



The Rural Religious Party

Support Source : textos de Marco Vinicio Rueda

INTERPRETATION OF THE EXPRESION “POPULAR”

Although it is certain the expression “popular” is a concept that exists from the beginning of the study of our history, but mentioning the “popular religiosity”, it has been likewise, a discussion topic and it debates when interposing it with the evangelism of the social groups.

Thanks to studies of several anthropologists, the exposed approaches as having guessed right in this summary, it is that the concept of popular religiosity that is a group of beliefs and traditions of big groups considered masses (non minorities) where little cultivation religious has existed and that has been for blame of the abandonment and the indifference of the clergy toward these groups, that it constitutes itself a culture since is manifested as a taken root culture where the inheritance transmission has been oral and that it is covered for a faith of people that believe and feel to make what believe view rather as pure in comparison to the faith that makes a religion of studios and that they are based on rules nothing else; but that makes do it with a touch of marginal and that one gives for the selection in blended peculiar religious ways with a re-interpretation in the official religious ways.

But there are many groups that say to defend the popular religiosity, but however , after exclaiming the purity and full realization of this religiosity, they expose it as the group of those excluded poor, ignored by the clergy and a new contradiction exists. And the fact is also given that it is these groups are in fact European and specifically Spaniards and that for themselves that evangelized when arriving to our land, and that when in fact not being those more experts in the religion caused this religious culture an unsightly point without taking it pejoratively.

In conclusion, to study the concept of popular religiosity, we should separate it of the socio-cultural aspect and to see it from a historical angle and specific to avoid us the crash that we always find with the norms and topics of the Catholicism and evangelism that mention it as a topic with too much little importance when referring to the alone topic and they take it referring to the non cultured mass of the history.

Source: Ballet Folklórico de Ecuador de Luis Beltrán

ANDEAN RELIGIOUS PARTY

In the Andean sector of our country, there is a lot of diversity in parties where the presence of the Catholic religion or simply the evangelism of the mestizo ones or in turn the conquerors, it has been very notorious and influential.

Analyzing the parties of this vast Andean sector, we can notice that all the parties rotate around a main character which we denominated “prioste.”

First let’s determine the historical roots of this type of parties in general. When speaking of rural religio-

ty, we highlight the beliefs before the evangelism influences in the peasants, the wealth or excessive quantity of uranianos sacred (gods that we cannot see and that they are manifested through the near and visible saints) and the near and visible saints like the sun, the moon and the rain. All the rites or ceremonies always had a stateliness thanks to the faith from the natives when celebrating them. The evocation to the saints for the care and the productivity of the lands, the health of the livestock, the labor force of the families, they were requested common in this type of ceremonies and commendations, gratefulness and reverences at the same time.

The coming of the conquerors to our lands and the imposition of another religion and customs on those that were professed in our sector, created a sincretización (mixture) where the acceptance of the natives toward to this new form of seeing the divine thing, was for the simple way that the natives had too many deities and one more in their list won't change in a lot its visión of the topic

The introduction of a new religion was not precisely imparted by the more experts, therefore the evangelism was not the clearest for them, as for example, for "to transform them into Christian" the baptisms became mass, with the single fact that the applicants answered "Sí" to the offer that if they want water on their heads.

Of there that the coalition of native beliefs with a new religion and a deformed point makes us look to the current religious parties. As a memory of what we really were and how we were subjected.

If we speak about the indigenous society before the Spanish interference, we can say that it was perfectly structured, since they had laws, values, quite clear social divisions. For example: a wealthy person was considered of high class if its house was own and it was in good state, if its lands were more and less big and if they were under good conditions for a good harvest, if they had at least several livestock heads, work instruments for own cultivation and the most important thing, if their social knots were many, therefore that person was in capacity of paying with enough chicha to their relatives and assistants that worked in their parcels. To those wealthy people they were designated "prioste" for the next party, because with him the financing of the party was assured.

The prioste.-

As it was already explained, the prioste should be a wealthy person who offered "voluntarily" to carry out this role. I.

The Economic Factor.-

The prioste is the one in charge of covering all the expenses that the party required, for that during the whole year, he got in debt or it gathered enough money to pay the disguises, the bands of musicians, the volatería, food and drink of the whole town, the mass and the priest's performance; and this debt regularly ascended to values that the prioste to cover them should sell or to pawn his lands, livestock and other goods, to the extreme of lowering the family budget drastically during several years. This was a very strong cause for the migration of the peasants, because many occasions didn't reach to pay with their possessions the enormous sums of money that were for the effect.

The Social Factor.-

This was the only benefit of “to give the party”, because after this, a lot of social prestige was won during the whole year. Who was not capable of “to give the party” or who didn't like the appointment, was qualified as brat, llucho or tragadebalde, that was one of the worst offenses in his world.

Church-Abuse.-

The church always wanted to be imposed to this type of celebrations because in many cases it was very difficult “to enter” in its customs and beliefs, so they invented ways to change the orientation of the parties being invented traps or impositions so that this celebrations are linked with the Catholic calendar, in order of there are the parties of: Corpus Cristi, San Luis, San Juan, San Pedro and San Pablo, Virgin of the Mercedes, etc.

When making it, the church not only achieved its moral objective that they have evangelized the natives but they also took advantage in its quality of “the saints' Representatives” to fill with money their pockets through an indiscriminate exploitation to the native with this pretext, they got paid enormous supreme for any “intersection against God.”

Source: Ballet de Ecuador de Luis Beltrán