

Catholic universities: a resource of common use. Definitions and implications for autonomy and shared decision making

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Introduction

Our concern for the topic under study emerged from changes in Higher Education in Ecuador brought about with the Organic Law of Higher Education (LOES, 2010) and regulations and reforms further this Law. The Organic Law of Higher Education regulates both state and private universities, but the state manages private universities in such a way that makes it difficult to consider them private since the application of traditional private rights are out of order. In this regard, the questions of how to define and what concept should be applied to catholic universities that respond to the mission of the church and have no other interests other than the university's objectives arises.

Ostrom's studies (2015) on common goods present the multiple and diverse reality with successes and failures, but always human, possible and unpredictable. It opens expectations and challenges that enable a private university to be considered a common good. Fo-

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llowing the path traced by Ostrom, the first part of this article refers to Catholic Universities which are considered a common good of citizens that make up the university community and its implications.

From the perspective of catholic university-common good, the second part reflects on and deepens the relationship between university autonomy and objectives of the university demanded by the external creating body; that way the scope of the co-government is restructured. Without ignoring the effort of designing the 2035 Agenda for Higher Education in Ecuador, it is necessary to investigate university management models that respond to the challenges of the Ecuadorian private university created with the sponsorship and promotion of the Diocesan Church or of Religious Orders, universities that respond to a Christian vision of the world and with social responsibility.

The original relationship of these private universities with their promoter institutions has been marginalized by the Organic Law of Higher Education approved in 2010. To agree on a future agenda, it is necessary to reflect on the present conditions and what mechanisms are viable to ensure the permanence of the original relationship.

The Organic Law of Higher Education presents the criteria of governance of both public and private universities, in the application of mechanisms to select officials under the criteria of representative democracy and balance of groups. The Law indicates the model of university governance and does not consider the practice of autonomy so that universities are able to apply their own government model which corresponds to their institutional culture and creates the conditions necessary to fulfill its mission and vision.

Universidad Politecnica Salesiana as a Common Pool Resource (CPR)

Goods and resources of common use

To apply the concept of common good to catholic universities it is necessary to specify the unique sense this expression is used in. Therefore, it is appropriate to contrast it with other common concepts given to the term common good and which is not identified with the public good.

In ordinary expression, the terms *public good* and *common good* are usually applied interchangeably. So when referring to a good that is clearly not private or cooperative, it can be identified as a public good or a common good. The following information is intended to explain that they are two different concepts that respond to different realities and are managed independently.

Public good

A public good, from a legal point of view, is one that belongs to or is provided by the State at any level through all the bodies that are part of the public sector. In economics a definition that corresponds to the generally accepted sense of public good is that of a good that is available to all and where use by one person does not reduce the availability to others (Ostrom, 2015). That is, a good that is produced is available to everyone if all the requirements demanded by the institution that provides the service are met. A public good is non-exclusive when it is not possible to prevent someone who has not paid for it to consume it, and exclusive when an individual can be prevented from consuming the good if he or she has not paid for it.

Common good

The term common good is used to describe a good which a community has access to and is looked after with certain normativity and organization.

The talk on commons, after all, is a talk about a better quality of life. [...] That is to say, it is not only about rights, but also about responsibilities and social relations of giving and taking (Helfrich, 2008, p. 23).

For Ulrich (2008), *commons* has ceased to be a term that homogenizes “the common” to show the commonplace points of what “is intended to be strengthened or created” (p. 303).

Therefore, it is important to claim that these resources can only be used in a way that makes sense to society, if access to them remains open. Responsible management of social goods is aimed at ensuring the existence, stability and resilience of resources and systems, as well as to ensure fair access, use and distribution for all human beings (Ulrich, 2008, p. 304).

Common pool resource (CPR)

Ostrom is considered one of the most prominent scholars in the area of shared resources or commons, with respect to how human beings interact in order to maintain long-term production levels of common resources, such as forests, hydrological resources, including fishing and irrigation systems, grassland areas, etc.

Ostrom (2015) has studied how different societies have developed institutional forms in which communities have instituted communal practices that have enabled the preservation of common resources and avoided the degradation of the environment.

The plural of a common good (common goods) is also known as *common property resources* or *common goods* that include not only material goods (land, mines, forests, etc.) but also systems –for example, a system of irrigation or computer network– that make it difficult but not impossible to exclude users (real or potential) from using them or benefiting from their use.

In her work Ostrom demonstrates the strength of the economics of the common good –Common Pool Resource– (CPR), when it is managed with rules that promote positive results. Because of the negative image given to the economy of the common good by traditional economy (Hardin, 2005), Ostrom prefers to call it the Common Pool Resource (CPR), so the distinction with the public good and the common good is more evident.

Therefore, the distinction between public good and a CPR is not trivial. A person who supplies a pure public good does not really care who else uses it, or when and where, as long as a sufficient number of other individuals share the cost of the supply. A person who supplies a CPR cares much more how many people use it, when and where, even if others contribute to its supply (Ostrom, 2015, p. 81).

Ostrom’s experience in multiple case studies allows her to give an institutional perspective for self-organization and self-government in the cases of a common good.

Catholic Universities as a common pool resource (CPR)

Catholic universities today do not respond to the traditional practice of university institutions conceptualized as private. Giving a creative identity to catholic universities, in homogenizing legal contexts and also those that impose logics of the State, requires opting for innovative concepts that have given successful answers in other areas of society identified as common goods.

A Catholic University is defined as a “disinterested form of service that *proclaims the meaning of truth*, a fundamental value need to maintain freedom, justice and dignity of man” (John Paul II, 1990, num. 4). In the Apostolic Constitution *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, it is stated that the catholic university is the concern of “[...] an academic community, which in a rigorous and critical manner, contributes to the protection and development of human dignity [...]” (num. 12).

A Catholic university is a good that responds to the interest of a specific community, the university community, and can be included as a common good in the category of systems with the power to exclude users and determine how many use it, when and where, and how they contribute to their supply (Ostrom, 2015). Catholic Universities are not a public good, nor a common good of general and non-exclusive use, but an exclusive good that users respond to under certain rules and conditions. Nor is it a good that is freely available to those who at some historical moment make up the university community, since “it is linked to the Church or through the formal or statutory link, or under an institutional commitment assumed by its leaders” (John Paul II, 1990, article 2 lit. 2). This connection gives rise to special characteristics that are specified in the aforementioned Apostolic Constitution:

Affirming itself as a University, every catholic university maintains a connection with the Church which is essential for its institutional identity. As such, it participates more directly in the life of the particular Church where it is located, but at the same time, –as it is incorporated as an academic institution into the international community of knowledge and research– it participates and contributes to the life of the universal Church, therefore, it assumes a particular bond with the Holy See for the service of unity, which it is called to fulfill in favor of the whole Church. The result of this close relationship with the Church is the fidelity of the University, as an *institution*, to the Christian message, and the recognition and adherence to the Magisterial Authority of the Church in matters of faith and morals.

Catholic members of the university community are also called to have a personal fidelity to the Church, and everything it encompasses. Respect to the Catholic nature of the institution where they render their service is expected from non-Catholic members, while the University, in turn, must respect their religious freedom (John Paul II, 1990, num. 27).

The works of Ostrom and her emphasis on the multivariate nature of the interaction between humans and a given Common Pool Resource (CPR) as well as search to create a general formal system that allows us to identify and study the elements or variables that influence the possibility of self-organization, self-government and sustainability of a CPR, lead to indicate that a certain university can be considered a CPR since it responds to the university community with rules that formalize the satisfaction of the interests of the members of the university community and of third parties related to the university, as is the case of the Church in the sense of the previous citation.

The university community is made up of appropriators and suppliers of the CPR catholic university

The 21st century university moves in very different terms to those of the last century, it is a reality that requires a conceptual innovation of its understanding (Mayorga, 1999). In this university, governance emerges as a consequence of a clear distribution of power in collegiate bodies and individual authorities. Each university will achieve governance with means that are appropriate to its reality. The form a public university is structured can be the worst way to achieve governance in a private university, or the form of structuring collegiate bodies in a small university does not respond to the organizational needs of a large university.

In this regard, catholic universities need to innovate its management model and move from the emphasis on a private proper-

ty model, since its creation, to a social model that recognizes the original connection and the interest of the university community. Catholic universities are a complex reality, but they have become more complex than necessary for trying to endow it a democratic, participatory and collegial government which is independent from the parties that intervened in its creation. On this subject, a university government system similar to that of a community that manages a CPR ensures representative democracy in a catholic university and strengthens its institutional identity with self-government and capacity for self-organization based on the group of appropriators-providers that make up the university community.

All members of the university community have an interest in using something offered by the university: a degree, salary, prestige, knowledge, profession, etc. And everyone must also provide something for the university to sustain itself: economic resources, work, etc.

Therefore, the university as a CPR considers that the appropriators-providers are all the members of the university community because they all have interests in the university and interact in order to maintain the long-term quality levels of the university. For this reason, the university community assumes practices that allow the preservation and improvement of the university as a CPR.

Ostrom (2015) recognizes that: “The organization of appropriators for collective action is, in general, an uncertain and complex task” (p. 82). She emphasizes the knowledge that appropriators should have about the institution in order to strengthen it: “The decisions and actions of the appropriators [...] depend on the way in which they know, consider and evaluate the costs and benefits of their actions, as well as their perception of this linkage”(p. 82).

Describing the entire process with objective, observable variables, is the responsibility of the regulations the university creates and the culture of governance.

The CPR catholic university is renewable and sustainable

One of the strongest arguments to affirm the end of the common good is to consider that the interests of the appropriators are exclusionary and therefore the war of interests will end up destroying the common good in favor of individual property.

Hardin (2005) declares the end of common goods because he considers that they are not capable of renewing and that they fail because they do not respond to the individual interest which is the driving force of production and the economy.

But if the CPR catholic university is managed under normal ethical conditions and with agreed administrative criteria, the usufruct of many resources of the university is extended indefinitely, since a positive feedback system is established in the academic quality that summons students and students ensure the interests of professors, administrators and service staff. The university manages to be a common pool resource that becomes a renewable resource. In addition, the incentive system for collective results and assessment of individual actions in a Catholic University can be analyzed from this perspective. As Ostrom (2015, p. 91) says: "The change of positive and negative incentives associated with particular actions and results, together with the levels and the type of information available, can also stimulate the coordination of activities".

The interest of each member of the university community is to appropriate what the university offers and responds to their interest, and therefore they agree to supply the university for its sustainability and renewal; maintaining the interest of the members of the community is essential to ensure the sustainability and renewal capacity of the university; the threat of prioritizing individual interests over the common weakens the balance between appropriation and provision and opens the way to the privatization of use.

The external authority and its function of ensuring the sustainability of the CPR catholic university

Catholic universities have a reference framework that places it among institutions of the private sector. However, the co-government, as regulated by the Organic Law of Higher Education, calls into question the possibility of exercising external authority that ensures institutional identification and the fulfillment of its mission and vision.

In the university, as a common good, it is the existence of the authority which is external to the group of appropriators and suppliers that ensures the fulfillment of the mission and vision. Ostrom has found the task of monitoring and assurance in the management of numerous CPR under the structure of Boards, Delegates of Local Organisms, etc. (Ostrom, 2015). Self-regulation that ensures the sustainability and fulfillment of the mission statement requires standards previously accepted by the appropriators and the suppliers, compliance is supervised by the external authority. “Without monitoring there are no credible commitments; without credible commitments there is no reason to propose new rules” (Ostrom, 2015, p. 100).

We should not speak of a *rule* unless most people, whose strategies are affected, know of its existence and assume that others supervise their behavior and sanction noncompliance. [...] the rules in force are common knowledge, they are monitored and applied (Ostrom, 2015, p. 109).

The external authority acts as a regulator of private interests in the face of the management of the common. The collective appropriator of the common good requires the development of satisfactory agreements and regulations to cover individual interests in the management of the common, the external authority intervenes to regulate these individual interests without affecting the CPR.

In catholic universities, managed as a CPR, the external authority is formed in the connection with the founding institution, be it Religious Congregation, Episcopal Conference or Diocese.

Catholic universities and their management as a CPR

The reason for suggesting certain structures and management processes of catholic universities is because of the capability of this university to satisfy the university community within the referential frame stated by the Law.

Ecuadorian catholic universities feel the excessive intervention of the State, which regulates the management of universities under co-government, and leaves aside the responsibilities that arise from the foundational link between the university and the founding institution. The legal marginalization of the founding institution of a university, creates dissatisfaction and places catholic universities in an atypical situation. The proposal of managing catholic universities following the model applied in the common use goods creates conditions of sustainability and assurance of the institutional identity and its mission.

At the government level, a catholic university that is managed as a CPR is regulated by an academic authority, formed with a self-government and the external authority of the founding institution that evaluates the self-government within the framework of the institutional identity and mission. The statute of Catholic universities must include both the connection and the agreements of rights and obligations between the academic community and the founding institution.

The governance of a common pool resource (CPR) requires a participatory and responsible culture of all the community members; in a catholic university participation is achieved through representation by election and participation by nomination of office. With the participation of the university community, operating standards are formulated which then receive the acceptance and consensus of the community, thus establishing mechanisms that subordinate individual and diverse interests to the identical interest of the people who

make up the group that appropriates the common good. The external authority controls that the individual interest does not privatize the common interest. It has the capacity to intervene in favor of the common interest of the university.

University autonomy and university government

University autonomy

Public universities, and to a lesser extent private ones, have made “university autonomy” the fundamental pillar of the university. However, the agents of university life explain in a different manner what is meant by autonomy and its scope in university government. UNESCO² affirms that higher education establishments should “enjoy full academic freedom and autonomy, conceived as a set of rights and obligations, and at the same time are fully responsible with society by rendering accounts”. Truth is there is no consensus in enumerating that set of rights and duties which consist of academic freedom and university autonomy.

As Ferrada said (2001):

It seems there is no discussion about the importance of university autonomy for the development of higher education in any political system, considering it as a fundamental principle that explains the subsistence of the university institution along almost nine centuries (p. 60). Hoareau, Ritzen & Marconi (2012, cited by Cardiel & Gómez, 2014), analyzed the relationship between university policies, the performance of universities and, later, the country’s economy. They concluded that: The results of their study indicate that university autonomy is a determinant of educational quality, more influential than public fun-

2 UNESCO, World Declaration on Higher Education for the XXI Century: Vision y Action 1998.

ding. This suggests that quality education is not only achievable by countries that make a significant effort in the financing of higher education. In particular, the study reveals that university autonomy translates into relatively high levels of graduation and employment. Likewise, management capacity and autonomy influence the productivity of research (p. 20).

Historical references on university autonomy

Authors present university autonomy in different ways as a result of various historical and social contingencies. The numerous meanings of university autonomy means it is concept that is socially constructed (Ferrada, 2001). A brief review of its historical structure facilitates its current understanding and contextualization.

The first universities emerged surrounded by privileges and concessions that gave the university institution a character of autonomy with respect to the obligations of other citizens. Civil and ecclesiastical authorities endowed the members of the university corporation with a unique status, so as Ferrada (2001) says: "If we look for the origin of university autonomy, we will come to the conclusion that it arises, in broad terms, with the foundation of the first universities" (p. 64). This model of university autonomy was developed in Latin American universities in the time of the Colony, they were created following the model of Salamanca with royal as well as the Pope's protection.

At the beginning of the new American republics the university gives way to its State character and assumes the Napoleonic model. Professors are assured complete freedom to express opinions or doctrines about the subject they teach. However, the economic dependence of the State is deepened. There was a rupture with the medieval model and the State assumed preeminence in university decisions. Politics and university autonomy failed to add wills:

From the university movement of the Reform of 1918 until the mid-1990s, successive democratic and de facto governments failed to deepen the relationship between the university and the state in terms of autonomy, nor were they able to establish distinctions within this complex attribute. [...] Rather, autonomy was always a condition observed by the university and sometimes subjugated by political power (Plencovich et al., 2015, p. 77)

Transformations of the 20th century driven by the phenomena of the university's massiveness and the consequent financial problems affected quality and autonomy, "the period of an institutional autonomy conditioned by the level of academic performance of the different university missions began" (Plencovich et al., 2015, p. 75).

New contexts seem to require models of university autonomy based on recognizing the university as a "public corporation" endowed with full legal capacity, as well as the university as a "community of culture" with professors and students that complement their efforts for the good of the nation, where the State must recognize the university's right to organize itself freely.

Scope of the concept of university autonomy

There is no single way of understanding the concept of autonomy, but reference is always made to the university's right to govern itself in accordance to its own statutes. It is here that university autonomy is specified and understood in its regularization of academy and administration. There is still the original thought of autonomy as the enjoyment of privileges that exonerated the university from ordinary legislation for society, today this tradition is limited to anything that does not violate the national legal order.

Palma (1983 cited by Ferrada, 2001) defines autonomy in relation to the aim of the university and therefore describes it "as a

formula foreseen by the constituent as a guarantee of the freedom of education” (p. 63).

The concept of university autonomy is diverse even in countries with similar traditions. Plencovich et al. (2015) have studied this concept in Argentina, Brazil and Mexico and conclude that:

There are basic coincidences in the analyzed indicators which leads to believe that there are some essential elements of university autonomy that are resilient to relocations and constitute the hard core of the concept: a relatively autonomous government, a discreet freedom of teaching, a certain democratization of the right to learn (p. 84).

Public universities in Latin America have come a long way in what for some is a conquest of autonomy and for others a condition of vulnerability subject to the vagaries of politics, but always seeking the democratization of higher education and achieving objective goals, although with different applications of university autonomy.

The consensus of university autonomy refers to a condition of the university government to guarantee the freedom of education, a necessary condition for the proper exercise of its functions; but also the connection between university autonomy and regulatory power of government gives way to key elements that make up university self-government that in addition to academic freedom and critical freedom, seeks institutional relations without coercion, especially from the government. Ferrada (2001) contributes, through his legal thought, to typify autonomy according to the powers that the university achieves to concretize its government, if it implies an independent exercise of power or is a normative capacity for its own function, in any case there is the reminder of “as long as it does not violate the legal norms and regulations in force” (p. 77).

Hence, university autonomy is presented as the guardianship of academic freedom and constitutes a necessary condition for the

appropriate performance of its functions. The exercise of university autonomy is concretized in independence with respect to the economic, political, religious and union powers. University autonomy is a condition for universities to serve society in the form of scientific criticism and non-mediated analysis of what happens in it, and the deontology of the use of scientific and technological knowledge.

The Ecuadorian Organic Law of Higher Education (LOES for its acronym in Spanish) introduces the term *responsible autonomy* that should rather be read as responsible university government in the exercise of university autonomy, but in this case as in many others, it is the same law that marks the scope of autonomy.

In the face of this tendency to interpret and regulate university autonomy from the law, which leaves aside a whole history of privileges and self-regulation of universities, it is the academic community that is constituted as the creator of a new model of university autonomy understood as academic freedom to seek the truth and self-government as a consensus of coexistence and common will to create the university's identity.

University government

The complex and diverse application of university autonomy has been concretized in the forms of government that have controlled universities. In Latin America, the search for formulas for university government has been marked by proposals for democratization in order to achieve greater participation of students and professors. The origin dates back to 1918 in the University of Cordova which “at that time [...] it had very elitist characteristics with strong religious influence, which was opposed, according to the students' opinion, to the new times” (Cifuentes, 2014, p. 5). This rupture occurs in the face of dissatisfaction with the medieval university, which as Plencovich et al. (2015) said:

[...] it emerged as a form of collegiate self-government, controlled by lifetime professors or by students, according to their foundational matrix. It constituted a system of horizontal, heterogeneous and decentralized organization, which was based on the suitability of the faculty.

This autonomy was translated into the ability of being governed by professors.

This political and social autonomy was encouraged by economic self-sufficiency, since the resources that were generated derived from tuition payments, graduation waivers and *collectae*, sums students were required to provide once or twice a year to pay the beadles, proctors and professors, and to cover certain ordinary expenses of the university. The university operated through private charity and was linked to the Church, although it did not strictly belong to it (p. 73).

By introducing the model of political democracy in the university, the State assumed the role of legislating the university. The power of medieval self-government of university professors as well as the involvement of professors with the institutions that created the universities disappeared.

The State as the agent that determines the university government

The university is a complex reality, but it has become even more complex than necessary for trying to give it a supposedly democratic, participatory and collegiate government. In this regard, the temptation of a government system almost of a political community can ensure representative democracy, but the university is more than a political entity; there is no less temptation to give it a business government (Arocena & Sutz, 2001, Kehm, 2012), it would surely make it more efficient, but the university is more than a commercial enterprise, in any case it would be a company of knowledge.

The university government has unipersonal and collegiate bodies, some are formed by choice and others by right. How many, how and with what rights and obligations the university bodies operate with, is a fundamental task of the statute. It is in this normative body where the university identifies and organizes itself to fulfill its mission. At present, the statute responds to new laws of higher education that understand autonomy as an expression of self-government under general norms that articulate the State's development policies with universities. The constitutional normative structure defines and guarantees the academic, administrative, financial and organic autonomy of universities. This new style of legislation looks strongly and clearly at the dynamics of the control of power and seeks to create a university government regulated by the State.

University autonomy stops being an exceptional, distinct and privileged form of self-government of groups that work together [collectively] such as professors and students, to become a special form of institutional government under the rule and regulation of the State (Arocena & Sutz, 2001; Kehm, 2012). In Ecuador, the Organic Law of Higher Education (LOES for its acronym in Spanish) reduces the importance and the historical sense of the university and simply considers it an institution of public service similar to others created by the State.

Institutions that created universities

When creating the first universities, there was the presence of a structure that recognized, validated, supported, and set the physical and administrative conditions for a group of people who had been acting in society as teachers and who have a group of followers or students to whom they teach their doctrines, they are open to the confrontation that is generated in the search for truth. In this regard, over the years kings and bishops granted universities a whole series

of privileges so they could be free from the limitations applied by power in any of its expressions. In return, they should serve society by illuminating its path, solving its physical problems and teaching youth the doctrine of good and perfect man (Arocena & Sutz, 2001).

The external forces that have contributed to giving numerous universities life throughout history, have been influencing their government one way or another, but in recent times they have been replaced by the regulatory and controlling role of state agencies. The structure of these institutions has had more or less representation in the various collegiate bodies of the universities that they have helped to create. The structure of the university board has been present in many universities and for many years in the configuration of the unipersonal bodies of the sponsored universities.

According to Cifuentes (2014): “The University Board is a collegial authority, made up of people who are external to the university policy, called employers” (p. 2). This structure contributes to fulfilling the aims of the university by providing support and services to officials and university offices for their adequate administrative, financial and accounting operations as well as the proper management of their human and material resources, and the proper use of the movable and immovable assets. It can be organized freely, as long as it is not contrary to what is stated in the law, but granting freedom for its integration. The university board, as a promoter, recovers the founding act and helps complete the legal identity of private universities which are first founded (board, promoter) and then created by the State.

In recent times, sponsoring institutions and promoters of universities have experienced many changes in the process of democratization of their governments and the intervention and regulatory nature that states have been exercising in Latin American universities. However, in the United States large and small universities are supervised by boards or entities of similar legal status; they are non-

profit institutions that act to guide and supervise the management of the university, which they have generally created. They are similar to North American boards of directors and have a similar hierarchical structure with the same legal status (Hermalin & Weisbach, 2001).

The presence of sponsoring institutions and subsequent boards in North American and European universities, as well as the efficiency and quality of the universities that carry out this model of government that support the university, demonstrates the success of the model.

This model of corporation or board of directors is a successful model in large universities such as Harvard and Yale which have the oldest boards of directors (Hermalin & Weisbach, 2001). It is a model that over time has been subject to evaluations which consider the performance indicators of the board as a set of interrelated dimensions where a change in one dimension affects others; performance problems of the board are diagnosed and then adequate improvement plans are proposed (Sajadi et al., 2014). In Europe: “New models of government redistribute responsibilities and the power to make decisions between external and internal agents” (García & Aller, 2014, p. 21). The same authors state that:

[...] the advice of supervisors or “administration councils” mainly made up by “lay members” (external people with prestige in the community) are increasingly frequent. These supervisory councils have the task of making the general public more aware of the institutional processes (p. 23).

University governance and autonomy

What strongly emerges in the 21st century University is the achievement of constructive governance as a result of a clear distribution of power in collegiate bodies and individual officials; for the 21st century university, the construction of a culture of responsibilities is more important than the distribution of executive functions;

culture occurs in a specific community (Kehm, 2012). Each university will achieve governance with means that are appropriate to its reality; the way a public university is structured may be the worst way to achieve governance in a private university, or the way of structuring collegiate bodies in a small university does not respond to the organizational needs of a large university. Arocena & Sutz (2001) talk about “ascending stratification of coordinating bodies, oriented to forming a systemic governance that feeds on the interests of the base of university configuration” (pg. 142).

In recent years there have been many experiences of governance being applied in recognized private and public universities where governance is not achieved with the criteria of balance of power and negotiation of interests, but from the mission and vision of the university (García & Aller, 2014).

The university of the future that seeks change, manages to create a governance environment that involves the entire university community to support research and innovation processes and mark the dynamics capable of creating a cooperative learning ecosystem (Salgado, 2016) in order to:

- Respond to social demands and raise new problems that question their way of acting.
- Understand the university as a place where you think about the future of society.
- Be a university where education in competences and the domain of knowing how to create science transcends the communication of learned knowledge.
- Mark its own style of bringing together the efficiency imposed by society with the freedom to think and act differently.
- Develop intelligence and logical thinking from comparing, organizing and explaining knowledge instead of simply learning it.

The governance of the university of the future must have a cooperative learning ecosystem to make sense, mean, understand, invent, create, assume, explain, be able to name, understand, know why we do what we do and integrate content and action.

The model of a university government of a university community that creates, with autonomy, the learning ecosystem environment, directly depends on its ability to consolidate around these three main pillars:

- The student as a person: From this premise, both students and professors, both researchers, will try to question paradigms, escape routines which prevent understanding reality differently and, therefore, will develop a critical reason that allows them to break with the purely instrumental and rationalist meaning of scientific knowledge.
- The scientific community: The university community thinks of itself as a scientific community that rethinks and recreates itself by shaping the process of education-research which cannot be understood separately but in a holistic and complex way, with its own movement, meaning, emotions and self-regulation. This is the common agenda that provides identity and presents the values of the university community based on reciprocity, cooperation and freedom of thought. The university of the future makes a leap from what is learned to what is understood, in a process that involves sharing and producing knowledge to accumulate collective knowledge. This way knowledge does not stagnate and the university accomplishes two reasons for existing, on the one hand, searching for the truth and on the other hand that the scientific community makes sense of the context's reality in order to transform it (Salgado, 2016).
- Communication for change: The convergence between order and chaos is produced by feedback generated from public opi-

nion, that is, the community itself communicates its positive experiences and these experiences focus on common objectives through a communication model with participation that convene an audience. New information technologies offer new possibilities to make participation more effective and enhance interactivity in social communication, this process continuously improves the mechanisms to reinforce good experiences and penalize bad ones in a transparent manner. The university of the future is a university of networks (Cazorla, 2014).

Governance in the university is fed by the dynamics of synergies which occur from complexity and in spaces that we define as *meeting places*. These meeting places are the result of crossings of multiple flows that intervene in research and teaching; it is a kind of free zone of thought, ideas and interests nourished by the academy and the university structure which are turned into specific projects and programs. Therefore, the aim is to have an academic community that investigates, that creates relationships, interacts as an uncontrolled rhizome and undertakes planning from below through action (Salgado, 2016).

Two aspects of university reality are combined in the three pillars described above: the internal institutional and the external significance. These two ways of contemplating reality from the university and from society should be translated into the combination of two types of measures: the first known as “top / down”, which is considered the backbone that guides institutional character and thus connects to another type of measure known as “bottom / up”, which is based on experience, intuitive and sometimes not very articulated. Knowing what measures should be implemented, in one direction or another, is key to success in university governance.

The university government which is created by following the two aspects indicated above, ensures the participation of society in

the university and eliminates an autarchic government of the university for the university. This system has given way to variations of a *shared government* that has representative collegiate bodies and unipersonal bodies by professional qualification, not subject to the political dynamics of representative democracy.

Conclusions

The conclusions from the first part of our article are:

- It is necessary to continue carrying out research in order to deepen the management of catholic universities as a Common Pool Resource (CPR).
- Likewise, all frameworks of collective action must respond to interests regarding identity and the mission proposed by institutions of founding churches of catholic universities.
- Consolidate social practices in the university that develop a culture where rules are the consequence of knowledge and are validated in practice.

From the second part of this work, here are some relevant conclusions about university autonomy (Ferrada, 2001):

- University autonomy is a complex legal concept of great relevance to this day, but the content has evolved from the historical circumstances in which it has developed, changing qualitatively in relation to the aims pursued during its construction.
- University autonomy is essentially connected to the aim it is linked to. Currently, this aim cannot be other than academic freedom, the main objective that conditions and bases the university institution and determines its content and limits.
- University autonomy, to be considered as such, requires certain minimum rules that make its exercise within the organization possible. In this sense and regarding such autonomy,

there cannot be rules that lessen academic freedom, individual expression of the institutional autonomy of the organization.

The university government, which is constituted with autonomic competences, must maintain the links that originate in the mission of the university community which it governs:

In the foundational event, links between the created university and the founding institution, also called promoter, are established. These links must have the ability to ensure, over time, that the university government maintains the founding identity and ensures the fulfillment of the mission it was created for.

The university cooperative learning community must organize its university government from models that share the autonomic power of the university in order to:

Create an environment of governance which is the result of the synergy of the complex university dynamics.

Integrate the stakeholders of the university: students, professors, officials, founding institutions, boards and the state.

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