

**Communication and symbolic borders.
Popular religiosity in the fishing village of Santa Rosa**

***Comunicación y fronteras simbólicas. Religiosidad popular
en el pueblo pesquero de Santa Rosa***

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Abstract

In the fishing port of Santa Rosa de Salinas, possibly the largest nautical procession in Ecuador occurs. There is a symbolic border formed by images, religious rites and a complex communication system, where official religion interacts with popular religiosity, and important changes take place in the meanings and in the reality they represent. The objective of the work was to establish the symbolic limits and the changes of meaning, that the religious images produce and experience, both in the context of the official religion, as well as in the scenario of the popular religiosity of the fisherman. Qualitative ethnographic research allowed the interpretation of meanings, participating in the experience and systematizing the process. In-depth interviews were carried out during the activities, prior to the nautical procession, in a period of two years and the nautical voyage was carried out for its subsequent description. The results were: knowing a cultural phenomenon and its frontiers of significance. Understand the functioning of the communication system and its religious symbols; and, understand the functioning of the symbolic borders in the interstices between the official religion and popular religiosity. In conclusion; acts of devotion and playfulness coexist in the phenomenon and although they fracture the structure of the official communication model, they validate the liturgical message and reproduce hybrid expressions of popular culture through unstable symbols in their meaning.

Keywords

Religiosity, communication, popular, culture, ethnography, symbols.

Resumen

En el puerto pesquero de Santa Rosa de Salinas, posiblemente ocurre la procesión náutica más grande del Ecuador. Existe una frontera simbólica conformada por imágenes, ritos religiosos y un complejo sistema de comunicación, donde interacciona la religión oficial con la religiosidad popular, y se producen importantes cambios en los significados y en la realidad que estos representan. El objetivo del trabajo fue establecer los límites simbólicos y los cambios de significado, que las imágenes religiosas producen y experimentan, tanto en el contexto de la religión oficial, así como en el escenario de la religiosidad popular del pescador. La investigación cualitativa etnográfica permitió la interpretación de los significados, participando de la experiencia y sistematizando el proceso. Se realizaron entrevistas a profundidad durante las actividades, previas, posteriores a la procesión náutica, en un lapso de dos años y se realizó la travesía náutica para su posterior descripción. Los resultados fueron: conocer un fenómeno cultural y sus fronteras de significación. Comprender el funcionamiento del sistema de comunicación y sus símbolos religiosos; y, entender el funcionamiento de las fronteras simbólicas en los intersticios entre la religión oficial y la religiosidad popular. En conclusión; los actos de devoción y lúdica coexisten en el fenómeno y aunque fracturan la estructura del modelo de comunicación oficial, validan el mensaje litúrgico y reproducen expresiones híbridas de la cultura popular a través de símbolos inestables en su significación.

Palabras clave

Religiosidad, comunicación, popular, cultura, etnografía, símbolos.

Introduction and state of the art

Faced with the problem of knowledge and functioning of the symbolic borders of communication in the cultural context, the event “Procession (Nautical) of the Christ of the Fisherman was identified, which takes place in July every year at the fishing port of Santa Rosa de Salinas, on the peninsula of Santa Elena in Ecuador. This cultural event has the characteristics required for ethnographic research of its communication processes, in order to establish its systems, uses and symbolic interpretation of the religious images used in Catholic rites. The research objects were constructed: 1) communication systems of the official religion and the expressive forms of popular religiosity; and, 2) functioning of communication in the cultural context of the religious rite. The symbolic borders represent the fissures between contradictory scenarios, where the meaning and sense of the symbols are modified as the communication actors confront the ways of representing and interpreting reality, in a debate to determine it. The Catholic religion historically established with its symbolic system of communication the meanings and controlled the representation scenarios, until different interpretations were elaborated and ambiguous and hybrid manifestations to represent the religious symbols and their ritual practices, in different scenarios to the traditional ones for the liturgical rites, were developed. In this case, the church and its manifestations on the mainland ceased to be the stable scenario, replaced by a symbolically and physically unstable one (Solís & Martínez, 2012, p. 10).

The forms of expression and symbolic representation occur in a time-space system, where there are subjects and objects acting in everyday practices, different from those of other social groups. In this environment, the ways of establishing and controlling the significance of the symbols and the interaction between the subjects are manifested, using images that configure the senses of reality (Rizo, 2004, p. 5). Symbols are signs produced in culture to establish conventions and meanings of something and whose learning implies their shared understanding (Lotman, 2002, p. 89). They make up systems of meaning that allow interpreting the world, articulated by regulatory codes of people’s daily behavior. The observed day-to-day is not a theoretical space, but is the scene where the practices, resistance and operations of cultural artifacts such as religious images occur, whose production we are not interested in, but ritual uses; as well as the popular cultural operations of

communication, its movements and its unpredictable trajectories. (De Certeau, 2000, XVIII). By achieving the understanding of these elements, an intercultural visual dialogue is established that represents in terms of communication and symbolic boundaries, frictions and confrontations, as an effect of an approach “to the other” and their daily ways of articulating objects and subjects to build their representation of reality. As ways of understanding cultural diversity are known, spaces of tolerance and coexistence of diversity will be established. Therefore, the purpose of the present work has been to establish the symbolic limits that occur between the official and the popular of a religious phenomenon, through the study of the production and control of the meanings of the predominant symbols in the Catholic liturgy, in a scenario of cultural conflict, which unites and separates actors.

Materials and methods

Qualitative research is characterized by providing rich and deep information about social and cultural phenomena through the analysis of content, languages, symbols or daily operations, since social reality is understood from intersubjectively shared meanings and expressed in practices and languages. These meanings cannot be considered as subjective beliefs and assessments, but as constitutive elements of a reality that are understood and interpreted to achieve the description of cultural complexity. Beltrán (in Berganza & Ruiz) says: “social reality is completely different from the physical-natural reality; it is full of meanings (more exactly, it is largely meanings) that must be understood to explain it” (2005, p. 31).

This work seeks to approach the living spirit of cultural manifestations by interpreting their meanings, to know the everyday interiorities where they are formed, participating in the experiences, to interpret and systematize them. The information was collected in situ, where the meaning of the analysis group’s action was manifested. Several actors were identified who expressed reasons, emotions and feelings to participate in a popular manifestation of religiosity in an open and spontaneous way. The research was carried out within a logic of understanding, whose essential component was the interpretation of the messages, of the devices and of the cultural artifacts used as mechanisms of interpretation, to understand the motives, meanings and emotions of the actions and interactions of the communication actors (Schwartz & Jacobs in Berganza & Ruiz, 2005, p. 32).

The techniques used were direct participant observation and in-depth interviews conducted during 2015 and 2016. They sought information on the relationships and interactions of the communication actors and their communicative behavior through opinions, feelings and motivations, to clarify the complex meanings of the studied cultural manifestation. Unstructured interviews were applied in informal environments, with dialogues initiated from a list of topics around the observed phenomenon, but without a defined questionnaire, for which prior contact with the environment and the people with whom it would be carried out was required. 56 people with some of the required characteristics were selected, since they should be bearers of knowledge. (From Miguel in Berganza & Ruiz, 2005a, p. 255). The territory was recognized, so that researchers could become part of everyday life. The territory subject to reconnaissance, so that researchers could become part of everyday life. In the sampling, a group of people carrying knowledge and experience related to the cultural manifestation were selected, which were classified by groups into: fishermen participating in the procession, cultural and community organization managers, authorities, priests and faithful representatives of the church.

The interviews were conducted in the places determined by the informants. Some did not culminate in a single meeting since more data, documents, images, names, dates, and others had to be recovered. Once the information was gathered it was interpreted and this generated categorical units to write this report, determining the construction processes of meanings, as well as the actors and their communication devices. The procession was carried out twice to observe the events, take photographs and understand directly, the emotional and ludic sphere that is formed during the journey. All information was recorded in audio files and photographs and transcripts were made to later prepare the final report.

Analysis and results

The “Procession of the Christ of the Fisherman” is promoted and organized by the community of the parish of Santa Rosa, and is celebrated in the month of July. It is preceded by festive events, which extend until August for its convergence with the parish-foundation festivities. It is an event where nautical skill, the ornament of the boats, the temporary conformation of plat-

forms by tied up ships, where the party takes place, where dance, drinks, food is shared and the presence of family groups and fishermen guilds is exalted, are appreciated. In this procession the popular religiosity is revealed, and on its success (according to the magical thinking of the fisherman) will depend, life and death, the abundance of fish, the economic bonanza, the ways of becoming, the places to do, the calm of the seas and the life of fishermen, as well as the health of the family, the growth of children and peace in the fisherman's home. Among the results of the study we may include: 1) description of the functioning of communication, its devices and channels in the conceptual scenario of the symbolic boundaries of culture and its mechanism of significance. 2) identification of resistance, hybridization and fracture practices of the official communication model (of the Catholic religion). 3) identification of the model of organization, visibility and political participation of the community in the celebration. 4) Identification of the main symbols, artifacts and aesthetics of the religious and popular combined in the celebration. 5) identification of the actors and scenarios (time/space) of the communication.

Discussion and conclusions

Historical and geographical context of the fishing port of Santa Rosa de Salinas

Santa Rosa is one of the parishes of the Salinas canton in the province of Santa Elena. It is located 144 km from Guayaquil. It has a boardwalk, beaches, hotels, hostels, restaurants, and a central park. It presents important cultural diversity of customs and religions; It has accessibility and connectivity with communication technologies and paved roads. There is historical and archaeological evidence (Marcos, 2005, Ontaneda 2007)¹, that the pre-Columbian cultures of the Santa Elena peninsula, sailed with skill on the high seas 4000 years ago. The fishermen of Santa Rosa consider themselves descendants of these cultures. On April 14, 1942 by Executive Decree No. 560, the current territory of Santa Rosa was determined, relocating the re-

¹ Data obtained from: ballenitasi.org and <https://bit.ly/2Yjyqoz> related to Ecuador. Milestones of a pre-Columbian past of Santiago Ontaneda, published by the Central Bank of Ecuador.

sidents of “La Ensenada”, as a result of the expropriation of the land occupied on January 16, 1942, by American troops to build continental defense works during World War II (Paredes, 2004, p. 282).

Images and religious symbols

The symbols of religion have been inserted, so that they are positioned in the memory of the faithful as codes of behavior and practices that allow the exercise of the hegemonic power of some groups over others, as well as the awakening of the struggle for the rights of cultural diversity (Yúdice, 2002, p. 37). The symbols and images form a link with forms of religious expression, whether official or popular, since they teach and learn content with the power of cultural transformation (Lira, 2016, p. 299). The importance of religious images goes back to Council II of Nicea in 787, where they were defined as teaching guides of the Catholic church tradition, which, with accuracy and care, should be exposed in a life-giving way in the church, both painted as in mosaics and sculptures; placed on the walls of the rooms, houses and roads; both those of the Savior (Jesus Christ), and those of the virgin, angels and saints. Aramoni, 2012, p. 103) Between 1545 and 1563 the Council of Trent was held whose decrees determined that the images should be used to request the intercession of the saints before God, who should be invoked and worshiped. They should be kept in temples, being recipients of honor and veneration. It is decreed to instruct, through painting and other reproductions, on the mysteries of the sacred and the divine (Aramoni, 2012, p. 104). Religious images are symbols that connect metaphysical content with real physical experiences that occur in people’s daily lives. They are significant that refer to realities and concepts related to morality, life, death, the divine and the profane, with which parishioners are educated and press to resign a life whose possible changes depend on faith.

The perceptual influence of the image is profound. It works through the sense of sight, within a reverential aesthetic system that facilitates contemplation and allows the observer to transport himself to remembrance, desire, and worship of God, and combines with aromas, candles and lights, creating a “Decosphere” of intimacy between the image and the faithful (Aramoni, 2012, p. 104). In summary, they are the symbolic vehicle between myth and the concreteness of life. They are plastic, carved and printed representations; produced and reproduced in all possible technological, artisanal and

artistic forms. According to Pérez (2016), religious images leave the territory of present-day Ecuador from the port of Seville, stopping at the New Kingdom of Granada, to reach the Royal Audience of Quito, in the midst of political, religious and civil transformations and in company of institutions such as the Inquisition, the councils and provincial synods, which struggled to homogenize religious practices and establish direct control over the cult of images, which had undergone modifications due to the different cultural contexts of their practice. In America they adopted indigenous or mestizo characteristics and local narratives that contributed to the construction of a social sense of identity and action. Their production, meaning and understanding materialized in the cultural practices of the subjects who carry out social operations with them, in accordance with the meanings of their symbolic world (Castro, 2013, p. 10).

Communication, culture and symbolic borders

For Solís and Martínez (2012), the cultural experience is constituted by the daily practices carried out in contexts that shape them, in co-dependence with a significant, singular and different framework to other practices and other contexts. These manifestations occur in a specific time and social, historical and cultural space and have objective and subjective characteristics, which allow the formation of symbolic borders or contact areas, where, as a result of heterogeneity, tension, conflict and confrontation occurs.

Culture as described by Tylor (cited in Solís & Martínez, 2012, p. 12), is a whole composed of articulated symbols that constitute a system made up of individuals, processes, objects, beliefs and other elements, located in an abstract structure, in a territory of functional logic, where meanings of language, values, worldview, becoming, tradition, heritage, and others are shared; and where an element is understood and explained in strict axiomatic relationship with the other elements of the system.

Religion acts through symbols and communication processes, as a model of reality and provides elements to live it as a social “ethos” of existence, which makes everyday life understandable and explainable. People with their religious and secular ritual practices, are those who have built the border areas of interaction, where religion has been blended with culture by fostering new symbols, or transforming the meaning of existing ones (Solís & Martínez 2012, p. 13).

Communication involves the multiplicity of messages and diverse forms of interaction between individuals and groups. It is literally the interpretation of cultural functioning, its construction and its transformation. Communication actors share the experience and awareness of their daily actions in an exchange between subjects and objects in which individual experiences are linked to collective ones inside and outside their borders. This symbolic and material link is a dialogue that starts from the introspective of the individual, towards the symbolic construction of the collective, and that results in a thought, an archetype or a symbolic system shared between the participants of the communication (Amodio, 2005, p. 27). In short, communication is the result of the symbolic interaction between individuals, in their borders of construction of reality and their way of sharing and experiencing it, through cultural artifacts.

Images and symbols of Christ of the Fisherman

The celebration and nautical procession of the “Christ of the Fisherman” is a cultural manifestation of popular religiosity, where solemnity and celebration are combined by Catholic symbols, which are mixed in the celebration, where the scenic “Ethos²” is at times the sea and other times the earth, in a physical and symbolic border. It is a period of exaltation of the “Nous³” that celebrates life and the fight against the fear of death, coming to take on characteristics of “Hibrys⁴” (Morin, 2006, p. 14). For Echeverría (2010, p. 40), the accessory is indispensable for the essential, since, in real life, where the institutional, technical and normative forms determine the culture, there are magical and ludic practices of resistance and rupture that dissolve them. Among these practices is popular religiosity, which creates ambiguity in the understanding of the mythical foundation of religion and its institutional communication practices. In culture, knowledge and ways of doing are created and communicated, either at the edges or the center where the symbolic tension between the official and the Dionysian is generated.

2 Habits, daily lifestyle and scale of values that a group creates and learns.

3 Spirit, living form of cultural exaltation.

4 Excessive or “demens.” One of the characteristics with which Edgar Morin categorizes the anthropology of human barbarism.

The Feast of the Christ of the Fisherman is a process of significance that is deposited in stories, images and symbols shared by the actors of the celebration, to reproduce ideas, concepts, events, and ways to recreate reality. On the boardwalk of the port of Santa Rosa, there is a sculpture that symbolizes the presence and permanence of the Catholic religion in the parish. This describes a scene of Jesus with a fishing net, in which several marine specimens are trapped (not necessarily biblical passage), and is related to the Christian metaphors of fishing, the fisherman and the fish, connected with the teaching of the faith, abundant physical and spiritual food and the work of the fisherman and his way of life, creating the link between the real and the imaginary. In addition to the aforementioned, there are others used as a symbol of the celebration. One introduced by Santiago Tigrero, Alberto Medina, José Vera and others, around 1970⁵, replaced by a crucified Christ about three meters high, which due to its large volume was changed by the current sculpture of the Heart of Jesus, introduced from Salinas by the Josefin priests. There is the initiative to commission the production of a definitive image as a stable symbol of the Fisherman's Christ, since in its absence the meaning contingently transits from one image to another.

The official communication system

In principle the procession was planned and executed by the Catholic Church, but management passed to the Parish Pro-Improvement Committee. The festivities start with a Friday proclamation in the presence of queens, candidates, the president of the party, the president of the Committee, local authorities and residents. On Sunday, the election of the Queen of Christ of the Fisherman is carried out, whose task is to support the collection of donations to carry out the events and the procession of the following Saturday, as well as the closing event of the last Sunday. The procession is always a Saturday morning and the faithful transport the image of the Christ⁶ from the church to the port, where they will embark it. The first route goes south (na-

5 Data provided by the leader of the Santa Rosa Pro-Improvement Committee, Amador Reyes Láinez, in an unpublished interview, held in March and April 2016.

6 To which good fishing and the care of the life of the fishermen are attributed, as well as good health and family happiness.

val base) and makes a port⁷ turn to the coast of La Libertad; and then, after a second trip, to settle in the port of Santa Rosa where the image is unloaded and transported to the church. The journey takes about four hours with approximately 800 ships, in which about 8,000 people are embarked. It is the largest religious and cultural event in the parish, and perhaps in the province, although not the only one. During the time of navigation, the image is accompanied by a band of popular music that sings all the time and that includes a repertoire of fishery narrative, catholic praises, *sanjuanitos*, *pasillos* and Ecuadorian passacaglia and more popular music. The boats join together forming platforms so that people can be close to the “living Jesus who is in the sky and the sea”, and celebrate the work of fishing. Beyond religious dogma one can deeply live the feeling and emotion. Ocampo says that “man has the ability to know and love, feel and enjoy in splendor (...) that is known as beauty” (2009). Drunkenness is observed in some fishermen and the celebration ends when approaching the port, where thousands of people quickly disperse upon landing, as a result of fatigue.

The church is not part of the celebration, because this popular manifestation is not considered a liturgical celebration. The manifestation of the fishing village is an amalgam of enjoyment, drunkenness, redemption and faith, whose scenarios, languages and artifacts are juxtaposed. The church defends its separation since its role is to work in evangelization, and “announce Christ as the architect of salvation and as a source of life that transforms the human being with the power of his spirit.”⁸ Due to the symbolic burden that this mission represents, it is not a simple task, so it requires specific scenarios and specific processes such as those explained below. People go to the church in search of a funeral, memorial, marriage or other religious service; then the priests spread a sensitive and emotional message with symbolic charge and achieve an emotional impact.

There is also the tool of catechesis, so that children and young people come to a confirmation of their Catholic faith, therefore they must receive the contents of the Christian doctrine and learn symbols and rites. People who have already learned Christian symbolic content go to Mass, where messages of mythical-religious character are repeated. To that is added the

7 Left side of the ship, looking from bow to stern.

8 Reflections of Father Josefino Alberico Zanella in an interview about the procession of Cristo del Pescador.

rhetorical work of the previously indoctrinated family, whose role is to influence young people and children, to concentrate them again on the Christian message. The device closes the circuit with the cultural offer aimed at young people, who in the absence of secular aesthetic and leisure activities, come to the church to fill the void with dynamics directed towards the reproduction and practice of pastoral discourse whose symbolic load is transmitted through inspiring metaphors. The cross is the main symbol that represents the faith of the Catholic spirit that motivates the person.

The faithful who participate in the celebration are more linked to the church than to the procession; and are families that perform acts of faith with offerings and masses of thanksgiving for life, for the fishermen's economy, for their fleets and their families. The church and the devotees participate with the religious services of the masses and the rosary of the novena. The fisherman offers the Holy Mass for the unity of the family and his children. He proposes his intentions and thanks for life, food, fishing and illumination during the day.

According to Zanella, in the popular imaginary there are contents that are related to the Catholic doctrine that teaches identity and religious mission through the images and symbols of the "Fisherman Christ", the official account tells that Jesus chose four fishermen as His apostles and spent a lot of time with them in the Sea of Galilee fishing. In choosing them Jesus said; "I will make them fishers of men" and, therefore, Jesus was considered a fisherman. The fish is another symbol of the first Christians, with which the identity and mission of Christ was transmitted, considered the sign privileged by Jesus as a representation of faith and acceptance of him in his followers.

There are exegetical narratives that escape the popular domain because of their abstract and complex content, but which, in ritual practice, are replaced by pieces of prosaicisms (popular aesthetics) to achieve their understanding. Zanella narrates that the language of the church in the first three centuries was Greek, in which "fish" is written "ICSUS", and with the five letters of the word the acrostic is formed: "IESUS CRISTOS SEO UIOS SOTER" "(Jesus Christ Son of God the Savior), establishing a relationship of significance between the symbol" fish "and its liturgical meaning. Despite the symbolic relationship between the fisherman and the church, the parish priest believes that the procession of Santa Rosa is not an act of deep faith, since it does not honor Christ who saves and frees men from sin. According to him, the liturgical message must circulate clearly in the procession and

the act of faith of the believer must be visible, and that occurs when the procession is on the ground. The procession at sea is, in his opinion, festive and folkloric, where the message does not clearly circulate. Therefore, the nautical procession and its festivities are a cultural act and a practice inscribed in popular religiosity as a result of a tradition.

The church has a communication device with messages that circulate through a synchronic emission directed to its audience, whether in catechesis, mass or procession. The symbolic message seeks an emotional and moral effect and a change of behavior in individuals. There is no evident appropriation of communication technologies. Communication in its official model is difficult when the scenario varies, messages issued on land have a different form of circulation to those at sea. The church has a guiding role of faith and offering religious services, so its language and code are limited to it. It develops a work of evangelization so it must achieve an act of deep faith and not of a natural, popular or folkloric order. Another form of circulation of messages of the church is Catholic education, where young people learn Christian life issues, an exercise that is complemented by a previously indoctrinated family that reproduces the message, generating a rhetorical reinforcement.

Resistance and rupture from the official message

When we refer to the sea as a form of nature, we speak of the most powerful symbol in the context of the fisherman, not as a sublime landscape seen from the shore at sunset, but, rather, the most violent nature that does not admit aggressive men who want to phagocytize it (Zecchetto, 2002, p. 25).

Finding the meaning of the celebration is to understand the web of meanings that fishermen give to their lives and their trade. It implies understanding their daily functioning, finding the way in which the playful and liturgical aspects of popular religiosity interact in time and space of the celebration, to identify the imaginary, the practices, the memory and the transformation of reality around them once we understand it (Guerrero, 2002, p. 28). Meaning implies understanding and representing something through practice. In this case, the manifestation has a complex meaning where factors such as realization scenarios (physical boundaries), the purposes and ways of understanding and practicing them (symbolic boundaries) are linked.

The celebration is organized with a logic of popular celebration that lasts nine days. Those responsible are members of the Parish Pro-Improvement Committee, among which there are practitioners of Catholicism and other religions. The organizers assume, in front of the demanding community, the responsibility of carrying out a ludic-liturgical celebration in two scenarios (sea and land), in one of which fishermen dominate the conditions, and the authorities, except the naval ones, are forced to follow its rules, as they depend on the expertise of fishermen in navigation.

Among the organizers, paradoxically, several of them have stopped fishing or have never practiced it. Among them are teachers, craftsmen and small merchants; these execute events whose predominant symbols are fishing and religion expressed in the images of Christianity. Several objects are articulated that reference different ways of perceiving reality through concepts such as life, death, danger, money, work, party and family. In Santa Rosa, the meaning of “deep” religious faith can be found in practicing people, who are firmly convinced of Catholic rites. Through the dialogues we found the basis of their acts of faith, which in some cases are the result of the doctrinal process, and in others of experiences of emotional intensity of extreme events that occurred in fishing operations or in daily life.

It was observed that in the procession there is no participation clearly directed towards faith; It is not an environment of reflection but ludic. However, there is no moral denial to its participants, as there are people who feel identified with this manifestation that merges the religious with the secular, where religious content and intense ludic practices are shared. This cultural hybridization has allowed the production of popular artifacts made to exalt the divinity of the Christ of the Fisherman, who do not officially belong to the church; but if they project the moral force and a religious aesthetic made from the prosaic and day-to-day (Praises created to the Christ of the Fisherman).

In official terms, the procession is a practice generated to justify interest and fear, since fishermen face many risks at sea (fear-death) and many needs on land (hunger-poverty), and seek a benefit for their work (fishing-money) and survival (life-family), through the festive act. The difference observed between popular and official religiosity is that the second accepts and practices rites committed to the doctrinal contents of the church. Popular religiosity, on the other hand, is an accessory of everyday life, where it is not faith that motivates people to practice Christian rites, but need and fear, and this practice is hybridized with religious, aesthetic and ludic experiences of

its practitioners. A contradiction that arises in this scenario is that deep faith arises from popular religiosity (according to the cleric himself). “Religion must go to man and accept it as it finds it to take it to the level of deep faith that is manifested by its approach to religious content,” that is, it should co-opt it and apply an indoctrination process to understand the liturgical symbolic system and its practices; but in reality things happen in a different way, since the popular religiosity of the fisherman, seek in God a personal “advantage” (without moral sacrifice) in a transactional way and allows a life without severe moral norm.

At sea the message circulation device is limited, therefore the circulation is minimal and does not achieve a large spread. Ships are mostly narrow “fibers” (boats), for few crew members and with limited cargo capacity. They are manned by ten or more people and do not carry a greater load, but the noise of the engines and music does not facilitate the organization and circulation of a specific message, which would require technology, as well as organization for its circulation. The fishing town probably set up a paradoxical and ambiguous religious message, at the time that the church had no capacity to achieve a clear significance on the sea stage, or perhaps it applies religious symbols, devices and artifacts, such as a creative pragmatism that goes beyond the limits of the meaning that religion assigns to faith (Echeverría, 2002, p. 24); and apply it in a practice of libertarian evasion.

Conclusions

The procession of the Christ of the Fisherman of Santa Rosa de Salinas (Santa Elena), is a manifestation of the popular culture and religiosity of the fishing town of the coast of Ecuador, where acts of devotion and fun coexist at the same time fracturing the communicative structures of the religious model, but validating the liturgical message. This procession is a journey of emotional intensity that facilitates the magical, folk and cultural experience, with combined nuances of religious and popular aesthetics.

For the organizers it represents a social, cultural and political task, since its management will be evaluated and discussed by the population. This exercise gives visibility and legitimacy to the community. The Catholic church in Santa Rosa has an official communication device, which is overwhelmed by the break in the way of practicing communication, where

devices are imposed and communication artifacts are created from the popular and the resistance.

The messages, symbols and meanings that intervene in this communicative, social and cultural phenomenon, circulate through official and unofficial channels, and their contents are adapted to the demands or needs of the different actors in two physical and symbolic scenarios. There are three communication actors that operate from communication: the fishing village, the managers and the church with their representatives.

Symbolic boundaries allow the determination of time/space action, in an objective, subjective and intersubjective scenario.

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