

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) in Guatemala: Issues of Gender, Ethnicity, and Social Transformation*

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Abstract

Far from the focus of public and scholarly attention, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) has developed into the largest lay movement of the Catholic Church in Guatemala, Latin America, and globally. This means that a significant number of Catholics are experiencing a Pentecostal revival within the Catholic Church, as they form part of an internal Catholic Charismatic movement, which in the year 2000 encompassed at least 74 million Catholics in the Americas and a minimum of 120 million globally. In Guatemala, representatives of the CCR claim that the movement is particularly successful among women and rural Mayas. If the aforementioned claim is substantiated by data, how do we account for the success of a movement with origins in the United States and apparently no cultural affinities to Mayan culture? Why are women specifically attracted to a movement that has been frequently described as patriarchal and conservative? This article examines the history of the movement, its demographics (female and indigenous membership), and four domains (discourse, religious practice, community, and institution) in order to shed light on the impact of Pentecostalized Catholicism on church life, gender, ethnicity, and social relationships.

Keywords: Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR); Guatemala; women; ethnicity; social transformation

Resumen

Lejos de la atención pública y académica, la Renovación Carismática Católica (RCC) se fue convirtiendo en el movimiento laico más grande de la Iglesia Católica en Guatemala, América Latina y el mundo. Esto significa

que un número importante de católicos están experimentando un renacimiento pentecostal dentro de la Iglesia Católica, ya que forman parte de un movimiento carismático católico interno a la iglesia, que en el año 2000 abarcaba al menos 74 millones de católicos en las Américas y un mínimo de 120 millones en el mundo entero. En Guatemala, representantes de la RCC afirman que el movimiento es particularmente exitoso entre las mujeres y los mayas de las zonas rurales. Si la afirmación anterior se sustenta en datos, ¿cómo explicamos el éxito de un movimiento que se origina en los Estados Unidos y que aparentemente carece de afinidades culturales con la cultura maya? ¿Por qué este movimiento atrae específicamente a mujeres, cuando ha sido frecuentemente caracterizado como patriarcal y conservador? Este artículo examina la historia del movimiento, su demografía (membresía femenina e indígena) y cuatro áreas (discurso, práctica religiosa, comunidad e institución) para arrojar luz sobre el impacto del catolicismo pentecostal en la vida de la iglesia, en el género, la etnia y las relaciones sociales.

Palabras clave: Renovación Carismática Católica (RCC); Guatemala; mujeres; etnicidad; transformación social

1. Introduction

Recent decades have seen large internal diversification within Catholicism and an explosion of Catholic movements and faith initiatives. The Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR)—now by far the largest lay movement of the Catholic Church in Guatemala,¹ Latin America,² and globally³—is one of many recently emerged Catholic movements and faith initiatives, including *Cursillistas*, *Focolares*, *Neocatecúmenos*, and *Opus Dei*. Despite being the largest Catholic lay movement and despite its religious potency, this version of Catholic Pentecostalism has gained very little attention from the general public and from scholars.⁴

General studies of Pentecostalism in Latin America and elsewhere, which examine both Catholic and Protestant variants,⁵ lack an in-depth focus on women and gender issues.⁶ Exceptions to this are the groundbreaking works of Elisabeth E. Brusco on evangelical conversion and gender in Colombia, published in 1995, and the works of Lesly Gill on Aymara immigrant women and the Pentecostal movement in La Paz, Bolivia, and Anne Motley Hallum on feminism, women's movements, and Pentecostalism in Latin America.⁷ Race and ethnic relationships within Pentecostalism, including the CCR, are also seldom examined. Here the innovative work of John Burdick, who combines research on Protestant Pentecostalism with ethnicity and gender in Brazil, must be mentioned.⁸

Existing studies on Protestant Pentecostalism, and in some instances neo-Pentecostalism, which include ethnicity and gender in their analysis, offer, in my view, fruitful incentives to the study of the CCR.⁹ As these are all Pente-

costal movements, they share many characteristics (for example, their focus on evangelization, prayer, the Holy Spirit, and “spiritual gifts” or charisma); and they are also enthusiastic,¹⁰ healing-oriented, and revitalistic. Moreover, the personal transformation, or conversion, is central for both the CCR and Pentecostalism. Other important common traits between the movements are that they make exclusive and absolute claims about their religious belief system, explicitly contesting hybridity and syncretism by insisting on clear categories of identity.¹¹ This aspect is relevant, since it has strong repercussions for the probability or improbability of a religious dialogue not just between Protestant and Catholic communities but also for an intra-religious dialogue within the Catholic Church.¹² These Pentecostal movements pursue an agenda of social change,¹³ and have dramatically and profoundly changed the makeup of the Guatemalan religious landscape and civil society. A significant difference with respect to the Protestant Pentecostal churches is, however, that the CCR is part of the established Roman Catholic Church. Therefore, the religious doctrines and practices of Catholicism, the matter of institutional belonging, and the role of Catholic identity should not be ignored.

Within Protestant Pentecostalism, several contradictory statements have been made with regard to female and indigenous participation. Griffith and Roebuck note that male Pentecostal leaders have often drastically narrowed the boundaries within which their female counterparts speak and act in positions of authority; so that Pentecostalism has come to be perceived as far more conservative than mainline Protestantism on gender issues.¹⁴ Gill argues that the Pentecostal movement in La Paz, Bolivia, is masking gender inequalities and implicitly affirming traditional relations of domination between men and women. However, similarly to Brusco, she also argues that the Pentecostal movement promotes values and practices that challenge aspects of the dominant society, even though they do not question the hierarchical aspects of Pentecostal ideology.¹⁵ Furthermore, the success of a movement with origins in the United States and apparently no cultural affinities to Mayan culture is thought-provoking. Therefore, the role of female *and* indigenous leadership merits attention. Moreover, the question of whether the CCR differs from Protestant Pentecostal traditions in this respect is worth investigating.

This article advocates for a careful contextualized analysis to shed light on the complex role of gender and ethnic relationships within the CCR. What is needed is an analysis that enables us to understand how rival narratives fit into the broader picture. Such an account will not simply attend to “great leaders,” for these exceptional figures often tell us little or nothing about the ways in which the roles of women or indigenous people have been bounded for the majority of participants. Nor should such an account solely emphasize the theological

discourse through which women, in particular, have been told to keep silent in the churches and submit to male authority.¹⁶ In sum, considering that the activities of both indigenous people and women have expanded well beyond these prescriptions, we have good reason to explore the nexus between their participation and the impact of Charismatic Catholicism on church life and social relationships.

2. Methodology and Methods

The underlying logic of this research departs from a historical, sociological, and at times anthropological academic perspective. The “modest”¹⁷ framing offered by social constructivism is important to this endeavor. It acts on the premise that the meaning of social action and institutions are constructed, interpreted, and constantly reconstructed by people. Hence, that meaning is shaped by social interactions with others and always attached to a specific context, that is, a concrete time and space.¹⁸ One advantage of this approach is that it acknowledges that social reality is created by human beings *and* that it potentially varies. Therefore, what is “real” to a Mayan villager may not be “real” to an urban Ladino¹⁹ businessman.²⁰ Equally, what is “real” for a woman might not be “real” to a man. Put differently, the acceptance in this framework of the fluidity of social meanings and identities allows us to fulfill a key methodological necessity: that of approaching religious, gender, and ethnic categories not as previously defined, but as reconstructed according to the significance that they have for social actors. This, in turn, is conducive to reaching explorative empirical results and avoiding a strict framing of the research field or its predetermination. Another advantageous aspect of social constructivism is that, as it entails a historic dimension, it is able to incorporate the aspect of social transformation, which is itself important for understanding the emergence of religious movements. Put differently, this research is not based on any essentialist categories, such as “popular religion is Maya religion uncontaminated,”²¹ but, rather, agrees with scholars such as Néstor García Canclini who coined the term “hybrid cultures” and characterized hybridization “as an ongoing condition of all human cultures, which contains no zones of purity because they undergo continuous processes of transculturation (two-way borrowing and lending between cultures).”²² This view is also in line with approaches in the field of history of religions. In the introduction of the edited volume *Indigenous Responses to Western Christianity*, Steve Kaplan notes, for instance, that research indicates that everywhere where Western “Christianity has arrived it has found shared or similar concepts which have served as useful bridges to the local religious systems.”²³

In line with this constructivist logic, the term “race,” although not used here explicitly, is understood as a social construction that creates groups according to specific—mostly biological—categories, such as skin color. In contrast, the terms ethnic group, ethnic identity, and ethnicity are understood as cultural markers (e.g., language, cultural heritage, place of origin, etc.), but, similarly to race, they are defined as socially constructed. Ethnicity also refers to the process through which people try to obtain public recognition for the ethnic group and identity with which they affiliate. Over the course of the last decades in Guatemala and elsewhere, we can observe a shift from race to ethnicity and ethnic identity. Whereas the concept of “race” was common until the middle of the twentieth century, and was often related to claims of racial superiority in dominant groups in society, these days it is mostly marginalized ethnic groups who adhere to the term ethnicity.²⁴ In Europe, from the end of the 1960s onwards, terms such as ethnicity, ethnic identities, or “ethnopluralism” became fashionable among the New Right, in an explicit attempt to avoid an older race terminology—hence the term “New” Right.

The data collection is also guided by this constructivist approach; this research is based on a qualitative methodological approach. In agreement with the methodology and social constructivism, I have used research methods that constitute a form of data gathering and interpretation that do not precondition the data content. These entail the application of methods of discourse analysis and guided expert interviews as well as biographic-narrative interviews. These autobiographical accounts capture the subjective motives for religious conversion and provide an insight into the individuals’ underlying ethnic and gender issues. In contrast, the material for the discourse analyses, which sheds light on the content of religious movements, is, therefore, not based on individual but, rather, on collective claims to religious authority and truth. This data is based on texts of sermons, field notes of prayer meetings and services, and pamphlets and brochures from churches, religious institutions, and the CCR. Expert interviews of representatives from the religious field included priests, catechists, and other officials.²⁵ Fieldwork itself—narrative interviews, interviews with experts, and participant observation—took place between February 2001 and March 2002. However, whenever possible, I have included current information and figures. Interviewees’ names are mostly pseudonyms and are identified as such. When the interviewee was a person in an important position, for instance pastors, authorities in churches, or academics, the real names are given. All of these persons have agreed to their names being published. However, for security reasons, pseudonyms were used for those who are not part of the public spheres.

3. History of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) in the Americas²⁶

The CCR, a lay movement in the Roman Catholic Church, dates back to the Charismatic movement in the historic Protestant churches of the early 1960s and the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965).²⁷ Many accounts of the CCR state that the movement started in the United States, more precisely, as an ecumenical encounter between Catholics and Protestants, when Catholic priests and lay leaders had “pneumatic experiences” (religious experiences attributed to the Holy Spirit) in Protestant groups and shared them with students from the Catholic Duquesne University in Pittsburgh, a Roman Catholic institution operated by the Congregation of the Holy Spirit. From Duquesne, the movement quickly spread to the University of Notre Dame and to The University of Michigan in Ann Arbor. Before long, the movement had reached other Midwestern campuses from which it spread throughout the rest of the United States.²⁸ Historian and priest Peter Hocken, however, identifies similar developments in October 1967 in Bogotá, Colombia, as an independent locality from Duquesne.²⁹ Charismatic splinter groups began even earlier, in 1962, including the Legion of Mary (*Legio Mariae*) in Kenya.³⁰

Since the CCR’s inception, four themes have been of special significance: First, the emphasis on the Holy Spirit; second, the role of the laity in the life of the movement and the church; third, the openness to ecumenical activity; and fourth, the emphasis on evangelization. Regarding its expansion, five additional factors have to be mentioned. First, the covenant communities, which had a prominent role in shaping and consolidating leadership;³¹ second, social networks of families and friends who contributed to providing the CCR with rapid growth, visibility, unity, and a sense of identity; third, small local prayer groups (often set up by families and friends); fourth, frequently held large conferences, and fifth, Catholic media.³² By the early 1970s, the CCR had not only become firmly rooted in the United States, it had also extended—often through international conferences—into Canada, Latin America, Europe, and Asia.³³

For many years, the CCR was accepted within the Roman Catholic Church but was not strongly supported by the bishops in Latin America. The Bishop’s Conference of Panama was the first to accept the CCR, in 1975; the powerful Brazilian Bishops Conference was the last one to accept the movement, in 1994. While the CCR in Brazil was very successful among the laity, its clergy was (more than in any other country) attached to the movement of liberation theology and, hence, hostile to the CCR’s theological and pastoral focus on personal sanctification and religious experience.³⁴ In the 1990s, however, the expansion of Pentecostal and Charismatic churches in Latin America persuaded many bishops that the only effective Catholic response against Protestant Pentecostalism would

be a spiritual renewal and encouragement of the CCR.³⁵ Many observers regard the simultaneous rise of the CCR and Protestant Pentecostal churches in the region as part of the same general Pentecostalization of religion in Latin America.³⁶

Undoubtedly, the CCR in Latin America is the largest and fastest-growing movement in the Catholic Church. With an estimated 74 million adherents in the year 2000, Latin America leads all Catholic regions in the world in this trend. In the words of Edward L. Cleary, O.P., the CCR became the “invisible giant” which no one studied, although it was ten to twenty times bigger than the Christian Base Communities movement.³⁷

In Latin America, the CCR has gradually attained a substantial influence on the institutional church. When analyzing the concluding document of the Fifth General Conference of the Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean, held in Aparecida in 2007 (CELAM), observers have noted that the language and the pastoral priorities described therein are markedly influenced by the Charismatic movement.³⁸ The document launches a “Great Continental Mission” and declares the Church to be “in permanent mission.”³⁹ The stated aim is to transform all baptized Catholics into “disciples and missionaries” through a “personal encounter with Jesus Christ”; the latter is understood as “a profound and intense religious experience . . . that leads to a personal conversion and to a thorough change of life.”⁴⁰ Throughout the document, there is a strong focus on conversion, religious experience (for instance, as an “encounter with Jesus”), the Holy Spirit, mission, and other terms that play a key role in the religious repertoire of the CCR.⁴¹

The election of Pope Francis in 2013 has given the CCR a solid anchoring in the Vatican. On various occasions, Pope Francis has strongly supported the movement. He was the first pope to accept an invitation to a CCR mega-event held in a soccer stadium in Rome, in June 2014, where he engaged in Charismatic-style worship and firmly endorsed lay preaching and missionary outreach. Unlike many Charismatics in Latin America, Pope Francis combines the Charismatic Revival with a focus on social justice, and he does not miss any opportunity to remind the CCR of the “horizontal” dimensions of the faith.⁴² Therefore, on a global scale, but particularly in Latin America and Guatemala (given the numerical presence of the CCR), one can observe a Pentecostalization of the Church in all dimensions, that is, in terms of institution, religious practice, community, and discourse.

4. The Guatemalan Catholic Charismatic Renewal

The origins of the CCR in Guatemala date back to November 1971. Two nuns from the United States, Anne Sullivan and Muriel Gallant, both from the US-American Maryknoll Order, experienced the baptism in the Holy Spirit⁴³ and wanted to share their experience with people in Guatemala, where they worked as missionaries.⁴⁴ The nun María Cecilia Arias narrated the beginnings of the movement in a post scriptum to a publication authored by priest José María Delgado Varela, asserting that the two women acted with great caution because the baptism in the Holy Spirit was unknown within the Maryknoll Order.⁴⁵ So they contacted two priests from the parish of Santa Ana in Zone 5 of the capital and, in January 1972, established a prayer group in the upper-class Colegio Monte María, a school that parents proudly referred to as the Maryknoll-Hilton.⁴⁶ In line with this, José María Delgado Varela notes that the initial constituency was upper-class and non-indigenous.⁴⁷ Similarly, Edward L. Cleary writes in 2009, that “[t]he indigenous . . . were largely overlooked in the initial stage of the movement in the country when it was fundamentally a European white and middle-class movement.”⁴⁸

More or less at the same time, the ultraconservative Spanish-born Guatemalan Archbishop and Cardinal, Monseñor Mario Casariego y Acevedo,⁴⁹ participated in a conference of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in New Orleans and invited the US priest, Harold Cohen, to come to Guatemala to introduce the Charismatic Renewal there.⁵⁰ After the arrival of the US priest,⁵¹ and several retreats and workshops, the movement developed fairly quickly. In meetings, participants became acquainted with, or deepened, the spiritual experiences that form the nucleus of the movement: speaking in tongues, faith healing, and prophecy. In 1974, the diocese established a special pastoral service team to accompany the first charismatic prayer groups.⁵² Many of the initial activists had previously participated in *Cursillo* groups,⁵³ in the *Movimiento Familiar Cristiano*, *Acción Católica*, or, as was the case for Fernando Mansilla, a prominent layman, all of these together.⁵⁴ Therefore, the first Catholic Charismatic Renewal members were committed and deeply involved in Church activities. The following section explores in greater depth the contemporary presence of the CCR in Guatemala, including women and the indigenous population.

4.1 *The Contemporary Presence of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Guatemala*

Compared to other Latin American countries, Guatemala now has the highest share of Catholic and Protestant Pentecostals among the populace.⁵⁵ The Pew

Charitable Trust concluded in 2006 that the presence of Renewalist Christians in Guatemala—an umbrella term which includes all born-again Christians, such as Catholic Charismatics, Evangelicals, neo-Pentecostals, and Pentecostals—may be as high as 60 percent.⁵⁶ In a more recent study from 2014, the Pew Research Center concluded that in Guatemala about half of the population is Catholic, while roughly four in ten adults describe themselves as Protestant.⁵⁷ Most of these Protestants identify with Pentecostalism.⁵⁸ The 2006 study of the Pew Forum on Religion also concludes that roughly six-in-ten Guatemalan Catholics can be classified as charismatic.⁵⁹

In a striking contrast, Edward L. Cleary, in his final book, published in 2011, analyzed the presence of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Latin America, including Guatemala, using data made available by Barrett et al. (2001). The survey he used estimates the number of Charismatic Catholics in Guatemala at approximately 864,000, meaning that 9 percent of Catholics are Charismatic. He also ranked countries by the percentage of priests who were Charismatic. Guatemala occupied the third place with 11 percent, mirroring Brazil.⁶⁰ The discrepancy between the findings of the Pew Forum and those of Cleary can best be explained by the fact that the numbers cited in Barrett et al. were based on a census of participants in Charismatic prayer groups organized under the CCR umbrella, whereas the Pew Forum numbers were based on Catholic respondents who engaged in Charismatic worship practices, e. g. speaking in tongues and prayer of healing. Furthermore, group attendance (where it existed) was not necessarily linked to the CCR.⁶¹ Therefore, statistical figures have to be treated with great caution, and it is important to look at the survey methodology. Representatives of the Charismatic Renewal in Quetzaltenango provided me, in 2002, with membership numbers for the dioceses of San Marcos, Quiché, Sololá, Chimaltenango,⁶² and Suchitepéquez-Retalhuleu. Even though the data cannot be trusted completely, it supports the estimate of CCR representative Luis Kelex that the movement is active and present in about 60 percent of Guatemalan parishes.⁶³ The data also suggests that the movement is more popular among the indigenous population than among the non-indigenous Ladinos. For instance, the diocese of El Quiché, which is predominantly populated by indigenous Mayans, with its 18,559 members, is by far the largest Charismatic stronghold. In the diocese Suchitepequez-Retalhuleu, where Ladinos form the majority of the population, the movement only registered 8,839 members. Aside from El Quiché, Chimaltenango (14,609 members) and Sololá (13,604 members) also stand out.⁶⁴ Padre Hugo Estrada, one of the pioneers of the movement in Guatemala said that the movement is indeed mixed in its class and ethnic composition, but that the majority of its members are women, poor, and lower middle-class.⁶⁵ This characterization is in line with those of CCR representative

Luis Kelex and Bishop Álvaro Ramazzini, who also agree that these days the CCR attracts specifically rural peasants, Mayans, and women.⁶⁶ According to the Pew Research Center, however, it is a misconception that Christian renewalism appeals disproportionately to women. In Guatemala they found that half of the renewalist population is female, and that the gender composition resembles that of the country as a whole.⁶⁷ Women, nevertheless, demonstrate higher levels of religious commitment than men do. In sum, currently the CCR is firmly rooted in a variety of ethnic groups and social classes. However, given the foreign origin of the movement and its initial rise among the upper, non-indigenous elite of Guatemala, the nexus between the CCR and Mayan culture is thought-provoking. The following paragraphs explore this connection.

5. Catholicism, Catholic Mayans, and the Catholic Charismatic Renewal

When looking at the success and appeal of the CCR among Mayan men and women, two issues arise. First, non-indigenous Mayans are attracted to a movement that has a foreign origin and that in Guatemala was initially an upper-class non-indigenous phenomenon. Secondly, there is a well-documented history of rejection by the CCR of traditional Mayan spirituality.⁶⁸

I argue that, indeed, the attraction of the CCR among Mayans is attributable to continuity in clerical policies, church history, and religious practices. More precisely, the negative attitude that the CCR displays towards Mayan culture and spirituality is totally in line with previously existing Catholic movements—first and foremost, *Acción Católica*.⁶⁹ Both *Acción Católica* and the CCR, have a clear-cut, radical understanding of traditional religious expressions and of agents who do not form part of orthodox Catholicism. In short, traditional Mayan priests are particularly condemned, deemed erroneous and misguided, but so are spiritists, healers, and fortune-tellers. The conservative position of Charismatics and (older) catechists includes the strict prohibition of alcohol consumption, dancing, and smoking—activities that are paramount in the traditionally practiced Mayan religiosity. Furthermore, there is a strong resentment of catechists and the CCR towards traditional institutions such as religious brotherhoods and the days of the saints.⁷⁰ According to Padre Tomás, who was a Catholic priest of Mayan descent, a whole generation of Catholic lay people was socialized in the attitude that everything having to do with traditional Mayan religion, Mayan priests, or Mayan spirituality is evil.⁷¹ As a result of this hostile attitude, many traditional Mayan priests started practicing in secrecy, for decades having almost no contact with ecclesial authorities or their Catholic brethren.⁷²

Luis Kelex, a Mayan-Q'eqchi' and employee of the CCR in the capital, is quite specific about why Catholics in general should refrain from traditional Mayan religious practices. In referring to Maximón, or San Simón,⁷³ a figure that is worshipped in many places in Guatemala, he says:

Yes, we disagree on that . . . As I told you before, there are clean traditions, but when you incline in front of an idol, when one performs other things, other rituals, it stops there for us. We don't participate in that . . . The Bible is telling us that God is a jealous God. God wants quite simply that we pray to him. If I pray to x-things, then I don't fulfil God's will. We from the Renewal know that we have to reject so many things. Above all those things that have the meaning of occultism, even though it might be a tradition, we have to reject it. The clean traditions, the beautiful traditions, we are not against; on the contrary, we support those as they allow us to evangelize.⁷⁴

Kelex's comment vividly illustrates that for the Catholic Charismatic Renewal some aspects of Mayan spirituality are of an occult nature. From the point of view of biblical literalism, these aspects are strongly resented. Still, this does not explain why the movement is primarily successful among the Mayan population and women. Biographies of rural Mayan CCR members provide some clarity. They reveal not only that the repudiation of Mayan spirituality based on biblical literalism is strikingly similar,⁷⁵ but also that the motives for their participation are the same.⁷⁶ Pascual Terretón, for instance, who worked for 17 years as a catechist and grew up as a dedicated orthodox Catholic, gave identical reasons for joining *Acción Católica* in the 1960s and 1970s, and later the CCR.⁷⁷ *Acción Católica* is a missionary lay movement that was particularly strong in the western highlands and started in Guatemala in the 1950s.⁷⁸ For Terretón, his activism grew out of a desire to live Catholic Christianity more fully and to dedicate his own life to the Gospel—something he said he could no longer achieve within the *Acción Católica* movement. In this context, Terretón criticized the lack of commitment of contemporary catechists and priests. He didn't mince words and said that the bad habits of some catechists and priests should be “rooted out.”⁷⁹ “Converted Catholics,” he added, “should serve as an example and facilitate subsequent missionary efforts and not the opposite.” On Mayan traditional spirituality, his reasoning was the same as that of Luis Kelex. He said that the explicit goals must be the elimination of “bad” customs, so as to achieve a radical evangelization of the person and total devotion to God. He mentioned, in particular, the processions and saints' days which would mostly morph into

public brawls. He also pointed to customs related to Mayan spirituality. “It is wrong,” he said “to already consecrate babies to become Mayan priests later.” Again, the above-stated Catholic-orthodox continuity and the clear positioning of the Charismatic movement as a defender of Christian values stands out. This leads to the question of why Catholic Charismatics continue to practice their faith within the Catholic Church? As already noted, the religious practice and doctrine of Catholic Charismatics are very similar to those of Protestant Pentecostals and neo-Pentecostals. Some have deduced from these similarities that the Catholic Charismatic movement is nothing more than a steppingstone for Catholics to convert to Protestant Pentecostalism. Others fear that it might develop into an internal religious competitor with parachurch tendencies. However, a Charismatic Catholic whose Catholic religious identity is more important than expressing criticism by choosing other religious options, will most likely try to reconcile her or his position within the Church. This situation has obvious consequences for pastoral work among the parishes because it is at the local level that all these different groups and positions come together and have to be accommodated.⁸⁰ The following section illustrates more fully how the movement’s doctrine correlates with the socio-cultural context of Guatemalan indigenous culture. Here, the aspect of the participation of women will also be discussed.

5.1 Theological Profile and Religious Empowerment of the Disenfranchised

When looking at the success of the CCR among the Mayan population, the theological and liturgical profiles of the movement seem crucial. In this regard, two characteristics stand out: the idea of renewal and the previously mentioned emphasis that the movement places on the Holy Spirit. Furthermore, it is important to recognize that these features are intimately connected, since it is the power of the Holy Spirit that should, according to the CCR, lead to a personal and collective (Church community) renewal.⁸¹

The Catholic Charismatic Renewal is rooted in many different soils; most importantly, in Pentecostalism, which itself had a precursor in the Holiness movement of the nineteenth century (e.g. John Wesley and Methodism).⁸² From these movements, the CCR inherited a renewed emphasis on the following aspects: the present reality of the gifts by the Spirit, a personal relationship with God, and a new informality and emotionality in liturgical worship. The gifts of the Holy Spirit include first and foremost healing, prophecy, and speaking in tongues (glossolalia). Testimonies from the early years of the movement underline that those who launched the CCR in the late 1960s perceived the formality of traditional mass as a constraint placed upon them.⁸³ They wanted to practice a much

more enthusiastic form of worship⁸⁴ in which the heart and the emotions were just as engaged in religious practice as the head and the intellect.⁸⁵ These ideas were motivated by a deep desire to live Christianity more fully.⁸⁶

From early on, the Catholic Church establishment saw the “renewalist” idea of the movement as an attack on the traditional formality and solemnity of Catholic worship, particularly the mass.⁸⁷ Another set of problems evolved from the characteristic of the CCR as a lay movement and the fact that in the previous two decades members had mostly originated from the lower classes. Both aspects prompted harsh criticisms that portrayed the movement’s constituency as lacking theological and pastoral preparation.⁸⁸ This critique was fostered by the emotional and enthusiastic traits of the movement, as described above. Similar to Protestant Pentecostalism, its Catholic counterpart is alien to a Catholic hierarchy that is accustomed to a systematic, interpretative theology. To the contrary, Pentecostalism, whether Catholic or Protestant, is based on a theology that builds on oral history, mysticism, prophecy, and biblical utterances.⁸⁹ All of these non-intellectual, non-rational, emotional, and embodied aspects of Pentecostalism abound in popular religious culture, disclosing the movement’s ability to attract, women, the poor, and the indigenous people of Guatemala and, in fact, of all of Latin America.

With regard to the movement’s popularity, two other aspects became apparent in my research. First, members reported that their Catholic faith and religiosity obtained a new spiritual quality. The descriptions of participants highlight how their belief was strengthened in many ways. Whereas, prior to the conversion process, a dreary religious routine prevailed—one interviewee talked about “mechanical praying”⁹⁰—afterward, the relationship with God became a concrete, physical experience. This leads to the second aspect, namely, that converts described how their concrete and physical awareness of the transcendental ultimately fostered their Christian belief and gave further proof of the existence of divine power. In other words, converts linked emotions, feelings, and physical manifestations to their belief.⁹¹ This finally confirmed for them the existence of the divine and of divine powers as an objective truth and reality in the here and now.⁹² The example of speaking in tongues might best explain this junction. It is also important to realize that this dynamic is asserted anew every time the believer has a (physical) religious experience; that is, every time he or she connects to the gifts of the Holy Spirit or to his or her Christian belief in general. Further conviction comes from the fact that the belief is shared within an important peer group, and that CCR groups are to a large extent ethnically homogeneous.

The movement’s emphasis on the Holy Spirit and the proclamation of living a strong personal relationship with God also provide an answer about why the movement is particularly attractive to the Mayan indigenous population and to

women.⁹³ Through these components, the movement's doctrine claims to have an immediate and individual access to the divine, a factor that can potentially supplant the role of bishops and priests as religious mediators and experts, that is, religious dignitaries that in the past were overtly non-indigenous and male. To put it simply, Catholic Charismatic Mayans would have no reason to rely on traditions such as the sacraments, administered by non-Mayan males, when, within the CCR, God's grace is imparted directly to them by the Holy Spirit. This facet evidences the far-reaching implications of the movement's doctrine, especially for previously marginalized sectors of society such as women and the indigenous Mayans. It has the potential to dissolve the established asymmetry in religious relationships, returning religious expertise to an indigenous laity and entrusting them to organize religious activities in a more autonomous fashion.⁹⁴

Last but not least, there is the spiritual proximity of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal to Guatemalan popular culture. Guatemala's cultural context provides a fertile environment in which the Charismatic doctrine can grow. In a world filled with mystic connotations and with a widespread belief in supernatural forces, the charismatic doctrine finds an exceptionally receptive audience, overlapping in central aspects with local beliefs. The following paragraphs on healing, exorcism, and popular religion make this relationship more explicit.

5.2 *Healing, Exorcism, and Popular Religion*

Healing is one of the central features of the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. In its aim to offer the means through which health in body, mind, and spirit may be attained, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal does not differ from Mayan traditional spiritual practices (nor does it differ from many religions in other parts of the globe).⁹⁵ Yet, it is not simply the goal of healing itself which is strikingly similar in the two religious perspectives but, rather, the underlying understanding of what causes sickness. A Mayan Charismatic Renewal member whom I interviewed hints at the connection: "We pray for instance for the needs of the sick. We pray to free them from the causes of their illness. There are many diseases that are not normal diseases but are caused by Mayan priests, spiritists, or witchcraft. Well, similar to the Evangelical churches, we work against them."⁹⁶ Here, sickness is associated with two origins: it can be caused by a biological failure of the body, or it may result from curses and witchcraft.⁹⁷ In its focus on the location of disease in the spiritual world, this last interpretation corresponds with popular beliefs. Charismatics, like adherents of traditional Mayan spirituality and popular religion, tend to view any sort of affliction, not just sickness or disease, as the result of maleficent interventions.⁹⁸ Furthermore, this religious

perspective has the same causative understanding as the origin of diseases; namely, that conduct (sin) is responsible, either the conduct of the affected person or that of ancestors, or the sin of someone else. Finally, the techniques and healing procedures, in particular the use of prayers, are remarkably similar. A Mayan ceremony, for instance, always contains the element of prayer.⁹⁹ In sum, both the understanding of what causes afflictions and the religious tools used to effectively draw on the power of the Holy Spirit and to communicate with God or transcendental powers, signal key similarities between popular religion and movements such as the Charismatic Renewal, as well as Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal types of Christianity.

Aside from its religious underpinning, the definition of what causes afflictions is important for another reason. It draws attention to challenges that involve both the Catholic laity and the Catholic hierarchy. More specifically, if an affliction is interpreted as a consequence of satanic possession, it should be treated by exorcism. An exorcism, however, can only be carried out, according to Catholic canonical law, by a bishop or by someone appointed by a bishop.¹⁰⁰ If, however, a lay person feels entitled to execute exorcisms or simply healing practices, the religious expertise of priests and bishops becomes highly dispensable. This, in turn, opens a potential breach which endangers ecclesial authority and expertise. Most likely, this is the reason why a distinction between an exorcism and a “prayer of deliverance,” (*oración de liberación*) was established. Luis Kelex states in this respect:

Question: Does the Renewal practice exorcism or the expulsion of demons?

Response: No. We regard an exorcism as something that only the bishop is allowed to do. However, one has to distinguish between a “prayer of deliverance” and an exorcism. For the Charismatic Renewal, the “prayer of deliverance” [*oración de liberación*] is something that certain lay people can execute. This can be, for instance, renouncing Satan, renouncing vices, or a lot of things that we want thrown out of our lives. This is for us a “prayer of liberation.” Now, an exorcism is to fight against Satan, against the devil. For this confrontation, one doesn’t authorize a layman; rather, a bishop has to name a specific priest to assist him in executing the exorcism. Therefore, there is a great difference between a prayer of deliverance and an exorcism.¹⁰¹

Rosario Fernández, an indigenous Charismatic woman, described this dynamic from a grassroots perspective. Her narrative is a commanding account of how

those who had previously been at the bottom of the Church hierarchy suddenly obtain religious power. Her case also raises the question of whether restrictions placed on the CCR will not considerably thwart the success of the movement:¹⁰²

The priest Ricardo Mendoza,¹⁰³ at the San Antonio Church for only a short time, left me alone with seventy women, all women from the San Antonio Church. Several times he threw me out of the Church. He told me that I should leave the Church, that I should go to the Protestants, because he doesn't want me in the Church. I remember that, when the Lord worked wonders in my life, I promised to stay Catholic. Well, I was Catholic and I wanted to stay Catholic. He threw me out of the Church three times. "Go away and take all the women with you," he told me. I was already preaching God's word to seventy women. . . . "Go with the Protestants, what are you still doing here? I don't like your applause, I don't like your shouts when you pray, and I don't like anything you do." . . . I thought to myself: I am not going. At that time I told the priest, "If I go," I told him, "I will make a cardboard plate, and put it here at the door of the Church. I will write your name on that and that you sent me to the Protestant church." That scared him. That is the reason why, now, we have in the San Antonio Church three very big Charismatic groups, even though the same Church declared war on the Charismatic Renewal. But God's word is the confirmation: your own family is going to declare war against you; that is what God's word says.¹⁰⁴

When we compare the position of Rosario Fernández in the CCR with positions traditionally held by women in Guatemalan indigenous culture, the case illustrates striking commonalities; that is, Mayan women are central in transmitting the cultural legacy in their role as midwives (*comadronas*) or healers (*curanderas*).¹⁰⁵ Consequently, Fernández's position in the CCR can be seen as a continuation of positions already present in the traditional Mayan religious and cultural environment. Furthermore, her narrative demonstrates that indigenous women and men are now able to practice their faith in their own language. In sum, by preaching and healing, members of the CCR amass a powerful cultural, social, and religious capital that jeopardizes the dominant role of priests and bishops, while offering Mayans, male and female, new autonomous options to practice their faith within Catholicism.¹⁰⁶

Conclusion

Many conflicts between the Catholic Charismatic Renewal and the Church hierarchy can be traced back to the movement's theological profile. At the same time, the Charismatic doctrine provides Mayans with tools to achieve greater empowerment in the Catholic institutional environment. How are the movement's theological profile and the question of religious empowerment connected? The relationship between Mayan culture and Catholicism hinges on the central role of the Holy Spirit in Charismatic doctrine. In particular, the character of a lay movement that claims immediate and individual access to the divine through the Holy Spirit offers great potential to previously marginalized sectors of society. In this context the Holy Spirit enables the believer to directly communicate with God in a much more personal relationship, a situation that considerably diminishes the role of the sacraments, but also that of priests and other religious dignitaries who are prime mediators and experts in divine relationships. In the past, it is important to remember, these religious dignitaries were overtly non-indigenous. Hence, the Renewal dissolves the established asymmetry in religious relationships, returning religious expertise to an indigenous laity, male and female, and entrusting them with the opportunity to organize in a much more autonomous fashion. It remains to be seen if the greater restrictions placed on the groups will not considerably thwart the success of the movement in the future.

Culturally, the Catholic Charismatic Renewal does not differ much from Mayan traditional spiritual practices, a proximity that further explains why the movement, despite its foreign origin, was able to become so successful. More precisely, in its goal to achieve healing, and in its underlying understanding of what causes sickness, the Renewal is strikingly similar to popular religion. Both locate diseases in the spiritual world, by characterizing it as a result of maleficent interventions. Again, this opens a breach, which potentially endangers ecclesial authority but also gives greater religious latitude to Mayans. A case in point is when affliction is interpreted as a consequence of satanic possession and an exorcism is executed by a lay person despite the prohibition of canonical law. This situation demonstrates how the expertise of the designated priests and bishops can become highly dispensable.

The organizational autonomy as well as the ethnically homogeneous structures, in combination with the doctrinal traits, also means that members of the CCR can involve their cultural and ethnic background. As lay people, they can amass a powerful cultural, social, and religious capital that not only endangers the dominant role of priests and bishops, but also equips lay people with greater religious power. These contextualized versions of faith, in which ethnic cultural norms are factored in, largely explain the success of the CCR and also that of

Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal movements. In this sense, indigenous Charismatic groups are not only the response of the Catholic Mayan flock to a racially divided society and ethnically mixed Catholic Church, they are also a Mayan contribution to shaping the new religious contours of Guatemalan society.

Notes

- * I want to thank Yael Mabat, Isis Sadek, the article's two anonymous reviewers, and Eugene Townsend for their generous support, editing, suggestions, and comments. The essay greatly improved thanks to their help.
- 1 Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, *Spirit and Power: A 10-Country Survey of Pentecostals* (Washington D.C.: The Pew Forum on Religion and Public Life, 2006), p. 80.
- 2 Edward L. Cleary, *The Rise of Charismatic Christianity in Latin America* (Gainesville, FL: University Press of Florida, 2011).
- 3 David B. Barrett, George T. Kurian, and Todd M. Johnson, *World Christian Trends, AD 30-AD2200: Interpreting the Annual Christian Megacensus* (Pasadena, CA: William Carey Library, 2001), pp. 275-278; T. Paul Thigpen, "Catholic Charismatic Renewal," in Stanley Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), p. 462, and Allan Anderson, *An Introduction to Pentecostalism: Global Charismatic Christianity* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004).
- 4 For exceptions on Guatemala and the CCR, see Andrea Althoff, *Divided by Faith and Ethnicity. Religious Pluralism and the Problem of Race in Guatemala* (Berlin and New York: Walter de Gruyter, 2014); R. Andrew Chesnut, "A Preferential Option for the Spirit: The Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Latin America's New Religious Economy," in *Latin American Politics and Society*, 45:1 (Spring, 2003a), pp. 55-85; R. Andrew Chesnut, *Competitive Spirits. Latin America's New Religious Economy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003b); Edward L. Cleary, *The Rise of Charismatic and Jakob Egeris Thorsen, Charismatic Practice and Catholic Parish Life. The Incipient Pentecostalization of the Church in Guatemala and Latin America* (Leiden: Brill, 2015). For Brazil, see Marjo de Theije, "Charismatic Renewal and Base Communities: The Religious Participation of Women in a Brazilian Parish," in Barbara Boudewijnse, André Droogers, and Frans Kamsteeg (eds.), *More Than Opium. An Anthropological Approach to Latin American and Caribbean Pentecostal Praxis* (Lanham, MA: Scarecrow Press, Inc., 1998), pp. 225-248; and Marjo de Theije and Cécilia Loreto Mariz, "Localizing and globalizing processes in Brazilian Catholicism: Comparing inculturation in liberationist and charismatic Catholic cultures," *Latin American Research Review*, 43:1 (2008), pp. 33-54.
- 5 For Brazil, see de Theije, "Charismatic Renewal"; for the CCR in Latin America, see Cleary, *The Rise of Charismatic*, and on women's issues in Pentecostalism in general, R. Marie Griffith and David G. Roebuck, "Women, Role of," in Stanley Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), pp. 1203-1209.
- 6 Elizabeth E. Brusco, "Barred from the Pulpit, Absent from the Stage, and Missing Analysis: Why We Must Keep Women in the Foreground in Understanding Global Pentecostalism." Second Annual Peter Berger Lecture in the Comparative Study of Religion, Boston University, Boston, November 8, 2012.

- 7 Elizabeth E. Brusco, *The Reformation of Machismo: Evangelical Conversion and Gender in Colombia* (Austin, TX: University of Texas Press, 1995); Lesly Gill, "Like a Veil to Cover them": Women and the Pentecostal Movement in La Paz," *American Ethnologist*, 17:4 (November 1990), pp. 708-721; Anne Motley Hallum, "Taking Stock and Building Bridges: Feminism, Women's Movements, and Pentecostalism in Latin America," in *Latin American Research Review*, 38:1 (2003), pp. 169-186.
- 8 John Burdick, *Blessed Anastácia: Women, Race and Christianity in Brazil* (New York: Routledge, 1998); John Burdick, "What is the color of the Holy Spirit? Pentecostalism and Black Identity in Brazil," *Latin American Research Review*, 24:2 (1999), pp. 109-131.
- 9 On Guatemalan Pentecostalism, see for instance Timothy J. Steigenga, "Pentecostalization, Politics, and Religious Change in Guatemala: New Approaches to Old Questions," *PentecoStudies*, 13:1 (2014), pp. 9-34.
- 10 Althoff, *Divided by Faith*, pp. 10-11; David Martin, *On Secularization. Towards a Revised General Theory* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), p. 27.
- 11 See also Andrew Canessa, "Contesting Hybridity: Evangelistas and Kataristas in Highland Bolivia," *Journal of Latin American Studies*, 32:1, Andean Issue (February 2000), pp. 115-144. In general, theories of cultural hybridity are built on the universal idea that all cultures are *hybrid*; that is, that they borrow and reinterpret elements from other cultures. See Néstor García Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures: Strategies for Entering and Leaving Modernity* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995).
- 12 Conflicts around religious pluralism abound e.g. members of *Acción Católica* and the CCR who are part of the same parish or clashes between those who adhere to tenets of liberation theology (priests, nuns, pastoral agents etc.) and the CCR. See Andrea Althoff, "Divided by Faith and Ethnicity. Religious Pluralism and the Problem of Race in Guatemala," *International Journal of Latin American Religion*, 1:2 (2017), pp. 331-352; Althoff, *Divided by Faith*, pp. 125-171; Eric Hoenes del Pinal, "A Ritual Interrupted: A Case of Contested Ritual Practices in a Q'eqchi'-Maya Catholic Parish," *Journal of Contemporary Religion*, 31:3 (2016), pp. 365-378, and James MacKenzie, *Indigenous Bodies, Maya Minds: Religion and Modernity in a Transnational K'iché Community* (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2016).
- 13 This might sound ironic, since Protestantism in Latin America is widely considered to be a disempowering force, with ties to the political conservative establishment, in addition to its sectarian nature and an individualism that makes it more amenable to neoliberal economic agendas. Susan Eckstein, "Epilogue. Where Have All the Movements Gone? Latin American Social Movements at the New Millennium," in Susan Eckstein (ed.), *Power and Popular Protest: Latin American Social Movements* (Berkeley: University of California Press), pp. 351-406. Similar to the United States, there are Protestant currents in Guatemala that reflect these tendencies. Yet, as Mathews Samson has argued for the Presbyterian Church in Guatemala, the story told here shows that the case is much more complex. See C. Mathews Samson, *Re-enchanting the World. Maya Protestantism in the Guatemalan Highlands* (Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press, 2007), p. 140. Kevin Lewis O'Neill does argue, in his study on the neo-Pentecostal Church El Shaddai, that members of this church are re-politicized by their church. Kevin Lewis O'Neill, *City of God. Christian Citizenship in Postwar Guatemala* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010).

- 14 Griffith and Roebuck, “Women, Role of.” See also Martin Riesebrodt and Kelly H. Chong on authority, “Fundamentalisms and Patriarchal Gender Politics,” *Journal of Women’s History*, 10:4 (Winter 1999), pp. 55-77.
- 15 Gill, “Like a Veil,” p. 708; Brusco, *The Reformation*.
- 16 The role of biblical literalism in Pentecostal churches is important in this regard, as is the reference to Paul’s dictum in 1 Cor. 14:34-35 (NIV) which has been instrumentalized to restrict female preaching and female public speech in general.
- 17 I use the term “modest” because I want to distinguish this constructivist approach from the radical constructivism of post-modern theorists who argue that there is no objective reality at all. According to these theorists, social reality as objectivity is non-existent. The brain does not reproduce or reconstruct reality by cognition (perception, senses etc.) but by constructing it within a closed structural system (autopoiesis). This supposition partly makes use of neurophysiologic research. See Ernst von Glaserfeld, *Radical Constructivism: A Way of Knowing and Learning* (London: Falmer Press, 1996); Humberto R. Maturana and Francisco J. Varela, *Autopoiesis and Cognition. The Realization of the Living* (Dordrecht: Reidel, cop., 1980). German sociologist Niklas Luhmann used the idea of autopoietic systems for his system theory. With regard to religion, see for instance André Kieserling (ed.), *Niklas Luhmann. A Systems Theory of Religion* (Palo Alto: Stanford University Press, 2012).
- 18 This line of reasoning harks back to Max Weber (1980) and his “interpretative sociology,” Pierre Bourdieu and his “theory of practice” (Bourdieu 1977) and Frederik Barth and his concept of ethnic groups and boundaries (Barth 1969, 1996). Max Weber, “Grundriß der verstehenden Soziologie,” in Johannes Winckelmann (ed.), *Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft* (Tübingen: J. C. B. Mohr (Paul Siebeck), 1980), pp. 727-757; Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1977); Frederik Barth, *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries: The Social Organization of Culture Difference* (Boston, MA: Little, Brown, and Company, 1969); Frederik Barth, “Enduring and Emerging Issues in the Analysis of Ethnicity,” in Hans Vermeulen and Cora Gouers (eds.), *The Anthropology of Ethnicity Beyond “Ethnic Groups and Boundaries”* (Amsterdam: Het Spinhuis, 1996), pp. 11-32.
- 19 The term “Ladino” is used to identify a Guatemalan who does not perceive himself or herself as being indigenous or as having indigenous roots.
- 20 This is a paraphrase of Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann’s book *The Social Construction of Reality*, with the difference that Berger and Luckmann are referring to a Tibetan monk and American businessman. See Peter Berger and Thomas Luckmann, *The Social Construction of Reality: A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge* (Garden City: Anchor Books, 1966), pp. 2-3.
- 21 The quote is from the second reviewer. I also reject the reviewer’s remark that my research assumes that “there is a clear dividing line between Maya culture and other cultures.”
- 22 Renato Rosaldo, “Foreword,” in Néstor Garcia Canclini, *Hybrid Cultures*, p. xv.
- 23 Steven Kaplan, “Introduction,” in Steven Kaplan (ed.), *Indigenous Responses to Western Christianity* (New York and London: New York University Press), p. 5.
- 24 David Mason, “Introduction. Controversies and Continuities in Race and Ethnic Relations Theory,” in John Rex and David Mason (eds.), *Theories of Race and Ethnic Relations*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), pp. 1-19, p. 7.
- 25 Most of the ethnographical data was analyzed using the software program winMAX 98. WinMAX is a CAQDAS-software program (Computer Assisted Qualitative Data Analysis Software) that allows the codification and systematic evaluation of texts.

- 26 Information on this section is, if not indicated otherwise, drawn from Andrea Althoff and Jakob Egeris Thorsen, "Catholic Charismatic Renewal," in Henri Gooren (ed.), *Encyclopedia of Religion in Latin America* (Berlin: VS Springer, 2018), and Andrea Althoff and Jakob Egeris Thorsen, "The Catholic Charismatic Renewal (CCR) in the Americas," in Solange Lefebvre and Alfonso Pérez Agote (eds.), *Annual Review of the Sociology of Religion: The Changing Face of Catholicism* (Leiden: Brill, 2018), pp. 147-164.
- 27 Randall Herbert Balmer, *Encyclopedia of Evangelicalism* (Waco: Baylor University Press, 2004), p. 143.
- 28 Balmer, *Encyclopedia*, p. 143; Thigpen, "Catholic Charismatic Renewal," pp. 460-461.
- 29 Peter D. Hocken, "Charismatic Movement," in Stanley Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Maas, eds., *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), p. 498, Cleary, *The Rise of Charismatic*, p. 55.
- 30 Stanley M. Burgess, "Introduction," in Stanley Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), pp xvii-xxiii, p. xix.
- 31 Thigpen, "Catholic Charismatic Renewal," pp. 460-461.
- 32 Thigpen, "Catholic Charismatic Renewal," pp. 461, 463; Cleary, *The Rise of Charismatic*, p. 10.
- 33 Balmer, *Encyclopedia*, p. 143.
- 34 Edward L. Cleary, "The Catholic Charismatic Renewal. Revitalization Movements and Conversion," in Timothy J. Steigenga and Edward L. Cleary (eds.), *Conversion of a Continent. Contemporary Religious Change in Latin America* (New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 2007), p. 168.
- 35 Hocken, "Charismatic Movement," p. 513.
- 36 Chesnut, *Competitive Spirits*.
- 37 Edward L. Cleary, *How Latin America Saved the Soul of the Catholic Church* (Mahwah, N.J.: Paulist Press, 2009a), p. 66.
- 38 Norbert Arntz, "Einführung in Aufbau und Inhalt des Schlussdokuments der 5. Generalversammlung des Episkopats von Lateinamerika und der Karibik," in *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft*, 92:1-2 (2008), pp. 48-67, p. 56; Joao Batista Libanio, "Conferencia de Aparecida. Documento final," *Revista Iberoamericana de Teología*, 4 (2008), p. 44; Paulo Suess, "Die missionarische Synthese nach Aparecida," in *Zeitschrift für Missionswissenschaft und Religionswissenschaft*, 92: 1-2 (2008), pp. 68-83; Thorsen, *Charismatic Practice*, p. 161.
- 39 CELAM (Conferencia General del Episcopado Latinoamericano y del Caribe), *Final Document of the Fifth General Conference of Bishops of Latin America and the Caribbean*, Latin American Conference of Bishops, 2007. <http://celam.org/aparecida%20/Ingles.pdf>. Accessed 21 July 2018.
- 40 CELAM, *Final Document*, p. 226.
- 41 CELAM, *Final Document*, quoted in Thorsen, *Charismatic Practice*, p. 160.
- 42 Thorsen, *Charismatic Practice*, p. 221.
- 43 The Charismatic movement—Protestant and Catholic alike—has claimed to rediscover "baptism in the Holy Spirit" and its outward display in healing, exorcism, and speaking in tongues (glossolalia). Formally, the Holy Spirit is the third person of the Holy Trinity, with the Father and the Son. John Bowker (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), p. 439.

- 44 María Cecilia Arias, “Inicio de la Renovación Carismática Católica en Guatemala,” in José María Delgado Varela (ed.), *Renovación Carismática Católica en Guatemala* (Guatemala: Separata de Estudios Teológicos, 1976), pp. 37-40, p. 37.
- 45 Ibid., p. 37. María Cecilia Arias was herself a contemporary witness, who supported the movement and the two US-American sisters in its initial phase in 1972.
- 46 Ibid., 9. Marjorie Melville, a former Maryknoll nun and supporter of the guerrilla, had worked in this school only a few years earlier. Thomas and Marjorie Melville, *Whose Heaven, Whose Earth?* (New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1971), p. 31.
- 47 Delgado Varela, *Renovación Carismática Católica*.
- 48 Edward L. Cleary, “Catholic Charismatic Renewal: Guatemala – Flourishing and Challenging. Part One.” *Religion and Latin America Blog*, 2009b. <http://ecleary7.wordpress.com/2009/03/18/catholic-charismatic-renewal-guatemala-flourishing-and-challenging-part-one/>, accessed July 12, 2018. James MacKenzie writes that the introduction of the movement into rural indigenous areas is less clearly documented than the equivalent process in urban areas (mainly Guatemala City). He also suggests that Charismatic Catholicism seems to have developed differently in urban and rural areas. See chapter three “Enthusiastic Christianity”, in C. James MacKenzie, *Indigenous Bodies*, pp. 121-170.
- 49 Cardinal Casariego, who died in 1983, was not a member of the movement. He was well known for his very conservative attitude, however. In the 1970s, he often clashed with progressive clerics from the Guatemalan Ecclesial Conference (CEG) who, influenced by the Second Vatican Council and mindful of addressing poverty and political violence in rural indigenous Guatemala, demanded political and social reforms from the government. Casariego, to the contrary, maintained close proximity to the military elite. Similarly to his predecessor Archbishop Rossell y Arellano, Casariego was an ardent anti-Communist. Jesús Ynfante, a Spanish scholar, characterizes him as sympathetic to the *Opus Dei*. Jesús Ynfante, *Opus Dei. Así en la tierra como en el cielo* (Barcelona: Grijalbo, 1996), p. 428. In spite of Casariego, the Guatemalan bishops did circulate several progressive communiqués and pastorals during his tenure, protesting the bloodshed in rural Guatemala. Tom Barry, *Inside Guatemala. The Essential Guide to its Politics, Economy, Society, and Environment* (Albuquerque: The Inter-Hemispheric Education Resource Center, 1992), pp. 192-193.
- 50 In my view, the fact that the CCR was introduced through the Church hierarchy merits attention, because it calls into question the critical capacity of a movement that claims to reform internal ecclesial structures. Moreover, this is an example of how female religious leadership is substituted by the authority of male leadership, here, the Church hierarchy.
- 51 In his detailed account on the CCR in Guatemala, Edward L. Cleary, also notes that “a retreat on Life in the Spirit, the traditional entry point into the movement, was given in English by Francis MacNutt and his team at Casa Emaus in Guatemala City in September 1973.” See Edward L. Cleary, “Catholic Charismatic Renewal.” This detail is important because the Guatemalan CCR marks its anniversary annually not on the date of the September meeting, but on December 8, the date of the retreat that Casariego convoked in 1973. See Cleary, *The Rise of Charismatic*, pp. 242-243; C. James MacKenzie, *Indigenous Bodies*, pp. 121-170.
- 52 Delgado Varela, *Renovación Carismática Católica*.
- 53 Thomas J. Csordas, “Catholic Pentecostalism: A New Word in the New World,” in Stephen D. Glazier (ed.), *Perspectives on Pentecostalism: Case Studies from the Caribbean and Latin America* (University Press of America, 1980), pp. 167-168; R. Andrew Chesnut, *A Preferential Option for the Spirit: Latin America’s New Spiritual Economy*, 2000b, p.

4. The goal of the *Cursillo* movement is similar to the Catholic Charismatic Renewal, in that both want to achieve a renovation and restoration of the Church. The name *Cursillo* is Spanish and means “little or small course.” As the name already suggests, the movement organizes small groups in order to familiarize the flock with doctrinal content and a correct Catholic lifestyle. David D. Bundy writes in the *International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements*, that the *Cursillo* movement is crucial for understanding the Catholic Charismatic Renewal. See David D. Bundy, “Cursillo Movement,” in Stanley Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), p. 568. On the close relationship between the *Cursillo* movement and the CCR in Guatemala, see also Edward L. Cleary, *How Latin America*, “Catholic Charismatic Renewal.”
- 54 Delgado Varela, *Renovación Carismática Católica*, p. 11. This is not different from today, as interviews with activists indicate. Rigoberto Fernández (pseudonym), May 21, 2001. Quetzaltenango; and Interview Pascual Terretón (CCR, Maya K’iché, pseudonym). May 24, 2001. Parish San Francisco de Asis, Quetzaltenango.
- 55 Cleary, *The Rise of Charismatic*. Interview Padre Hugo Estrada (CCR). February 18, 2002. Guatemala City.
- 56 Pew Forum, *Spirit and Power*, p. 4.
- 57 Pew Research Center, *Religion in Latin America: Widespread Change in a Historically Catholic Region* (Washington D.C.: Pew Research Center, 2014), pp. 12, 14. Roger Grossmann from the *Servicio Evangelizador para América Latina* (SEPAL), a Protestant research and training facility, presents the following figures for 2003: 58.1% Catholics, 25.4% Evangelicals (mainline denominations are included in their survey), 13.9% without a religious affiliation, and 2.6% what they call sects, including Mormons and Jehovah’s Witnesses. Grossmann from SEPAL, and Pew, present, therefore, very similar estimates of the percentage of Protestants in Guatemala. See Roger W. Grossmann, *Interpreting the Development of the Evangelical Church in Guatemala: Year 2002* (Wake Forest, N.C.: Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary, September 2002).
- 58 Pew Research Center, *Religion in Latin America*, p. 15.
- 59 Pew Forum, *Spirit and Power*, p. 79. Luis Kelex, who works for the CCR in the Guatemalan capital, reported that the Renewal is present in about 60 percent of the Catholic parishes. Interview Luis Kelex (CCR, Maya Q’eqchi’). February 15, 2002. Guatemala City.
- 60 Cleary, *The Rise of Charismatic*, p. 27-29.
- 61 Thorsen, *Charismatic Practice*, p. 41.
- 62 Chimaltenango is not a diocese proper, but a department.
- 63 Interview Luis Kelex (CCR). February 15, 2002. Guatemala City.
- 64 Based on a document prepared from survey information provided by the Catholic Charismatic Renewal in Quetzaltenango in June, 2001.
- 65 Interview with Padre Hugo Estrada. February 18, 2002. Guatemala City.
- 66 Interview Luis Kelex (CCR). February 15, 2002. Guatemala City. Interview bishop Álvaro Ramazzini. November 9, 2001. San Marcos.
- 67 Pew Forum, *Spirit and Power*, pp. 34, 37.
- 68 Many interviewees underlined the Charismatics’ rejection of Mayan spirituality and native religion: Monseñor Hugo Martínez Contreras (Bishop of the Diocese Los Altos), May 23, 2001, Quetzaltenango; Bishop Ramazzini, San Marcos, November 9, 2001; Padre Miguel Chanteau (formerly parish Comitancillo, San Marcos), July 20, 2001, San Cristóbal de

las Casas, México; José María Durango (Maya Mam, catechist, pseudonym), January 4, 2002, Llano Grande, Concepción Tutuapa, San Marcos; Padre Ramón Echevarría (parish San Miguel Arcángel, Totonicapán), May 17, 2001, Totonicapán; Padre Tomás García (Maya K'iché), June 18, 2001, Almolonga, Quetzaltenango; Luis Keléx (CCR, Maya Q'eqch'i), February 15, 2002, Guatemala City; Luis Vásquez (*pastoral social*, Maya Mam), May 21, 2001, Quetzaltenango; Padre Hugo Estrada (CCR), February 18, 2002, Guatemala City. The strong rejection of Mayan spirituality is also part of the Protestant Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal religious discourse and repertoire. See Althoff, *Divided by Faith*.

- 69 It wasn't until the 1940s, with the creation of *Acción Católica*, that the Church launched its first concerted effort to establish orthodox Catholic hegemony in indigenous communities. The agents of *Acción Católica* wiped out many of the existing spiritual—and often other cultural—Mayan practices. Greg Grandin, “To End with All These Evils: Ethnic Transformation and Community Mobilization in Guatemala’s Western Highlands, 1954–1980,” *Latin American Perspectives*, 24:2 (1997), p. 11. Hence, *Acción Católica* contradicts and corrects the common notion that Catholic mission and its destructive force are exclusively related to the conquest. In other words, the common emphasis on the effects of the conquest hides the fact that recent Catholic pastoral policies, including liberation theology, have also had a cataclysmic impact on Mayan culture. For other accounts on how “orthodox Catholicism as understood by North Americans, Spaniards, and other European missionaries, was pitched against the heterodox understandings of Christianity thoroughly mixed with traditional religious practices that had returned or intensified in the absence of priests,” see (Cleary (2009). In rural, indigenous areas, see Maud van Cortlandt Oakes, *The Two Crosses of Todos Santos: Survivals of Mayan Religious Rituals* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1951); Douglas E. Brintnall, *Revolt Against the Dead: The Modernization of a Mayan Community in the Highlands of Guatemala* (New York: Gordon and Breach, 1979); John M. Watanabe, *Maya Saints and Souls in a Changing World* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1992); Kay B. Warren, *The Symbolism of Subordination: Indian Identity in a Guatemalan Town* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1989); and Thomas and Marjorie Melville, *Whose Heaven*.
- 70 In Comitancillo, for instance, a Mayan town in the department of San Marcos, the local priest who introduced both the CCR and *Acción Católica* to his parish, tried to shut down the local *cofradía*. Part of his criticism and that of his supporters was that the *cofradía* raised money for the celebration of the saints’ days during which heavy consumption of alcohol ensued. Furthermore, he and his followers disapproved of the traditional marimba music financed by the *cofradías*. The marimba is often a source of conflict because, in the eyes of orthodox Catholics, it is part of a pagan context and considered evil. Interviews with Dolores Martínez Nube (Pastoral Indígena, Maya Mam, pseudonym), June 26, 2001, San Marcos; Padre Miguel Chanteau (formerly parish Comitancillo, San Marcos), July 20, 2001, San Cristóbal de las Casas, México.
- 71 Padre Tomás García (Maya K'iché), June 3, 2001, Almolonga, Quetzaltenango.
- 72 A more complete account on the policies of the Catholic Church to evangelize rural areas in the 1950s and 1960s can be found in Althoff, *Divided by Faith*.
- 73 Maximón or, San Simón, might be called a ‘pagan saint,’ embodying pre-Columbian, Catholic, Spanish, as well as good and bad faculties. According to popular beliefs, Maximón has the power to, among other things, curse people, generate wealth, and resolve conflicts. Well-known sites where figures of Maximón can be found are: San Andrés Izapa (Province Chimaltenango), Zunil (Province Quetzaltenango), and Santiago Atitlán

- (Province Sololá). The physical expression of San Simón is mostly that of a life-size puppet. People give it alcohol to drink and cigarettes and cigars to smoke. Interestingly, the figure resembles that of a non-indigenous person; in some cases it has the features of a Spanish conqueror. Despite the institutional contempt that the figure has attracted from both the Catholic Church and Protestant churches, many Christians visit the Maximón figure and perform religious rituals, such as prayers, in front of it. The latter was confirmed by a Mayan priestess who hosts a Maximón in her house (Zunil). Interview with Marta Toj (Maya K'iché, Mayan priestess, pseudonym), June 4, 2001, Zunil. James MacKenzie even relates in his book *Indigenous Bodies, Maya Minds* that he came across Mayan priests (ajq'ija) who were Protestants.
- 74 Interview Luis Kelex (CCR, Maya Q'eqchi'), February 15, 2002, Guatemala City.
- 75 For Luis Vásquez, member of the *pastoral social*, biblical literalism and the gap between Church doctrine, practice, and tradition is an ideal target for critics, and it can draw new attendees and members into the CCR movement. Interview Luis Vásquez (*pastoral social*, Maya Mam), May 15, 2001, Quetzaltenango.
- 76 Padre Tomás García from Almolonga gives some concrete examples, e.g. opposition to the marimba, a traditional musical instrument that resembles the xylophone, the saints' days, and the veneration of saints. Padre Tomás García (Maya K'iché), June 3, 2001, Almolonga. Quetzaltenango.
- 77 Interview Pascual Terretón (CCR, Maya K'iché, pseudonym), Parish San Francisco de Asis, May 24, 2001, Quetzaltenango.
- 78 In reading publications that deal with *Acción Católica*, I was struck to discover how paramount the motive of conversion is in both movements. See for instance Ricardo Falla, *Quiché Rebelde. Religious Conversion, Politics and Ethnic Identity in Guatemala* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2001).
- 79 Interview Pascual Terretón (CCR, Maya K'iché, pseudonym). Parish San Francisco de Asis, Quetzaltenango, May 24, 2001.
- 80 Tellingly, members of the *pastoral indígena*, an initiative promoting Mayan culture within the Catholic Church, said that no CCR members are active in their ranks. In line with the anti-Mayan spiritual discourse of the CCR, employees of the *pastoral indígena* spoke of many tensions between the Catholic Charismatics, Protestant Pentecostals, and neo-Pentecostals. Interview Ernestina Lopez (PI, Maya K'iché), April 24, 2001, Guatemala City; Luis Vásquez (*pastoral social*, Maya Mam), May 15, 2001, Quetzaltenango. On conflicts within Catholic parishes among different religious groups (*Acción Católica*, CCR, traditional *costumbre* (custom), see Althoff, *Divided by Faith*, pp. 125-171; MacKenzie, *Indigenous Bodies*; and Hoenes del Pinal, "A Ritual Interrupted.")
- 81 The spiritual or social emphases of the CCR and *Acción Católica* respectively, do not always imply contradiction and/or conflict. In Comitancillo, for instance, a municipality in the highlands of San Marcos, the same priest introduced both.
- 82 Information in this paragraph is drawn from T. Paul Thigpen, "Catholic Charismatic Renewal," 460-467.
- 83 It becomes clear that the rejection of the traditional mass as a ritual practice is not simply a historic episode, in Eric Hoenes del Pinal's description, "A Ritual Interrupted": "The importance of Masses is a point of contention between the two groups [Mainline Catholics and the CCR group, A.A.] since Charismatics tend to view Masses as but one element in their religious life and not actually a crucial one at that. From the Charismatics' perspective, one should attend Mass a few times a year to receive communion or because a major rite will be performed (e.g. marriage, baptism, or first communion),

but the key to being pious lies in actively participating in semi-weekly prayer meetings. The key religious trait that distinguishes the CCR from other Catholics is the search for direct, unmediated communication with the Holy Spirit, signaled by charismata, and thus their prayer meetings are organized around the pneumatic practices . . . It is therefore not surprising that the mediated communion of the Eucharist is a secondary concern in their religious lives,” Hoenes del Pinal, “A Ritual Interrupted,” p.371.

- 84 Catholic Charismatics, similar to Pentecostal and neo-Pentecostal Christians, emphasize the glorification of God (*alabanza* in Spanish) during the first part of the service. Applause, enthusiastic singing, and prayers also take place. In Guatemala, this is the main reason why Catholic Charismatics are often mistaken for Protestants. Furthermore, when analyzing the interviews with Catholics and Protestants, I discovered that entire sections were identical in their wording. This suggests that similarities exist not only in terms of worship, liturgy, and doctrine but also in form of a ritualized rhetoric.
- 85 Bowker (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*; Anderson, *An Introduction*, p. 206.
- 86 The enthusiastic form of worship and the idea of renewal do not translate into a progressive Catholic understanding, however. On the contrary, Catholic Charismatics profess a conservative doctrine when it comes to topics such as Catholic lifestyle, family, and gender relationships. Additionally, they adopt a more literalist understanding of the Bible, an aspect that explains why some scholars have labeled the movement as fundamentalist. See, for instance, Martin Riesebrodt, *Fundamentalismus als patriarchalische Protestbewegung: amerikanische Protestanten (1910-28) und iranische Schiiten (1961-79) im Vergleich* (Tübingen: Mohr, 1990).
- 87 Thigpen, “Catholic Charismatic Renewal,” 460-467. The way these different conceptions of Catholicism play out in a Q’eqchi’-Maya Catholic Parish in Guatemala, see Hoenes del Pinal, “A Ritual Interrupted.”
- 88 *Ibid.*, 464.
- 89 Edward L. Cleary, “Protestants and Catholics: Rivals or Siblings,” in Daniel Levine (ed.), *Coming of Age: Protestantism in Contemporary Latin America* (Lanham: University Press of America, 1994), pp. 211-212.
- 90 Interview Pascual Terretón (CCR, Maya K’iché, pseudonym). Parish San Francisco de Asis, May 24, 2001. Quetzaltenango.
- 91 Rosario Fernández, a Mayan convert, attests to this dimension: “One wants to cry and feels a great joy in the heart; the Holy Spirit rocks the person; a great feeling of peace and of love comes over me.” She later describes that when she is sure of the presence of the Holy Spirit, she feels a breeze in her face (Rosario Fernández, Maya K’iché, CCR, pseudonym), May 21, 2001. Quetzaltenango. Problematic in this respect is that within the CCR, as in Protestant Pentecostalism and neo-Pentecostalism, there is a great expectation of the dynamic and empowering presence of the Holy Spirit, which has, in some cases, led to a stigmatization of people who do not possess these gifts (e.g. speaking in tongues, healing, prophesying etc.). These people are then labeled as less “holy.” Interview with pastor Adolfo Barrientos (Iglesia de Dios del Evangelio Completo), May 9, 2001, Guatemala City.
- 92 The belief dates back to the classical doctrine of Pentecostalism and is shared by the CCR. In this respect, Pentecostal and Charismatic movements, Catholic or Protestant, differ from mainline western Christian churches. The latter claim the “cessation of the charismata teaching,” which holds that at the end of the Apostolic Age, the charismata (that is, gifts of the Holy Spirit) had been withdrawn from the Church. See Harold Vinson

- Synan, "Classical Pentecostalism," in Stanley Burgess and Eduard M. Van Der Maas (eds.), *The New International Dictionary of Pentecostal and Charismatic Movements* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2002), p. 553.
- 93 The emphasis on spiritual aspects has made the movement prone to criticism from progressive Church sectors, above all adherents of liberation theology who place more weight on social justice.
- 94 The doctrinal profile finds an expression in the movement's organizational structure; the so-called prayer groups (*grupos de oración*). Most of these groups have ties to local parishes, although this does not necessarily mean that they are controlled by parishes. Lately, the hierarchy has tried to integrate these groups more strongly in order to avoid parachurch tendencies and has also issued rules regarding the behavior of CCR-groups. Obispado San Marcos, "Orientaciones y disposiciones sobre la Renovación Carismática en la Diócesis de San Marcos" (San Marcos: April 25, 2001).
- 95 Bowker (ed.), *The Oxford Dictionary of World Religions*, p. 416.
- 96 Interview Pascual Terretón (CCR, Maya K'iché, pseudonym), May 24, 2001, Parish San Francisco de Asis, Quetzaltenango.
- 97 Consequently, radical Charismatic or Pentecostal believers argue that those who go to see a doctor or to a hospital are people who lack faith.
- 98 In fact, Charismatic and Pentecostal expressions draw on the devil quite often, in order to denounce cultural practices. For instance the marimba is sometimes called the "ribs of the devil" and "alcohol [described] as Satan's urine." Interview Padre Tomás García (Maya K'iché), June 3, 2001. Almolonga. Quetzaltenango.
- 99 Prayers of traditional Mayan priests are often a polyglot mix of old, still known Latin-Catholic, Spanish, and indigenous Mayan languages. The Latin elements come from the way masses were held prior to the II Vatican Council. Until recently, older Catholic priests still used Latin to say mass, which included turning their back to the congregation rather than facing it, a change that came about with the II Vatican Council. Interview with anthropologist Emmerich Weisshaar April 21, 2001, Guatemala City, Conversations with nuns from Concepción Tutuapa.
- 100 The Guatemalan Episcopal Conference draws attention to cases in which exorcisms were executed without the permission of a bishop and speaks of "irregularities that should be watched." "Renovados en el Espíritu. Instrucción pastoral colectiva de los obispos de Guatemala sobre la Renovación Carismática. March 30, 1986," in Conferencia Episcopal de Guatemala (CEG) (ed.), *Al Servicio de la vida, la justicia y la paz. Documentos de la Conferencia Episcopal de Guatemala 1956-1997* (Guatemala: Ediciones San Pablo, 1997), p. 415.
- 101 Interview Luis Kelex (CCR, Maya Q'eqchi'), February 15, 2002, Guatemala City.
- 102 In relationship to previously marginalized groups I have to add another comment from Rosario Fernández. She told me in the interview that, although she had never attended school or taken lessons, she had learned to read and write with the help of the Holy Spirit. An almost identical comment was made by a Protestant convert, Enrique Sandóval (CAM, Maya Mam, pseudonym), August 19, 2001, Comitancillo, San Marcos. Whether both assessments are pure rhetoric or can be traced to the Holy Spirit is not what is important here. What is crucial is the effect of conversion in the life of converts: they are able to compete better in larger segments of society and, at least potentially, gain opportunities for social mobility. Moreover, the acquired skills—here literacy through Bible reading—can be seen as a way of easing integration into wider society.
- 103 Name changed.

- 104 Interview Rosario Fernández (CCR, Maya K'iché), May 21, 2001, Quetzaltenango.
- 105 In general, Mayan women have retained much more of the traditional cultural heritage than men. Rural indigenous women mostly wear traditional garments, whereas men have abandoned this custom to a large extent. Furthermore, indigenous women are far more often monolingual (Mayan speakers), because men are usually more exposed to the world outside of the villages.
- 106 According to Moisés Guillermo Quintanilla from *Misión Trigo*—an influential Catholic Latin American Missionary organization—, authorization to preach is one of the most contentious points between the hierarchy and the CCR. Interview Moisés Guillermo Quintanilla, Misión Trigo, February 18, 2002, Guatemala City. This assessment was confirmed to me when I attended a workshop for catechists. The issue of preaching caused the hottest debates among participants. Centro de Formación Interdiocesano, Aldea Champoyap, June 23, 2001, Champoyap, San Marcos. A document from the San Marcos diocese provides further proof.