of the flock is established. The change from the ordinary temporary duration to the sacred time which Eliade (1979) refers to, in the previously stated terms, means the conjunction of the time of the sacred with that of the profane in a single one. Being the believers immersed into the time of the sacred, they do it carrying with them and imprinting it the symbolical, valuing, behavioral and cognitive elements which are part of the profane; these come from popular culture said congregation carries. Thus seen, the holy occurrences celebrated in the Mass are re-updated and re-signified with the incorporation of the popular manifestations, which currently make up

¹³ Mircea Eliade states in the introduction of her work *The sacred and the profane* that “the first definition the sacred can be given is that opposed to the profane” (1979: 18).

their culture. With them, said manifestations are integrated into the celebration and become part of it. Wherewith Mass acquires a more immediate sense for the partakers, since it is now part of their culture.

Another idea I would like to add on this way to conceive Mass is that by means of participating in it, the believers submerge in said *boundary* and with this they transcend from the time framed by the historic present toward a time that “in certain aspects, can be compared to *Eternity*” (Eliade, 1979: 64). From my perspective, this is the time that defines identity or better said the meta-identity that the believer establishes with divinity.

As a whole, charismatic Masses broke violently with the traditional scheme of the Tridentine Mass, yet that did not mean the extinction of its model which prevailed among priests and churchgoers. The *boundary* which separates tradition from modernity prevailed. Hence, even if when *charismatic renewal* appears in Mexico in the late 1970's, in compliance with the council reforms, choirs with guitars and percussion instruments had already been made part of Masses, most of parsons omitted them into their ceremonies and only allowed their celebrations with the priest in front of the flock in the latter's language. Thus far there were not problems, not so when some parishes introduced this movement. The churchgoers who had been raised in the tradition of the Catholic Church were not late to protest in defense of what they believed was the authentic way to celebrate Mass. In Mérida, seat of the archdiocese of Yucatán, by-then archbishop Manuel Castro Ruiz constantly received people who, individually or on behalf of groups from these parishes, manifested their unconformity on what they considered to be not only an alteration of that authentic way, but also something which according to their conception of religion was a sacrilege. In response, the archbishop appointed the presbyter Fernando Rodríguez to coordinate the movement of the charismatic Renewal in the archdiocese. In the former's opinion, father Rodríguez was a man who had understood what that movement was and would correctly lead it without excesses. Nowadays, said priest holds the same position after being ratified by the current archbishop, Emilio Berlie Belauzarán.

The appointment of father Rodríguez meant the ecclesial authorities

controlled the *charismatic renewal*. As though he was some sort of guardian of orthodoxy, this priest has kept the movement inside the activities and apostolic groups in the parishes, in this manner he prevented the appearance of leaders outside these spaces who can give it another orientation. Thus far, he has accomplished his task, as there has not been cases of conflict, such as those which Elizabeth Juárez (1997) reports in Zamora, Michoacán. In the same way, the decision made by archbishop Castro Ruiz meant to insert the charismatic renewal among the pedagogical ways the Church has draw to transmit its doctrine to the flock, mainly those who belong to popular strata, which are majority and lack high schooling levels. As if it was an auto sacramental in times of the Colony charismatic renewal was included in the traditional ways of the Catholic Church's teachings. The complementary strategy was the attachment of popular religion to said movement. I will return to this topic further on the text.

The control of catholic hierarchy on charismatic renewal is not exclusive to the Mérida's parishes I studied, the same occurs in the cases that María Cristina Díaz de la Serna (1985) analyzed. In both cases, San José del Altílo and the community *Espíritu y vida*, hierarchy had a heavy influence on the direction and supervision of this movement's activities. In the former, a team of four priests was in charge of developing these activities, whereas in the latter it depended on a priest. This caused the churchgoers' lack of interest when the priest was missing. In both cases, the intervention of priests influenced the shape of the *charismatic renewal* alike. The same can be said on the research by Miguel Hernández (1999) in Zamora and where this movement is included. In his book *Post-council dilemmas (Dilemas posconciliares)* he pinpoints that the "caution to prevent 'deviations' in CR has been objectified in pedagogical and control devices for praying assemblies. The precepts the Archbishop Robles issued in the Synod of 1987 to regulate the CR movement are not very different from other dioceses in occident" (Hernández, 1999: 319).

Another instance of the charismatic renewal to return to tradition was that which took place in the middle of this movement's transformation in the 1990's decade; in those years charismatic priests included in their

messages and ceremonies elements the Pentecostal priest used in their religious services. The justification they provided, as one of them told me,¹⁴ was the search of “newfangled things” which could include the churchgoers and motivate them to be, in his words, the salt of the earth. At the time of the interview with this priest 20 years already passed since the charismatic renewal had begun in Yucatán and another lustrum ever since its appearance in the United States, so it was considered as necessary to keep the flame of the Holy Spirit alive. In this context, in the middle of the 1990’s decade, father Carrillo, similarly to other follower priests, incorporated one of the elements which characterizes what some scholars call Neo-Pentecostalism (Wynarczyk, 1993; Frigerio, 1994). This is the notion of *spiritual war* or *spiritual guerrilla* (Wynarczyk, 1995; Vázquez, 2002a).¹⁵ This is to say, the symbolical representation of the struggle between the Devil and God; the former to take men’s souls to hell, and the latter to prevent it by means of his salvation plan. To sum up, the representation of the eternal conflict between good and evil.¹⁶ Or in Durkheim (1992) terms, the struggle between benefactor forces and the evil and impure powers which characterize the very idea of the sacred. Hence, the notion of spiritual war was added to the idea of healing, glossolalia, and the baptism in the Holy Spirit which characterized *charismatic renewal* in its first quarter of century. In both cases, these elements were taken from North-American Pentecostalism.¹⁷

The priests of *charismatic renewal* tried to detach the idea of *spiritual war* from its Pentecostal version and dress it with the elements proper to

¹⁴ This priest was Álvaro Carrillo Lugo, responsible for the Cristo Rey parish.

¹⁵ Other elements that characterize Neo-Pentecostalism, and which to a different extent the priests from the *renewal* have adopted, are the ideas of prosperity and liberation, the conception of a powerful God and the use of mass media as a form of propaganda.

¹⁶ In 1998, Pope John Paul II, in his homily in the Mass celebrated as commemoration of the Ascension of Mary, said: “As long as the world exists, the history will always be a stage for the collision of God and Satan, good and evil, grace and sin, life and death” (*Diario de Yucatán*, August 16th, 1998).

¹⁷ Diverse analysts support that the origin of the category of spiritual war is to be found in the Churches which appear after the third wave of Neo-Pentecostalism (Vázquez, 2002a).

Catholicism. For the consecution of these ends they draw to two emblematic figures of the Catholic Church's tradition. These were the Virgin Mary and Michael Archangel. According to the symbolism imprinted into their homilies, Virgin Mary is the queen of the *Blue Army* and the *Army of soldiers consecrated to the immaculate hearth of Mary*, and Michael Archangel is the prince of the Army of God; so they foster the flock to enroll into these "armies" in order to defeat Satan and chain him for ever. As it occurs to the countries' armies, the members of these "armies" have a manual which guides them in their combats against the evil forces. Thus, in their pages we read this: "the struggle of the Christian is that of an army, our struggle is against evil powers, against this world's prince which has been defeated by Jesus [...] in order to win this victory we must consecrate ourselves to the Immaculate Hearth of Our Mother and make ours the salvation of his much beloved Jesus" (Ceja and Abullarade, 1998: 5).

Under the symbolism which orients this struggle, the Christians faces spiritual enemies, and to defeat them has, likewise, spiritual weaponry that the Church provides them with. In order to do so they have the helmet of salvation, the shield of faith, the armor of justice and the sword of God's word (Celayeta, 1998). In similar terms by a priest, promoter of *charismatic renewal*, when interviewed pointed out that these weapons are those of the God's word contained in the Bible, sacraments, prayers and Mary.

The emphasis paid by the priests of *charismatic renewal* to the participation of Virgin Mary's figure in *the spiritual war* made this image become one of the central axes of the movement; the already traditional veneration to

Nonetheless, the Anglican priest John Henry Newman is the first to use it in several documents he wrote in the 1830's and 1840's decades. Newman draws to it to refer to the inner struggle, so as to discern whether to remain in the English Anglican Church or join the Roman Catholic Church. Newman renounced to Anglicanism on October 8th 1845, on May 30th he was appointed as a catholic priest in Rome, in May 1879 he was bestowed with the cardinalate by Leon XIII and, finally died on August 11th 1890. He is now undergoing a beatification process. In a paradoxical manner he remains unknown for the priests of the *charismatic renewal*, those I asked say they do not know who he was.

virgin Mary was added to the forms of perceive it as closely linked to Jesus and the Holy Spirit. Although the priests linked to this movement pretend to support such perception of Mary on the Bible, especially in the New Testament, the figure they promote is the conservative vision of Catholicism which is supported upon: a) the warrior image that encouraged Spaniards to conquer the lands claimed by the Catholic kings and not the liberalizing image held by Hidalgo, San Martín, Belgrano and Bolívar in their battles for independence of their peoples in the XIX century;¹⁸ b) the dogmas of Her Immaculate Conception and her Assumption to Heaven;¹⁹ and c) her role of mother. This role of Mary's motherhood fulfills a double task. On the one side, it articulates the notion of *spiritual war*, ergo *charismatic renewal*, with popular religion in Mexico and Latin America; and on the other, altogether with this warrior image, it makes more understandable that figure of Virgin Mary said priests promote. Not so the referred dogmas that allude to a tradition of Catholicism which becomes older by the day, loses meaning and turns out to be difficult to understand by younger generations.

Charismatic renewal's priests not only adopted the *spiritual war* the Pentecostal priests already employed in their ceremonies, but also their behavior, attitudes, movement wherefrom they preached, and part of their discourse that expressed in the celebration of Masses as well as other events they presided. All of these elements were conjugated for the Masses to transfigure into the field where such battle was held. In several charismatic events —Masses, congresses, Jericho's Sieges— which I attended in Mérida, the priests insisted on the events' development was a battle against Satan and his legion of fallen angels;²⁰ and in order to defeat them it was necessary

¹⁸ On the image of the Virgin Mary in the conquest and Independence of the Latin America Peoples, see González Dorado (1988).

¹⁹ The first dogma was declared by Pope Pius IX in 1854 and the second by Pope Pius XII in 1950.

²⁰ In February 2007, the Churches belonging to the Assemblies of God in Yucatán organized, in a football stadium, a praying and healing crusade and invited the Argentinean preacher Carlos Annacondia and other two. In both nights he underscored that "God's peoples"

to invoke the help of the queen of the *Army of soldiers consecrated to the immaculate hearth of Mary* and the prince of the Army of God, and wield against those evil powers the weapons “with which Christ has redeemed us and his Most Holy Mother protects us”. In one of these ceremonies held at the Christ the King Parish, the parish priest handed out rosaries and small stamps with the image of Michael Archangel and asked the congregation, when the moment arrived, to rise them and order the demon that “in the name of the precious blood of Christ” to leave forever. At the same time they asked them for “battle cries”, he said aloud and visibly excited that Satan was fleeing screaming and writhing in pain as he could not bear the mention of the Blood of Jesus. On its own the flock shouted: Jesus! Jesus Christ, yesterday, now and forever! And Mary, Mary, Mary!

The adoption of the spiritual war had the intention of reducing, even more, the *boundary* between tradition and modernity established with the introduction of *charismatic renewal* and its expansion all over Mexico. Nonetheless, the *charismatic renewal's* priests' toil to provide it with an own meaning in accordance with the tradition of the Catholic Church broadened the gap again. What is more, the traditional practices associated to the cult of Virgin Mary and angels were reinforced among adults and became popular among youths who attended Masses and other *renewal* events. From my point of view, the proliferation of stores where articles, books, figures and images of protecting angels are offered has contributed to youths and adults accept the idea of their participation in the *spiritual war*. Thus seen, the

therein gathered would be witness of a grandiose deed, for Satan will be ejected from Mérida. After summoning him in the name of God, Son and the Holy Spirit he repeated: “I order you to leave this city and free it from every evil... Behold my brothers! Satan is running wild, he knows not where to go, there he goes, crying as he knows he has been defeated”. The choir and band sang and played nonstop, the attendees —no more than three thousand— came down from the tiers, gathered closely to the stage where Annacondia preached and shouted Hallelujah! Christ! Glory to God! As a triumph sign. Meanwhile, several kilometers from there, many more people crowded Paseo Montejo and downtown streets as they watched the carnival, and take part in the “war” the beer brewer and fast food companies held to attract more customers.

ideology underlying this category has as a support the popular religion²¹ and popular culture the followers of *charismatic renewal* provide.

Popular religion, also known as popular piety and popular theology (González, 1988) in catholic hierarchy, had an important role in the current configuration of the charismatic renewal, but above things in the configuration of the *boundary* that nowadays exists between tradition and modernity in Catholic Church. Its relevance in current Catholicism is beyond questioning; therein contained are the ideas, language, symbols, knowledge, behavior, customs and the thought of the flock on divinity and its representations. As a whole, it is the cultural baggage, inherited from parents to children, on which popular Catholicism lays upon. Hence catholic hierarchy had understood the importance of this sort of religion has for most of the believers, and had decided to recover it and promote it among said strata so as to establish a boundary that joins them with one of the modern ways it also promotes. Prayers, praising chants, music, homilies, candles, holy water, *ex votos* and the attitudes of priests in charismatic Masses and the praying of rosary, the celebration of novenas, the establishment of domestic altars as part of the cult to Child Jesus, Divine Infant, Mary, Saint Joseph, Saint Michael and other saints, the placing of blessed palms behind the households' doors and the formation of new associations, among other elements, make this *boundary* objective at the dawn of this new century we live in.

The results from the research I carried out in a number of parishes in Mérida show how the priests who promoted charismatic renewal fostered, at the same time, the exercise of old religious practices. So in their homilies and during Masses as well as other related events, they encouraged their congregations to pray the rosary and the *Angelus*, to settle domestic altars, wear scapulars, holy water and blessed candles, offer flowers to the Virgin

²¹ Literature on popular religion is vast. Nonetheless the reader can refer to the old work, yet current, by Pedro Carrasco (1976) and those by Alberto M. Cirese (1979), Gilberto Giménez (1979), Manuel M. Marzal (2002) and Cristian Parker (1993).

Mary in May, organize *guilds*²², pray novenas²³ on certain images, practice devotion to saints, protecting angels and archangels and visit the *representation* of the Holy Spirit. The obedience and faithfulness to priests, bishops and the pope is included into this recovery and promotion of the religious practices prior to the Second Vatican Council.

The believers responded the call of their priests since all of these practices converged with their beliefs and practices proper to that syncretic Catholicism, which was incubated in the Colonial past and of which they were bearers. In such manner they continued, for instance, taking to parishes and chapels their images, vessels with water and oil, rosaries and other objects for the priest to bless them; placing in the back of their doors pieces of blessed palms to protect their households; taking *ex votos* to Saint Judas Thaddeus or other saint fulfilling their promises, and attending to pilgrimages devoted to Our Lady of Guadalupe in December as favors' appreciation and petition. In the cases of those who have migrated from the towns inside Yucatán toward Mérida and had relatives there, they continued attending the feast day of the Patron Saint in their hometown; participating into religious ceremonies associated with agriculture, cult to earth, mountains, beings which inhabit them, the death, and forcing their children to initiation rites linked to Mayan culture. Beliefs related to life and death, health and sickness, the shapes in which divinity is manifested or expresses its *grace* and the systems of relations derived from these hierophanies are also included among the ideas and religious practices persisting among the followers of the *charismatic renewal*, mainly among those with indigenous roots.²⁴

²² Guilds are religious organizations, derived from old guilds and craft unions, formed around an image held as patron saint. Robert Redfield (1944), in his already classic study on Yucatán, points out that, patron saint s' guilds were one of the forms around which this cities inhabitants were organized.

²³ *Novenas* are prayers for certain image for nine days. These prayers generally consist in a rosary, specific prayers for the image, litanies and chants.

²⁴ For a vision on the religious syncretism between the peninsular Mayas, see Redfield (1944) and Villa Rojas (1978). A look at this very subject for the case of Latin America can be found in

Anyone can think that the followers of charismatic renewal, by attending ceremonies, applauding in the Masses, dancing to the rhythm of songs, invoking the Virgin Mary against Satan, providing communion and healing the diseased by means of the Holy Spirit, were taking part into the Church modernity; nevertheless, it is not so. At the time they obeyed the priests' instructions, they preserved those ideas and practices learnt at childhood as a result of their religious socialization, and how they conceived divinity and related with it. In any case, they re-structured their popular Catholicism including the foundations of the *charismatic renewal*.

A final evidence of the problem I have been commenting is the instance of how the priests who boosted charismatic renewal in their parishes and chapels took over the participation of the churchgoers into this movement. As we already know, the Movement of charismatic renewal appeared aside from the ecclesial hierarchy; differently from other movements began by a priest, religious man or woman, this was characterized by the direct intervention of a group of laics in its organization, performance and promotion of the activities, and even in some tasks which are part of said hierarchy. Nowadays, the research carried out in Mérida shows us that such participation both in quality and quantity depends on the parish priest. In any case, the churchgoers of those churches where this movement is practiced are more participative than those from temples where it is not. From this work's interpretation horizon, that participation marks a dividing *boundary* between tradition and modernity of the Catholic Church.

Before the Second Vatican Council, the border line which limited liturgical activities where laics were able to take part was very clear. According to the tradition of Catholic Church the complete Mass was in charge of the priest, his position was turning their back on the flock and the use of Latin to read the prayer from the missal excluded the congregation from the ceremony and leave it as a mere spectator. The council meeting

Marzal (1988). In Yucatan this phenomenon is not exclusive to Catholics with indigenous roots, Enrique Rodríguez (2005) shows us that it occurs in the Pentecostal population of a Mayan community from Yucatán.

opened the doors for the laics to actively participate in Mass and be able to perform, in exceptional cases and with prior preparation, some of the priests' functions. The *Lumen gentium* dogmatic constitution on the Church²⁵ was the result from that participation; ever since, laics did not only took the new responsibilities the hierarchical Church gave them, but also became starring actors; moreover in the case of women, whose marginalization was greater. Currently, Laic women, prior preparation, can deliver communion in Mass or take it to sick people. In this order of ideas, the line that excluded the flock became a *boundary* which now includes it; the document recently presented by Benedict XVI that authorized Mass in Latin as an option, enables the closure of that door and the reestablishment of that dividing *boundary* (*Diario de Yucatán*, July 8th, 2007).

The aforementioned conditions permitted the followers of charismatic renewal, specially those who felt most identified with this movement, in addition to their participation in Mass as the rest of Catholics could and independently from being a man or woman, deliver communion, transit the Holy Spirit to other by the imposition of hands, pray to intercede before divinity for those who had some trouble and even heal people and eject demons. Notwithstanding, what seems to be the sign of modernization of Catholic Church was dressed in the traditional ways both its hierarchy and flock practiced. This was due to the mistrust from some priests toward charismatic renewal; in spite that it attracted many a Catholics ever since it came into Mexico, not all the priests adopted it in their parishes. Even though it was accepted by the Popes Paul VI and John Paul II, not few priests mistrusted this movement. Some included it into their parish activities, although under their control; whereas some other preferred to omit it and continue promoting their own quite traditional pastoral, this is to say conservative. Hence, in both cases, priests decided who participated and how to participate into the decisions of parish life, in Mass and in the rest of ceremonies either they were related to the movement or not.

²⁵ See in particular the fourth chapter of this document.

According to the interviewed priests, all of these actions were a “serious issue”, whose execution required people with spiritual formation so that they could understand its true meaning and transmit it to the others. In order to do so, they arranged study sessions, in charge of them and other priests they invited to talk on a subject and direct the session in turn. Besides their attendance to the sessions, laics should give testimony of being responsible people, not having any addiction neither “homosexual deviation”, being married, “having Christ as an axis” in their familial life and fulfilling with Church’s lineaments. The fulfillment of these requirements and their correct performance during the sessions did not guarantee them to take any responsibility in the parish on, the decision was made by the priests; they were those who selected the people who were vested with such responsibilities, for instance, being Minister of Eucharist, reader in the Mass or leader of some of the parish’s groups.

Despite this forms of control the priests involved with charismatic renewal draw to, the insistence from some of the followers to keep that boundary, which articulates tradition and modernity active, turns out to be encouraging as they actively participated in those ritual whose exercise does not imply an open confrontation with the priest; for example: pray for a sick person, read the Bible to others and preach the doctrine of Jesus.

As a conclusion

What we have seen along the work tells us that nowadays talking of religion, specifically about the Catholic, carries references to diverse *boundaries* which on occasions joins and summarizes in the same reality multiple realities, representations, identities, worlds of life, actions and problems, yet in some others separates it. Nevertheless, above things, it implies the reference to multiple individuals who permanently construct and reconstruct it. Although modernity, in its broadest meaning, supposes the deep renovation of the institutions, ways of life, systems of thought, manners of acting and make things, coined through time and gave way to traditions considered as valid in a certain society, it is not always so; the Movement of charismatic renewal confirms this. In the catholic world, it emerged as the boundary that synthesized traditions, dogmas, thoughts and rites Catholic Church fomented

along its history and the innovations it tried to introduce as from the Second Vatican Council. However, at the moment, it marks the *boundary* which divides the conservative leadership of the Church from the modernity this gathering tried to provide this institution with. After all, the *aggiornamento* the council attempted did not transform the essential neither its doctrine; in any case, it worked as a stage both to rethink of itself before a world that was indeed transformed so as to restate the strategies and alternatives to face the problems and challenges this transformation meant. For the Church this decision was not new; five centuries before it had practiced it with the same objectives as now. Before the end of the XV century, it decided to face the by-then modern world adopting the fundamental values of the Middle Ages (Blancarte, 1993). This is to say, the old time values.

In this horizon of reflection, the aforementioned suggests that nowadays the idea on the pertinence of the *charismatic renewal's* exclusive belonging to modernity is difficult to maintain; or said in other words, the idea that this movement, as the priests who promote it state, represents the modernity of the Catholic Church. The reality is in charge of putting in risk this idea. Thus, even if it is true that it appeared as a result of the Second Vatican Council, at the time it has its foundations upon the tradition which constitutes the Catholic Church's doctrine and the practices and ways popular religion has. If we add this to the fact that currently *charismatic renewal* has in the popular strata the largest number of followers, it is understandable that catholic hierarchy has incorporated this forms and practices into this movement. With this, church has recovered the old practices unused among youths because of modernity so as to preserve their flock and make Catholicism's teachings more accessible for it; the objective has been partially fulfilled; despite said movement still attracts large numbers of people, it has not prevented Catholic Church from losing members and its members from having a very elemental knowledge of it.

The response the followers of the *charismatic renewal* to the call of the priests to put into practice old beliefs and ceremonial ways denotes, on the one side, their will to obey the authority represented by priests, and on the other, their proclivity toward tradition. The absence of conflicts where this

call is questioned and the priests' authority reinforce this idea. Indeed, despite it is not possible to provide exact figures, the attitude adopted by the responsible of the parishes in Mérida, where this movement exists, caused dissatisfaction among determinate churchgoers who help them to organize the charismatic events. Some decided to attend other parish, but some others preferred to join some of the Pentecostal Churches nearby. In my opinion, these dissidents maintained the *boundary* between modernity and tradition, as in this sort of churches, modern religious forms coexist with traditional ones, among them flexible rituals and the authority of priests alike.

The return to traditionalism is neither a phenomenon exclusive to Catholicism nor Christianity. It is now extended to all religions and societies; the same in Orient as in Occident, the reappearance of religion²⁶ is evident. In both societies it appears with new manifestations; in some cases, the believers orient this phenomenon, nonetheless in some others the hierarchies are in charge of it. In one or another case, the actors' rationality that orients the construction and reconstruction of the *boundary* between tradition and modernity is different; in the believers' case, it is oriented to the hope for a better immediate reality, in that of hierarchies, to the providence of an explanation of that reality based on the faith in divinity they preach. In the former there is the possibility to create new forms of religion in accordance with the times and spaces where the quotidian life of its actors lapses; whereas in the latter there is the reproduction of the old forms if this relating with God and the perpetuation of power of those who abrogated its representation on earth.

²⁶ Gilles Kepel (1995) uses the category God's payback to refer to the reappearance of religion in an explosive manner as from the second half of the XX century; which confirms the unfulfillment of the XIX-century modernity sociologists' prophecies and the success of Émile Durkheim on the future of religion. The Movement of Charismatic Renewal in the Holy Spirit is found in this reappearance. If the reader cannot consult this work, see Samuel Huntington (1998).

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