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The discourse of sanctity: Early modern canonization of saints as a collaborative process

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Rice University, 1994
RICE UNIVERSITY

THE DISCOURSE OF SANCTITY:

EARLY MODERN CANONIZATION OF SAINTS
AS A COLLABORATIVE PROCESS

by

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A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
MASTER OF ARTS

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ABSTRACT

The Discourse of Sanctity:
Early Modern Canonization of Saints as a Collaborative Process

by

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Re-evaluation of the current scholarship on sainthood reveals
canonization to be a process of deliberate creation by which candidates are
first depicted as members of particular groups or communities and then re-
represented as exemplary members of the Church of Rome. Collaboration
among the multiple groups promoting the canonization yields saints with
multiple identities who nevertheless serve as icons of consensus. This
interpretation challenges the previous scholarly depiction of early modern
canonization reform as the Vatican’s attempt to change popular values by
imposing elite models of sanctity. Instead, seventeenth-century reform,
which forced communities to seek official approval for local saints, can be
viewed as a unifying strategy rather than a repressive one. Scholars who
emphasize the popular/elite dichotomy in religious culture or who examine
only certain types of documents miss both the collaborative nature of
canonizations and the importance of saints as symbols of Church cohesion.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to Dr. John Stroup, my thesis director, for his support and scholarly advice on this project. His interest in historians and in historiography proved quite contagious. I wish to thank Dr. Patricia Seed for teaching me how to read critically and for encouraging me to take my own new perspectives. I am also indebted to Dr. Gerald McKenny and to Dr. Edith Wyschogrod whose interest and helpful questions have aided my study in numerous ways.

Dr. Margaret Edwards offered valuable criticism and editorial advice on the early drafts of this manuscript and provided ongoing encouragement. My husband, Howard Wood, made this project possible in many ways but he deserves special acknowledgement here for his computing expertise and assistance. I wish to thank Jeannine Klein for her attentive reading and editing of this manuscript at all stages, for her wide-ranging technical support in everything from grammar to word processing, and for giving me, years ago, a copy of Lives of the Saints.
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INTRODUCTION

Saints belong to the present as well as to the past. Although contemporary scholars may think of saints mostly in connection with the ancient and medieval church, many Catholic communities continue to sponsor candidates for canonization by the pope in Rome. We must recognize that it is the saints' relation to living communities—towns, parishes, fraternities, religious orders, or even whole countries—which makes them important both to their devotees and to scholars of religion. The vast majority of saints belong to specific local communities regardless of the fact that they are, by virtue of their canonization, held up for universal veneration by the entire Church.¹ Devotees of these saints believe that the special relationship between the saint and their community provides not only divine protection and aid, but also gives the community special status and legitimation.

À CONTEMPORARY CAUSE

The Sisters of the Holy Family in New Orleans are carefully preserving the writings and effects of their founder, Henriette Delille, in

¹The few saints widely revered by Christians all over the world—Mary, the apostles, the four evangelists, St. Francis of Assisi—are exceptions to the general rule. In actual practice, the cults of most saints (as indicated by public celebration of their feast days, for example) are confined to rough geographical areas or to specific groups of people such as religious orders. See Löw, Giuseppe "Canonnizzazione" Enciclopedia Cattolica (Città del Vaticano: Ente per l'Enciclopedia Cattolica: 1949-1954) 589.
hopes that she will someday be canonized.² Delille, born in 1812, was a free
woman of African descent who did charitable work among the slaves of New
Orleans. In defiance of segregationist laws, Delille founded an order of
nursing and teaching nuns for black women. Her cause for canonization
was initiated in 1978, and her supporters hope to see Mother Henriette
become the first North American black woman to be declared a saint. Her
biography is written, her correspondence is catalogued; now the sisters are
waiting for a miracle. The canonization of a saint requires evidence of
sanctity not only during a virtuous and pious life on earth but also, after
death, demonstration through miracles of the power to give heavenly aid
and assistance to the community. One certifiable miracle is needed for
Henriette to be declared "blessed," that is, beatified. Another miracle would
be needed for her to be declared a "saint," or canonized.³

The Sisters of the Holy Family, the Diocese of New Orleans, and the
African-American community all hope to see this heroic woman held up for

²Norma Martin,"A Family of African American Sisters," Houston
Chronicle, 20 November 1993: 1E.

³A person with a reputation for holiness cannot be officially called a
"saint," according to the Roman Catholic Church, unless he or she has been
canonized. Preliminary to canonization is the process of beatification—the
official declaration of virtue—which confers on the holy person the title of
"blessed." Local veneration of the blessed person is permitted but at least
one additional miracle and another lengthy investigation by the Vatican are
required for the upgrade in status to sainthood. For convenience, however, I
will frequently use the term "saints" to refer generally to those in both
categories except when I am explicitly contrasting the two.
veneration by the Church. They have every reason to believe that Delille's cause will be well-received in Rome. Since taking office in 1978, Pope John Paul II has beatified more candidates than all the previous popes of the twentieth century put together. In 1983 he reformed the canonization process to encourage new causes. This modern pope has a penchant for presenting newly beatified blesseds to local churches as he travels around the world and the Congregation for the Causes of Saints supports the pope's agenda by striving to present him with candidates native to the countries on his itinerary for the coming year. In this way, the pope and his curia try to strengthen the bonds between the Church of Rome and the culturally varied communities of Catholics by diversifying the population of the saints. I see Pope John Paul II's use of saint-making as a cohesive gesture, one which parallels in many ways Pope Urban VIII's seventeenth-century canonization reforms. Both popes saw the making of new saints as a way to encourage renewed Christian faith and virtue in an age of internal religious reform. More importantly, both Urban VIII and John Paul II realized that formal recognition of local saints by the Vatican engages the different cultural,

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5I.e., reducing the required number of miracles, cutting costs through the streamlining of the process, and introducing an historical-critical consciousness into the project. See Woodward, 90-99.

6Woodward 116.
political, and historical communities with the Church of Rome. In terms of the Church's needs, the canonization process is every bit as important as the canonization product (i.e., the saints). Despite the large body of scholarship on saint-making, the process of canonization is not well understood. Most modern scholars assume that the Church's control of the canonization process is primarily concerned with directing which saints are selected and thereby controlling society's definition of "Christian virtue." The true importance of the canonization process, I believe, lies in the process of exchange among the various parties—laity, clergy, community leaders, and Vatican officials—and in their shared discourse about sanctity and virtue. It is, at least in part, because canonized saints symbolize that collaboration that they continue to hold meaning for the Church.

The process by which saints are made today still follows in many ways the procedures and guidelines developed in the early seventeenth

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7The term "discourse" is frequently used these days but it needs explicit definition here for emphasis. According to The Oxford English Dictionary, second edition (1989), "discourse" can refer to "a conversation," or "a spoken or written treatment of a subject in which it is handled or discussed at length." These meanings are, perhaps, the obvious ones for the present context. But "discourse" can also mean "the process or faculty of reasoning" and this should remind the reader that the discourse of sanctity to which I refer includes not only the language or vocabulary employed in discussing the saints but also the way in which arguments for sanctity are constructed and the way in which conclusions about a saint's life are reached. The use of the term "discourse" in this paper also points to the work of Michel Foucault. Foucault's use of the work "discourse" includes the relationship between language and social institutions and the ways in which discursive practice forms power relations and structures knowledge.
century by Urban VIII and the then-new Congregation of Rites. Long before John Paul II, Urban VIII sought to strengthen the central authority of Rome over a culturally diverse Church. In 1643, Urban radically centralized the saint-making process, stripping local bishops (and thereby communities) of their power to create purely local saints. From the seventeenth century through the present, the canonization process has been administered by a Vatican congregation of cardinals. The candidate's life is presented mainly through written texts: biographies, personal testimonies transcribed by the local tribunal, correspondence, documented miracles, and the briefs and records of the ecclesiastical examinations all provide pictures of the saint as remembered by others. Because the process is a lengthy one, saints are often canonized generations, or even centuries, after their deaths. It is not only the passage of time which threatens the saints' relevance, but the inevitable changes in their identities which accompany the documentation, transcription, and repeated re-presentation of their lives.

Canonization holds a saint up not only as a symbol of God's presence in the world but also as an icon of consensus and cooperation between community and Church. Because the saint's identity is constructed through

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*The Congregation of Rites was so-called because its duties initially included the improvement of the liturgy as well as the preparation of causes for canonization. In 1914 Pius X separated the Congregation's duties and now the processes for beatification and canonization are handled by the Congregation for the Causes of Saints. For brevity's sake I will refer to Congregation of Rites as simply "the Congregation;" no other curial Congregations are under discussion in this paper.
a collaborative effort in which the saint is first depicted as a member of a particular community and then re-presented as an exemplary member of the Church of Rome, the figure of the saint symbolically "ties" culturally diverse parts of the Church together. The long-term nature of the process ensures that the saint’s final image or identity will be a collaborative construction of both Church and community. The saint and his or her virtues may be described very differently by different groups according to their different perceptions and values but these "multiple personalities" are accommodated by a process which constructs, revises, remembers, and forgets but rarely denies what proves to be important to any one community. Although Rome controls the discourse, it cannot control the entire conversation; the local community must initiate the dialogue, supply the raw materials, and keep the process going through financing and local advocacy. No matter how carefully the saint is described or depicted by any one group--including the Congregation in Rome--the interpretation of the saint’s life and virtues, as well as the definition of the saint’s relationship to living communities, takes place according to the needs and traditions of the different people involved. It is my contention that the church's control over the community is not exercised primarily through conscious imposition of models of sanctity. Rather, control is exercised by forcing the community into dialogue with the institution (i.e., requiring saints to be recognized by Rome rather than allowing them to be local creations), and by defining and
imposing the terms of the discourse itself (i.e., by defining the language and vocabulary of sanctity, by regulating the procedures by which information about the saint is gathered and exchanged, etc.). When the Catholic Church canonizes a saint, the moment is the culmination of a long conversation that cements the relationship between church and community.

The initiation of a canonization is motivated by the desire of the community for recognition and by the desire of Rome to establish a discourse with the community. It is important for scholars to identify the political dimensions of individual canonizations in order to recognize all of the parties involved, such identification is not sufficient to explain the situation fully. Political concerns may identify the initial motives of some parties, but as a political discourse, canonization is inevitably consigned to the most powerful side—the Vatican. Consideration of canonization as a one-sided political strategy fails to recognize the exchange and collaboration among community, sponsors, and curial Congregation of Rites. While different groups create different identities for "their" saint—and largely retain these particularistic interpretations even after the saint’s canonization—what they share in canonization is a way of talking about, thinking about, and celebrating saints within the church. The collaborative construction of the saint creates an illusion of consensus between various factions involved, despite the absence of shared values and concepts and
despite bitter disagreements over jurisdiction and authority within the church.

The process of canonization is presented ostensibly as the authentication of a natural social phenomenon (i.e., the popular recognition of the saint) and the logical outcome of a rational investigation (i.e., the ecclesiastical trial). The differences among parties and the revisions and alterations to the saint’s Life are deliberately forgotten and the procedures by which the construction took place are obscured under the final pronouncements and official iconography. It is my opinion that the whole process exhibits what Roland Barthes has called a "mythologizing strategy" which erases both the underlying political considerations and the history and mechanics of construction so that all parties can represent their saint as an unmediated symbol of sanctity.9 Beneath the highly visible myth of the saint, a second-level discourse creates a myth of the Church—an ideal Church whose members share common symbols and concepts, and whose internal differences can be overcome. It will be my project in this paper to show how the evidence presented in the scholarship points to this dynamic process and collaborative effort despite the fact that few authors elaborate upon it.

THE STANDARD PICTURE OF SAINTHOOD\textsuperscript{10}

Scholars have generally answered the question of whether, after canonization, saints still hold meaning for both laity and institution in the negative because of the way studies of canonization are framed. The standard depiction of sainthood in scholarly literature is molded by three dominant assumptions: (1) that canonization is a process of identification and selection; (2) that religious culture and, therefore, sainthood, is polarized into "popular" and "elite" types; and (3) that the increasingly centralized Church authority over saints precludes any significant role for local communities. In fact, as my review of the literature will show, all three assumptions oversimplify scholarly readings by forcing the material into rigid dichotomies. Although the modern view reverses the old dichotomies which privileged "elite" over "popular," it maintains a rigidly hierarchical bias that erases the diversity of voices involved in canonization. A more attentive reading of a wider array of source materials reveals that saints retain their power as Christian symbols because they are jointly constructed by local community groups, the candidate's devotees, and the Congregation in Rome. This revised approach suggests a new model of

\footnotesize{\textsuperscript{10} This section title "The Standard Picture," and the subsequent one, "Revising the Standard Picture," are taken from chapter headings in John Stroup's The Struggle for Identity in the Clerical Estate: Northwest German Protestant Opposition to Absolutist Policy in the Eighteenth Century (Leiden: Brill, 1984). I am indebted to Dr. Stroup for suggesting this organization of the material.}
institutional control which more realistically addresses the participation and collaboration involved in cultural exchange. Saints—useful ones—cannot be unilaterally imposed.

The first assumption—that the process of saint-making is one of identification and selection of worthy candidates—naturalizes the canonization process. Most scholars focus almost exclusively on who was chosen for sainthood and why. How and by whom are too often overlooked. The identification of a saintly individual within a community is commonly assumed to result from the person's obvious virtues or powers in combination with the community's need for spiritual leadership. As a result of this assumption, scholars traditionally focus either on the personalities of the saints or on the cultural expectations and needs of particular historical communities. Likewise, canonization in Rome is traditionally presented as a selection process whereby the Church authenticates and corroborates the community's choice. In more recent scholarship, canonization is presented as a second, independent selection process based on the pope's or the cardinals' own set of criteria (catechetical, political, or cultural). Because

the proclamation of a saint has for so long been portrayed as the natural outcome of two relatively independent processes, little attention has been given to the particulars of how saints are constructed.

The second feature of traditional scholarship on sainthood is its division of saints into "popular" and "elite" or "ecclesiastical" categories. The standard picture of sainthood remains strongly influenced by the sociology of the 1970s which drew sharp distinctions between "popular" and "elite" cultural practices.12 While scholars in other disciplines have abandoned such sharply delineated categories, scholars of sainthood remain mired in the old dichotomies. For the past twenty years, saints have been studied almost exclusively as cultural indicators. That is to say, scholars have tried to see how saints exemplify the values of the age in which they lived or how they reflect the values of the Church at the time they were canonized. Scholars have shown a strong preference for studying the early Christian and medieval saints because of the common assumption that bishops, priests, kings, and peasants of those ages more closely shared common values and beliefs. Within this sociologically based approach, saints are deemed to be a natural outgrowth of "popular" religion. The saints of popular cults serve as miraculous symbols of God's direct

12Not all scholars name the distinction as "popular" and "elite." Other pairs of terms include: "periphery" vs. "center," "popular" vs. "institutional." But none of these changes in terminology reflects an improved understanding.
participation in human life; the criteria for popular acclaim focuses on their miraculous interventions. In this role, say traditional scholars, popular saints are fundamentally opposed to or in competition with church authority. In the seventeenth century, so the accepted history goes, these popular saints were co-opted to serve the interests of "elite" religion as a strategy for social control. This view further assumes that saints have no ontological status except as political and social constructs; therefore, the only rational criteria for judging them must be based on their effectiveness as icons or propaganda for some group--providing a neatly circular rationale for proving that saints are strictly political constructs.

The third characteristic feature of standard scholarship on saints is that the increasingly centralized Church authority over saints in the early modern period signals a watershed in the history of canonizations. In this period, Urban VIII enforced earlier papal decrees outlawing the making of saints at a purely local level and decreed that all candidates must pass the scrutiny of the Vatican before being publicly acclaimed. Scholars have traditionally read this move as a repressive one--an attempt to place local religious practices and local congregations firmly under the control of the Vatican. In addition, most historians present the canonization reforms of

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13A fundamental component of the Weberian notion of charisma is the anti-authoritarian nature of charismatic leaders. In particular, says Weber, such leaders are sharply opposed to "bureaucratic authority" (bound to rules) and to "traditional authority" (bound to precedent.) See Max Weber, 361.
the seventeenth century as marking a radical shift away from popular saints which had meaning for the average layperson toward elite saints chosen by the Vatican for propaganda purposes. By the end of the sixteenth century, it is assumed, the interests of the Church as an institution governed by the pope and cardinals widely diverged from the interests of the laity. Local saints, in their role as charismatic wonder workers, are seen as direct challenges to church authority. Those acclaimed as living saints were often forced to endure the scrutinies of the Inquisition before they died; once dead, their lives and reputations were subjected to the trials of a bureaucratic process before they could be canonized. Local shrines and relics of these local saints after their deaths competed with Church-mediated sacraments as sources of sacred power. Canonized saints of this period, on the other hand, are portrayed in the scholarship as exclusive creations of the Church hierarchy which granted local communities no significant role in the saint-making process. These conclusions have been supported by studies of the "types" of saints canonized under the new system; little scholarly attention has been paid, however, to the reformed process itself. Few scholars have examined the way the testimony and documents concerning the saints' lives were read, exchanged, revised, and shaped by the new procedures at either the local or the Vatican level. In the standard histories, the seventeenth-century canonization reforms are use to argue larger issues of the zealous "Catholic Reformation" which
strove to ensure orthodox belief and practice throughout Europe. Local communities, according to the standard history, were forced to adopt saints chosen by Rome. The saints of the early modern period, insist scholars, are icons of ecclesiastical power rather than symbols of popular piety; objects of propaganda, not objects of devotion.\textsuperscript{14}

\textbf{REVISING THE STANDARD PICTURE}

Most of the literature presented in this study falls well within the frame of the standard picture outlined above. However, the evidence used by these scholars, when considered as a totality, challenges the traditional interpretation. Much of the source material is interesting and pertinent; however, too much of the scholarship is narrowly focused on tabulations of

\textsuperscript{14}I will avoid the use of the terms "Counter-Reformation" (most commonly used, especially by Protestants) and "Catholic Reformation" (preferred by many Catholics). Both of these terms have been debated for years (see the works of Jedid, Evennett, and O'Malley) and each has acquired a specific connotation for the history of sainthood. "Counter-Reformation" implies a reaction by the Church to Protestant criticism. "Counter-Reformation saints" are usually described as those individuals held up by the Church for their usefulness in combatting Protestant heresy—either by their actions against or despite Protestants or for their conspicuous embrace of "good works" and Catholic theological premises. The term "Catholic Reformation" emphasizes the internal reform which began in the late Middle Ages and was renewed at the Council of Trent in the 1560s. "Catholic Reformation saints" are described as individuals whose lives demonstrated virtue in conformity with orthodox practice and whose fame stemmed from heroic service or devotion rather than from miracles. Both of these labels convey a sense of propaganda directed at some group. I will use instead the term "early modern period" as O'Malley has advised to refer to this historical period. (See O'Malley, "Was Ignatius Loyola a Reformer? How to Look at Early Modern Catholicism" Catholic Historical Review 77.2 (1991):177-193.
data or close readings of small segments of information. One scholar may compare two early biographies of a particular saint; another looks at the canonization bulls (but not the early biographies) of several saints; another mentions the legal process while ignoring the political situation in the saint's community. In order to study the effects of the canonization process on the saints, one has to examine a wide array of very different types of research. I will demonstrate in this paper that the scholarship, when considered together, reveals that the process by which saints were made in the seventeenth century took place at both local and institutional levels and that it was deliberately creative, rather than merely selective. Furthermore, the literature which closely documents the lives and canonizations of specific saints calls for a re-interpretation of the role of

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15 An example of an excellent work which compares early biographies and painting of a single saint is William R. Cook's work, Fraternal and Lay Images of St. Francis in the Thirteenth Century. "Popes, Teachers and Canon Law in the Middle Ages. Eds. James Ross Sweeney and Stanley Chodorow (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1989) 263-289. Cook does not pursue the revision of the saint through the canonization process. Another example of good work on early biographies but without helpful comparison to canonization materials is Aviad Kleinberg's book previously cited (see note 10, page 10 above.) An example of a study which focuses on canonization documents but fails to adequately explain their relationship to earlier, vernacular biographies is the work by Andre Vauchez, La Sainteté en Occident aux Derniers Siècles du Moyen Age, D'Après les Procès de Canonisation et les Documents Hagiographiques (Rome: École Francaise de Rome, 1981). Studies of the canonization process itself, for example the work of Eric Waldram Kemp, Canonization and Authority in the Western Church (Oxford: Oxford UP, 1948), fail to consider what potential effects local politics and personalities might have on the process. All of these works are discussed, along with others, below.
canonization in establishing relationships between local communities and
the Church of Rome.

**Overview of the Scholarship**

I have divided the modern scholarship on sainthood into three main
categories: the study of the canonization process itself; the study of trends
in the selection of candidates for sainthood; and the study of hagiography--
that is, the study of the written *Lives*, or biographies, of saints. The first
category, the study of the history of canonization itself, has been the least
well represented in recent literature. The standard works in the field date
from the 1940s and have no recent counterparts. The second field, which
considers saints as social indicators, has produced scholarship which reflects
the efforts of sociologists to find principles of variation between the saints of
different centuries and of different cultural groups. This literature first
appeared in French scholarship in the early 1970s and then, some ten years
later, in American scholarship. Those works which describe trends in
popular perceptions of sanctity or trends in canonization criteria remain the
most influential and well-known across several disciplines. Yet more recent
studies, which tend to focus attention on fewer candidates and consider the
interplay of different local and ecclesiastical groups at work on behalf of a
saint's cause, have proven to be more rewarding for understanding the
complex social, cultural, and political dimensions of canonization. The third
area of research on saints, hagiography, is the most rapidly expanding field.
After a period of scholarly neglect, the study of the written *vitae* of saints and of their authors has attracted many contemporary scholars of literature and social history. These scholars re-read the *Lives* of the saints for clues about the saint as a member of a community—and about the author as a member of his community—instead of trying to recover the historical saint. Their findings offer historians of canonization new information on the interactions between saint, local community, sponsors and promoters, and the Vatican congregation.

I will briefly review the important scholarship in each of these three areas in order to sketch the most significant contributions to the general scholarly understanding of sainthood. By considering this broad range of material I hope to show that the process by which saints are made is a complex one which takes place on several fronts and knots together multiple strands of discourse. While most of the works I cite deliver some portion of the "standard picture" I have outlined above, several recent works, which study the hagiographical history of individual saints and details their posthumous "careers" toward canonization, reveal traces of the collaborative effort I want to bring to the foreground. I will begin with a short review of the history of canonization process in which I will argue that no evidence exists in the primary sources to support the common assumption that the popes aimed to revise the type of saints presented for veneration. Next I
will present a review of the literature on "popular" religion which has set
the tone for modern research on the saints.
SECTION I: THE CANONIZATION PROCESS

Scholarship on saints, especially that which focuses on the relationship of saints to their historical cultures, has long presented the seventeenth-century reform of canonization as a milestone in the history of saint-making. Opinions vary as to the relative importance of the broad centralizing tendencies at work within the Church and the precedent-setting power plays made by individual popes, but most scholars agree that the shift in canonization authority from the bishops to the pope began in the twelfth century and was fully accomplished in the middle of the seventeenth century. Two decisive events enforced this shift in authority: the establishment in 1588 of a curial Congregation of Rites expressly for conducting canonization procedures, and the decrees of Urban VIII (1623-1644), which made it imperative for any community to seek official authorization for their local "saints" through this Congregation. This shift in authority combined an enforced control over emerging cults, a judicial process by which sainthood was evaluated, and an increasingly important role for canon lawyers rather than local clergy. Such a shift, scholars claim, effectively changed the kinds of saints who were canonized and held up by the Church for veneration by the faithful. In modern and post-modern scholarship, this papal and curial control over the making of saints acquires
its primary significance as part of the post-Tridentine Church's larger agenda to reform and control popular belief and practice.\textsuperscript{16}

Many scholars seem to deliberately ignore the fact that papal involvement in canonizations--and even the pope's exclusive right to canonize--had existed for centuries. This omission adds emphasis to the repressive nature of the early modern period by drawing a stark contrast between ancient canonizations by popular acclaim and the lengthy, highly formalized process of the seventeenth century. Furthermore, because many social historians have simply "mined" church history for examples to cite, they have failed to place canonization reform in its proper historical context of evolving papal jurisdiction and a growing concern for objective verification. As a result, it is easy to forget that the seventeenth century documents make no mention of changing the images of saints.

**Scholarship On The Process Of Canonization**

Over the course of this century, opinions have varied widely as to the nature and results of the process by which the Catholic Church canonizes saints. Canon Macken, an English cleric, was the first to outline the process of canonization for lay readers. In his 1909 book he described the process of canonization as an "exact science" in which careful deliberation

\textsuperscript{16}For an example of how canonization reform is treated in a standard history of the period, see A. D. Wright, *The Counter-Reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World* (New York: St.Martin's Press, 1982) 82. Wright sees the influence of Urban's reforms on lay piety as "enormous."
and accurate investigation not only avoided the possibility of deception and error but permitted the truth to shine forth.\textsuperscript{17} Few writers have shared Macken's optimism but then few have reacted as strongly as Cunningham who, in 1980, denounced the process as one which "sanitized" the saints and reinterpreted "deviant charismatic symbols" in order to foster "conforming identification."\textsuperscript{18} Most of the published literature--and there is not much of it--focuses on the ecclesiastical history behind the evolution of the process rather than on the nature of the process itself. One recent exception, a work by Kenneth Woodward, does investigate the language, procedures, and policies of the Vatican Congregation; I will discuss his work at the end of this section.

The standard references on the history of canonization are the 1949 articles on canonization and beatification written by Giuseppe Löw in the \textit{Enciclopedia Cattolica} and the 1948 book \textit{Canonization and Authority} by Eric Kemp.\textsuperscript{19} Löw's articles remain unsurpassed for some details, but they are outdated in many respects. Molinari's more recent articles on the same

\textsuperscript{17}Canon Macken, \textit{The Canonisation of Saints} (Dublin: M.H.Hill, 1909).

\textsuperscript{18}Lawrence Cunningham, \textit{The Meaning of Saints} (San Francisco: Harper and Row, 1980).

subjects are fine but do not replace Löw's. Kemp presents the history of canonization as it reflects the increasing centralization of authority in the church. A 1938 work by Stephan Kuttner considers the history of canonization from the perspective of canon law. Kuttner and Kemp disagreed to some extent on the specific popes and canonizations which set precedents, but they are both clearly concerned with the procedural evolution as it relates to increasing papal authority. Damian Joseph Blacher's study, written as a doctoral dissertation in Canon Law in 1949, gives an historical commentary on the canonization process. This work is particularly helpful to the study of canonization reform because it frequently refers to Benedict XIV's 1734 codification of the procedures which had evolved over the course of the seventeenth century. Blacher discusses the authority exercised by different parties as well as the credentials


\[\text{Stephan Kuttner, "La Reserve papal du droit de canonisation." The History of Ideas and Doctrines of Canon Law in the Middle Ages (London:Variorum, 1980).}\]

\[\text{Kuttner felt that Innocent III, rather than Alexander III, was the pivotal figure at the end of the twelfth century who changed the course of papal authority for canonizations. Kuttner and Kemp argued this in print and it was apparently quite a famous debate, until Kuttner conceded in 1939. See the retractions included at the end of Kuttner's book.}\]


\[\text{Benedict XIV (Prospero Lambertini) is discussed below on page 32.}\]
required of petitioners, promoters, witnesses, and judges. He outlines the various parts of the canonization process and describes their historical precedents. This work is only infrequently cited in the literature.

Because of its brevity and clarity of style, and in the absence of any more recent survey in English, Kemp's work remains the most popular and the most widely cited. His history of canonization starts with the ancient cults of the martyrs and extends through the early modern period and into the nineteenth century. Kemp places the history of papal attempts to control canonizations and local cults into the wider context of an overall tendency within the Church and Europe as a whole toward the centralization of power. Kemp balances his narration of the evolution of the canonization process with a description of the historical debates over papal authority and infallibility which accompanied the consolidation of papal power over the centuries. Kemp demonstrates the degree to which Urban's achievement--the culmination of almost five hundred years of papal efforts--was made possible through widespread confirmation by theologians and lawyers who supported the strengthening of papal authority.

While Kemp's account stresses the consolidation of papal power and the centralization of the procedure, more recent scholars have read the history of canonization from the perspective of diminishing local and lay influence and with an eye to changes in the type of saint which resulted. The now almost universally accepted view charges that the development of
canonization from a locally controlled to a centralized and papally controlled process meant a shift from "popular" to "elite" ideas of sanctity. The result was that "virtuous" saints preferred by Rome replaced the "miraculous" saints preferred by ordinary lay Christians—at least in the niches and liturgy of the Church. In order to provide some perspective for the change from Kemp's view to modern interpretations of these seventeenth century events, I will review the history of canonization and the changes instituted in the early modern period.\textsuperscript{25}

**HISTORY OF EARLY AND MEDIEVAL CANONIZATIONS**

The cult of the saints arose in early Christianity from the cults of martyrs.\textsuperscript{26} Local churches started new cults around their own martyrs who died under Roman persecution. For the first several centuries, saints were chosen on popular fame without any formal process or inquiry. The local bishop's permission for the raising and transfer (called the "translation") of the martyr's bones to a place of honor usually constituted official approval. Even in the early Middle Ages, the bishop's "canonization" of the saint was

\textsuperscript{25}For the interested reader, I have provided an appendix at the end of this paper which outlines the steps involved in canonization and presents the terminology used.

\textsuperscript{26}For a more detailed history of this development, see Peter Robert Lamont Brown, *The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1981); Kemp, 5; see also articles on the history of canonization by Molinari and Löw cited above.
usually tied to the translation of the relics. For some of these early canonizations, records were kept by bishops concerning the saint’s life, death, miracles, and martyrdom. These vitae, all similar in form and content, reflected little of the saints’ individual personalities but appear to be primarily concerned with promoting the reputation of the saint (or the relics).

This early type of canonization has been assumed by most scholars to be an ecclesiastical function which merely constituted official sanction for a cult which had spontaneously arisen within a local congregation. One of the most widely respected scholars of Early Christianity, Peter Brown, has repeatedly called for a more nuanced understanding of the social and cultural roles of the ancient saints: he challenges the commonly accepted idea about early canonizations as expressions of vox populi and the bishops’ role as one of simple endorsement of popular enthusiasm. Instead, says Brown, the bishops “came to orchestrate” the sites of cults in order to shift the boundaries of their own influence. Even in antiquity, so Brown reminds us, the shrines and cults of saints formed a basis for ecclesiastical power structures.

\[27\] Kemp 29. It was not until the twelfth century, Kemp reminds us, that the term “canonization” was used to refer to the insertion of the saint’s name into the canon of the Mass or into a list of saints (Kemp 1).

\[28\] Woodward 65.

\[29\] Brown 8.
The medieval period saw an increase in invitations to the pope to perform the honor of canonization which directly paralleled the growth of papal power and prestige during the eleventh and twelfth centuries. Papal canonization extended the saint's reputation beyond a local community and added prestige to the cult. Early papal involvement in affairs of canonization, other than at the invitation of the community for added prestige, most often appears as efforts at "quality control." Pope Alexander III (1159-1181) is reported to have rebuked a bishop for tolerating a public cult honoring a monk killed in a drunken brawl. This same pope was the first to decree that no one, regardless of popular reputation, could be venerated without papal authorization. He abandoned the earlier practice of canonizing saints only at a general council of bishops and relied solely on the advice of the cardinals to help him reach a decision. His successor, Innocent III (another canon lawyer) concurred but the idea did not catch on. It was not, says Kemp, because papal canonizations were not highly valued—they were; it was just that episcopal canonizations continued for most local saints.

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30 Kemp 62, 79, 106.
31 Kemp 99; Woodward 67.
32 Löw 575.
33 Kemp 97.
34 Kemp 71.
In 1234 Pope Gregory IX (1227-1241) once again asserted the absolute jurisdiction of the pope over all canonizations and legally established this decree.\textsuperscript{35} Yet another thirteenth century pope, Innocent IV, argued for Gregory's decree thus: because saints were objects of devotion for the whole Church, only the pope's universal jurisdiction possessed the appropriate authority for such weighty matters.\textsuperscript{36} By the thirteenth century the process of canonization had become more exacting: the local process had evolved into a formal tribunal with a papal delegate in attendance; testimony was requested from witnesses in support of miracles and virtues according to a standard interrogatory format.\textsuperscript{37} As early as 1200, Pope Innocent III, in his canonization of St. Cunegunde, declared that a saint must show proof of a good and pious life. Another thirteenth-century pope, Innocent IV (1243-1254), subsequently declared that the life of a saint should be one of "uninterrupted virtue."\textsuperscript{38} As a result, reformed sinners-turned-saints became less common and were replaced by candidates whose pious childhood or cloistered lifestyle confirmed their sanctity.\textsuperscript{39}

\textsuperscript{35}Molinari 56; Kemp 104.

\textsuperscript{36}Kemp 108.

\textsuperscript{37}Blaher 18.

\textsuperscript{38}Michael Goodich. *Vita Perfecta: The Ideal of Sainthood in the Thirteenth Century* (Stuttgart: Anton Hiersemann, 1982) 31ff; 207.

\textsuperscript{39}Goodich 82.
A significant change in canonization history came in the fourteenth century when the Avignon papacy adopted a judicial procedure modeled after a legal trial. Once this ecclesiastical trial became obligatory, only a well-organized group could promote a candidate because popular acclaim could not provide the written evidence the judicial procedure required. The process of canonization, now controlled by a literate minority, increasingly encouraged the promotion of candidates supported by clerics and educated aristocrats who tailored their candidates' images for the judges. The importance of petitions on behalf of the candidate from political and ecclesiastical leaders further suggests that mere popular reputation was already considered insufficient. In addition, someone now had to pay the lawyers to argue the cases which, even in the fourteenth century, took months to complete. It quickly becomes clear, however, that more specific rules did not mean a certainty of results. Some popes were more inclined to canonize saints than others; some local bishops were less inclined to sponsor a candidate than others. Political and economic calamities such as war, plagues, and floods delayed even well-supported causes. Most scholars of medieval sainthood should agree with Aviad Kleinberg who observes: "Saints were canonized at a particular moment in time because all the

40Woodward 68.

41Kemp 159. Kemp cites the fourteenth century case of St. Osmund as an example of the repeated setbacks and obstacles encountered by even the well-financed, popular and persistent petitions; see Kemp 138-140.
procedures had been exhausted, because the pope was sympathetic to the cause, because it was an opportune moment, and because nobody objected.\textsuperscript{42}

By the sixteenth century, criticism of the cult of saints and of relics in particular was widespread and articulate among humanists, Catholics and Protestants. In 1523 the canonization of St. Benno provoked a public mockery in Lutheran Saxony; the event was followed by a sixty-five year hiatus in canonizations.\textsuperscript{43} The subject of canonization was not directly addressed at the Council of Trent, but the twenty-fifth session in December of 1563 discussed the invocation, veneration, and relics of saints. The bishops were directed to supervise local cults and investigate reports of new miracles but they were not to "introduce anything new" without express approval of the pope. In actuality, papal control over the introduction of new cults was far from complete in the sixteenth century and the practices in many dioceses remained unacceptable to canonists and theologians.\textsuperscript{44}

\textsuperscript{42}Kleinberg 13.

\textsuperscript{43}Peter Burke has called this a "crisis of canonization" caused by a "failure of nerve" because the "very idea of a saint was under fire." See Peter Burke "How To Be A Counter-Reformation Saint" Religion and Society in Early Modern Europe 1500-1800 ed. Kaspar von Greyerz (London: George Allen & Unwin, 1984) 46. Antonino of Florence was canonized alongside St. Benno in 1523 and recent research by Polizzotto, discussed later in this paper, suggests that procedural difficulties associated with Antonino's case further contributed to the "crisis." See Lorenzo Polizzotto "The Making of a Renaissance Saint: the Canonization of St. Antonino, 1516-1523" Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies 22.3 (1992): 353-381.

\textsuperscript{44}Kemp 144.
EARLY MODERN CANONIZATION REFORMS

The next significant step toward canonization reform was taken in 1588 by Sixtus V (1585-1590) when he set forth new guidelines for the division of work of the Roman Curia in the constitution *Immensa aeterni Dei.* 45 This constitution founded the Congregation of Rites to supervise the tasks of improving the liturgy and preparing papal canonizations. 46 The new Congregation struggled for several decades to develop its own procedures, standardize its practices, and supervise tribunals far from Rome. 47 The 1622 canonization of five saints—Ignatius of Loyola, Francis Xavier, Teresa of Jesus (of Avila), Isidore the Farmer, and Philip Neri—marked the completion of the first causes to be promoted through the new Congregation of Rites. Accompanying the changes in official procedures were two significant new developments in the way that holiness was gauged. First, the new style of making saints was marked by increasing scrutiny of miracles in an effort to eliminate fraud, on the one hand, and human error on the other. 48 Second, the changes also reflected a new understanding of

45Molinari, "Canonization" 56.

46See note 7, page 4 above.

47Molinari 56.

48There has been no study of canonization which specifically ties these seventeenth century developments to the growing contemporary European interest in science, objective analysis, and verification. Delooz, discussed below, is one of the few scholars of canonization to even mention the broader intellectual trend.
saintly virtue. "Heroic virtue" was first introduced by the College of
Salamanca in a letter on behalf of Teresa of Jesus. The concept appealed to
the magistrates in Rome who, as early as 1614, began to use the idea in
their formulations for assessing candidates for sainthood. While evidence
of a virtuous life had been demanded by the tribunals since the Middle
Ages, there had been no attempt to measure supernatural virtue. In the
early seventeenth century the concept of "heroic virtue," taken from
Aristotle's ethics and applied to Christian virtues, made such a
measurement possible.

While the formal canonization of new saints was widely celebrated
with festivals and public holidays, "unofficial saints" persisted alongside
canonized ones in public devotions. Reports of unauthorized cults continued
to scandalize Rome well into the seventeenth century. Pope Clement VIII
(1592-1605) conferred with the College of Cardinals and heads of religious

49Löw, "Canonizzazione" 595. Interestingly enough, says Löw,
contemporary theological debates on the topic did not focus on its
implications for sainthood. He cites Brancati da Lauria's 1668 classic De
virtute heroica and a 1671 work by Lappi. It was the eighteenth-century
canonist Lambertini (later Pope Benedict XIV) who made "heroic virtue" an
official requirement of canonization. See p. 32 below.

50Christian virtues are said to be seven: Faith, Hope, and Charity (taken
from St. Paul) are the "supernatural" virtues which are possible to
humankind only through God's grace; Prudence, Justice, Fortitude, and
Temperance (taken from Aristotle) are the human "moral" virtues. Since all
Christians are expected to practice these virtues to the best of their
abilities, a saint must be characterized as one who practices them to an
extraordinary, exceptional, or "heroic" degree. See Woodward 223.
orders in December, 1602 and then again in 1603 specifically to address the problem.\textsuperscript{51} In 1610 Pope Paul V (1605-1621) reiterated that the papacy was the sole authority to canonize saints and on several occasions called for further regulation of local cults; he too met with little cooperation.\textsuperscript{52} Clearly, practical control of canonization and popular cults remained problematic for the Vatican well after the closing of Trent and up until the reforms of Urban VIII (1623-1644).

Urban issued important decrees in March and in October of 1625 which were republished and reconfirmed in July, 1634. Invoking the twelfth-century decrees of Alexander III as legitimation, Urban proclaimed that no form of public veneration could take place unless and until the candidate was formally beatified or canonized. Failure to observe this restriction, Urban added, would halt the candidate's process in Rome. Moreover, Urban decreed that no Vitae or collections of miracles could be published without examination and approval of the local ordinary and notification of the Holy See.\textsuperscript{53} Urban further refined the process of

\textsuperscript{51}Kemp 145.

\textsuperscript{52}Kemp 145.

\textsuperscript{53}Woodward 75. Lives of candidates for sainthood were published while their causes were under consideration. Blaheer seems to interpret this rule as intended to safeguard against publication of the acts of the local canonization process (collections of testimony given by witnesses) and to ensure that biographies of the saint-in-waiting clearly present the individual's sanctity as an opinion of the author and make no claim to official approval or status before canonization was complete (Blaheer 224).
canonization to include an exception to the above rules for saints whose
cults could be shown to have existed "from time immemorial" or which could
be justified in Scripture or in the writings of the Church fathers.\textsuperscript{54} Saints
whose cults were at least one hundred years old at the time of Urban's
decree (and for whom the process of a formal canonization might prove
impossible) could obtain an equivalent or "equipollent" canonization with all
due rights and privileges. In effect, canonization by Rome was now a
requirement--not a prestigious luxury--for \textit{every} local "saint." Canonization,
furthermore, was now possible only by one of two methods: by judicial
examination through the Congregation of Rites or through the special
process which recognized well-established cults. Failure to go through the
appropriate channels (i.e. establishing a public cult before approval was
received) would jeopardize future canonization of the candidate. In 1642,
Urban ordered the publication in one volume of all the decrees and
subsequent interpretations issued on the canonization of saints during his
pontificate.\textsuperscript{55} By mid-century, the new canonization practices were firmly in
place although refinements and modifications of the system continued under

\textsuperscript{54}This cushioned the impact of the new rules on most local saints whose
cults were well established. It also permitted new devotions to Mary, St.
Anne, and St. Joseph--all biblical figures--which were encouraged by the
Church.

\textsuperscript{55}\textit{Urbani VIII Pont.\textit{O.\textit{M.} Decreta servanda in canonizatione et
beatificatione sanctorum}...} See Löw 591-2. Löw also mentions that at about
the same time the Holy Office of the Inquisition published two decrees
about popular cults, but I have no other citations which mention these.
subsequent popes. The final formulation of the process of canonization came in the early eighteenth century under Prospero Lambertini who became Pope Benedict XIV (1740-1758). A canonist whose career was made as a member of the Congregation of Rites before becoming pope, Lambertini reviewed, clarified, and codified the procedures for beatification and canonization as they had developed in the seventeenth century under the reforms of Urban VIII and within the Congregation of Rites.\textsuperscript{56} It was Lambertini who was responsible for making "heroic virtue" the official and definitive measure of sanctity for canonization--Urban VIII had never used the term nor had his seventeenth-century successors.\textsuperscript{57} Lambertini's five-volume \textit{De Servorum Dei beatificatione et canonizatione}, published 1734-1738, remained the definitive authority on such matters until the twentieth century.

In review, then, the evolution of the canonization process toward greater centralization of authority and increased regulation of local cults began in the Middle Ages but culminated in the seventeenth century. Certainly the seventeenth-century church achieved an unprecedented level of ecclesiastical control over the making of saints, but it is misleading to

\textsuperscript{56}Molinari 56.

\textsuperscript{57}It is noteworthy that the Congregation of Rites had employed the concept of "heroic virtue" in evaluating candidates long before it was mandated for canonizations. This demonstrates the difficulties in tracing the specific influences of individual popes, or of individual legislation, on the process of canonization.
portray that control either as originating in the Catholic reform after Trent or as explicitly directed at changing the characteristics of the saints themselves. The predominant concerns which repeatedly emerge throughout this history are the augmentation of papal jurisdiction and prestige, the subordination of local bishops to the pope in Rome, and the regulation of public cults. This is clear from the very earliest scholarly treatises on canonization which date from the seventeenth century which discuss canonization as part of a wider debate on papal power and evolving canon law.  

**PAPAL HISTORY**

Papal control over the making of saints is assumed by many scholars to be part of a larger agenda to reform and control popular religious belief and practice. In light of this, it is particularly surprising that no study of canonization and beatification focuses on the individual popes. Furthermore, there is no definitive list of popes which tabulates all their activities concerning saints: the official processes and bulls, official approval

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59 André Vauchez, Kenneth Woodward, Donald Weinstein and Rudolph Bell, Sara Nalle and many other scholars of saints make this assumption. Historians of early modern Europe were among the first to do so: Delumeau, Muchembled, Peter Burke, Peter Hoffman, and others. These scholars are discussed and their works cited throughout this paper.
given to older cults, "upgrades" of saints to more prestigious observances, introductions of new causes, or refusals to canonize. Listings of canonizations and beatifications by popes, such as those provided by Löw and Delooz, include only those saints whose causes were prepared by the Congregation of Rites. They fail to mention those who were given "equivalent" canonizations on the basis of established cults or causes which were introduced or endorsed by a given pope but never concluded in formal recognition.\(^{60}\) It is, moreover, difficult to ascertain if the pope who promulgated a given bull of canonization is the same pope who presided over the final Congregation in which the candidate was approved. Because in most cases the canonization process took decades to complete, the pope who pronounced the canonization was rarely the same pope who gave the *signatura commisionis* formally introducing the cause; popes who introduced a cause rarely conducted the canonization.

Most conspicuously lacking in an analysis of papal policy towards saints and cults. While some studies research the political considerations behind specific canonizations, none really examines papal legislation on the saints as part of a papal program.\(^{61}\) This is remarkable considering the fact

\(^{60}\) The most complete list of canonized saints is that compiled by Pierre Delooz, *Sociologie et Canonizations* (Liège: Faculté de Droit, 1969).

\(^{61}\) The work of Vauchez and Goodich, which will be discussed later in this paper, approximate this kind of study for the thirteenth century although they still remain fundamentally sociological studies of saints, not popes. There is nothing that comes close to this type of study for the early modern
that scholarship on saints has been quick to assign papal motives to the selection of candidates for canonization. No research has been done on either the popes or on the members or policies of the Congregation of Rites to confirm or dispel the idea of a papal program concerning the types of saints or the depiction of saintly virtue. Literature on the popes of the early modern era is out-of-date; Ludwig von Pastor's forty-volume *History of the Popes* remains a standard reference.\(^{62}\) Pastor, in his thoroughness, does mention each pope's important pronouncements, bulls and legal documents and some of these pertain to canonization but Pastor does not devote much attention to individual canonizations or even to the reforms of Urban VIII. The period of which we are speaking--from roughly the middle of the sixteenth century to the end of the seventeenth century--saw the pontificates of seventeen popes from Pius IV (1559-1565), who convened the last session of the Council of Trent, to Innocent XII (1691-1700). Of the seventeen popes in this period, only nine canonized any saints: Sixtus V (1585-1590); Clement VIII (1592-1605); Paul V (1605-1621); Gregory XV (1621-1623); Urban VIII (1623-1644); Alexander VII (1655-1667); Clement IX (1667-1669); Clement X (1670-1676); and Alexander VIII (1689-1691).

Most of these popes also made at least minor changes in the procedures for canonization as well. No in-depth biographies have appeared recently for these popes who were central to the history of canonization. The one exception is a 1984 biography of Pope Innocent XI by Raymond Maras.\textsuperscript{64} Innocent, who was himself beatified in the twentieth century, beatified several saints but canonized none. Famous for his austere lifestyle and his strict control of papal accounts, Innocent is said to have objected to the exorbitant costs involved in preparing canonizations. Maras, however, provides us with little information or insight into Innocent's involvement in the causes of specific saints or on his opinions about the canonization procedure itself.

**CRITICISM OF THE PROCESS**

The history of canonization offers no evidence that the reforms of the seventeenth century were unusually concerned with altering patterns of popular devotions or with revising the types of saints to be canonized.\textsuperscript{64} The


\textsuperscript{64}This is the standard picture in the literature. This view is most often supported by research which tabulates the outcome of the process, i.e. the attributes of the canonized saints. Peter Burke, whose work is discussed later in this paper (see p. 45ff) is one notable example of a scholar who holds this view. Most of the scholars who conduct or rely upon what I have termed the "sociological approach" to canonization would agree (see below p. 73ff): Vauche, Goodich, Weinstein and Bell, among others. I do not find support for this view in any of the scholarship which examines the process of canonization or in any of the scholarship which focuses on the issues of authority and jurisdiction which were debated after Trent.
shift in control of the canonization process from local bishops to the Vatican
nevertheless affected the saints and their devotees in a number of
important ways. People could no longer publicly honor members of their
community who possessed the reputation of sanctity but lacked official
accreditation. Private prayers for intercession were allowable, but no
liturgies could be held nor could statues and paintings be placed in the
church. For such public honors, the local saint had to be promoted by a
community campaign for official evaluation to try to "win" recognition from
Rome. The candidate had to meet newly elaborated criteria for virtues and
miracles and the devotees had to provide written documentation to
substantiate their candidate's merits. Such campaigns were lengthy and
expensive; they were necessarily led by literate, affluent groups who were
sufficiently well-organized to sustain the effort over several decades.65 Some
locally revered candidates for sainthood inevitably lacked sufficient backing
for the long campaign in Rome or failed to pass the official "tests" for
virtues and miracles. Both of these changes—the restriction of cults to
"official" saints and the elaboration of requirements by which a saint could
become "official"—are read by many modern historians as a double-pronged
attack on "popular" religion.

65 Religious orders were almost the only groups able to meet all of these
requirements. It is not surprising, therefore, that every canonization of the
early modern period had the support of a religious order but it is misleading
to present that fact as certain proof of the Congregation's selective
preference for canonizing members of religious orders.
The most recent English language work on canonization, *Making Saints* by Kenneth Woodward, focuses on the process of canonization as conducted in modern times. Woodward places the modern process at the end of a long historical trajectory of increasing centralization and increasing institutionalization of the power to define sanctity. The process, as Woodward portrays it, inevitably results in distorted and disappointing saints. Woodward takes most of his history from Kemp but his reading of *Canonization and Authority* reflects the contemporary bias against institutions in general. Despite his sometimes polemical tone, Woodward provides valuable insight into the effects of the canonization process itself on the construction of a candidate's official image. Of particular interest to my project is Woodward's implication that the Congregation's requirements for standardized information, verification and documentation (aspects of the process which become dominant in the seventeenth century) deform the testimony of witnesses and prejudice the collection of biographical materials so as to diminish both the personalities of the saints and the narrative power of their stories.

Woodward has studied several modern processes in detail and for these cases his observations are insightful. In comparing the modern processes to those of preceding centuries, Woodward sees the recent adoption of an historical perspective as an improvement over the traditional approach to saints: candidates for canonization are increasingly regarded as
individuals conditioned by their historical time and place. Woodward claims that causes for canonization formulated according to norms established in the seventeenth century "tended to seek similarities among the saints, to work off expected patterns of behavior, to fit fresh candidates for sainthood into the mold of precedent." Woodward insists that insofar as the modern bureaucratic process continues to utilize forms and formulations unchanged since the seventeenth century--especially the requirement to establish "heroic virtue"--the preparation of causes continues to miss "what was original and different" about the lives of individual saints. While his critique of "heroic virtue" is enlightening, Woodward's general understanding of the seventeenth century process is based on Woodward's acceptance of traditional scholarship about canonization and not on the same insightful analysis which he has given his twentieth-century material.

Woodward's study highlights at least two crucial aspects of canonization which are overlooked by most other scholars and suggests areas where further research is needed: (1) the effects of the Congregation's procedures and methods upon the identities of saints and (2) the roles of the local sponsors and the roles of the Congregation's appointed promoters of the cause in shaping the identity of the saint. His findings suggest that the lengthy analyses and narrow categories of sanctity themselves transform the images of the saints as much as deliberate revisions do. Of particular

Woodward 95.
concern to Woodward is the Vatican's continued insistence on perfection and "heroic virtue." In analyzing the documents available for several modern causes, he considers the effects of strict guidelines for sanctity upon the writing of meaningful (or accurate) biographies of the saints. The insistence on a life of perfection, says Woodward, requires the exclusion of evidence of human failure at the trial or in the documents and thereby eliminates what is truly exemplary in the life of any saint: the struggle involved in being a Servant of God. Likewise, the Vatican's insistence on conformity to rigidly defined ideals flattens the personality of each candidate until nothing remains to reveal either development of individual character or spiritual growth. Woodward's discussion is enriched by frequent comparisons between candidates, some of whose causes have met with indefinite postponements or opposition. From these comparisons between candidates who "make it" and those who do not, Woodward concludes that the process by which the Church selects her saints effectively screens out the intellectual, ambiguous, and interesting characters while admitting only those candidates for sainthood whose biographies are bland enough (or distorted enough) to be non-controversial and rigidly orthodox. Recent reforms in the process, he suggests, have not corrected enough of this

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67 Woodward 391.
68 Woodward 393.
69 Woodward 393.
tendency. Just as the early modern Church supposedly insisted on "virtuous" saints instead of the "miraculous" saints preferred by ordinary Christians, so too, Woodward claims, the modern requirements for virtues create one-dimensional saints instead of the complex and challenging individuals who could hold the interest of ordinary people in the twentieth century.

Woodward studies modern day causes and he interviews supporters of causes and Vatican officials to understand what each contributes to the making of the saints. This is not possible for causes which took place over three hundred years ago. Nevertheless, Woodward's demonstration of how the interactive process works can be beneficially applied to historical causes. Woodward gives special attention to the "off stage" aspects of the official canonization process which usually remain invisible to the public: the parties who support the candidate for sainthood, the financial investment, the public relations campaigns. Furthermore, says Woodward, people "outside the system" attribute far too much influence to the pope's role and not enough to the local bishops. Woodward demonstrates the necessity of examining the discourse between local promoters of the cause and the Vatican tribunal in order to understand the image of the saint presented, or promoted, to the public. In doing this he identifies an important depth and complexity to the canonization process which its portrayal as a purely

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Woodward 381.
ecclesiastical process lacks. Woodward describes the saint as "the product of a system" (a system essentially formulated in the seventeenth century) which favors candidates who exemplify traditional virtues and who are promoted by groups with considerable influence, money, and longevity.71

Woodward's interest in the groups for whom a candidate is deemed worthy of canonization places him squarely in the tradition of those scholars who approach sainthood as an indicator of social and cultural ideals. He is strongly influenced by the sociological approach to sainthood popular in the 1970s. The sociologists tried to construct models of sanctity for different historical periods in order to assess changing concepts of Christian virtue. They were concerned, in most cases, not with the effects of the canonization process but with the attributes of the saints themselves as they reflected the religious concerns of the faithful or of the ecclesiastical hierarchy. Woodward draws his underlying assumptions about the historical divergence between "popular" and "official" saints from this literature.

It is in relationship to larger issues of cultural control that this examination of "official" versus "popular" sainthood gains its importance. That is to say examination of saints is part of a scholarly concern about how the interests and needs of the laity are addressed, manipulated, or suppressed by those in power in the Church. This concern brings us to the next section of this paper which will examine how the scholarship on saints

71 Woodward 77.
participates in the larger discussion of control and institutional hegemony. I will begin with an influential article which articulates what might be called the prevailing opinion about seventeenth-century saints and from there move to the scholarship on "popular" religion which frames it.
SECTION II: SAINTS AS CULTURAL INDICATORS

"HOW TO BE A COUNTER-REFORMATION SAINT"

Ten years ago Peter Burke wrote an article with the catchy title "How to be a Counter-Reformation Saint," which has been widely cited by social historians. Because of its influence and because it summarizes much of the scholarship up to that point, Burke's article makes a good introduction to the literature on saints. Furthermore, this article reflects all three of the major characteristics I previously identified as basic to the standard picture: a view of canonization as a selection process, a strong polarization of saints into popular and elite categories, and the depiction of seventeenth-century reforms as effectively eliminating popular participation in the selection process. Burke says that the making of saints is "the outcome of some sort of interaction between clergy and laity, centre and periphery, learned culture and popular culture, but at varying times [in history] the balance of forces has shifted towards the centre." The chief example of such a shift,


73Burke,"How..." 45.
according to Burke, takes place in the Counter-Reformation. In the article it becomes clear that Burke, in fact, concedes to the seventeenth-century papal curia (the hierarchy at the "centre") essentially **all** of the power in this "interaction." As a result, the saints of the times inevitably reflect only the values of the clergy in Rome (the "centre"), not those of the local lay communities ("the periphery").

Despite his assertion that saint-making is an "interaction" or "negotiation," Burke does not, in fact, describe any interaction at all; instead he proposes a set of criteria by which saints were **selected**.\(^{74}\) The saints of the Counter-Reformation, says Burke, exhibit characteristics which indicate cultural expectations of sanctity: the saints were, generally speaking, male not female, clerical rather than lay, and more often members of a religious order than members of the regular clergy. People in Italy and Spain were the most likely to recognize saints in their midst—or at least to sponsor candidates for canonization.\(^{75}\) Saints were, furthermore, perceived in stereotyped ways, according to Burke.\(^{76}\) He identifies five main roles into which saints of the times were expected to fit: founder of a religious order, missionary, charitable worker among the poor or sick, pastor (with a rank of bishop or better), and mystic. These five roles did not, admits Burke, fit

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\(^{74}\) His criteria for sanctity are derived from a tabulation of the attributes of canonized saints—a circular process.

\(^{75}\) Burke, "How..." 49.

\(^{76}\) Burke, "How..." 50.
every saint canonized in this period. However, the fact that most do fit into one of these roles is evidence for Burke "that a key factor in the imputation of sanctity to an individual is the 'fit' between his or her career and the best-known stereotypes of sanctity."\textsuperscript{77} Burke concludes by observing that two other factors positively influenced an individual's chances for canonization: association with other saints, and friends with influence in Rome.\textsuperscript{78} While Burke insists that saint-making is a process of cultural negotiation between parties, what he calls "negotiation" here seems to be not even conversation but, at best, selection based on what each side thinks the other one will accept. The attributes of saints listed by Burke testify, in his view, to Rome's failure to select saints who reflected the values of a majority of lay Christians.

Burke's interpretation of seventeenth-century canonizations and his characterization of saints in that period is strongly tied to his view of the history of canonization which he himself presents as background. At the start of his essay, Burke outlines that history and presents the reforms of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as a crowning strategy of repression. While he points out that many of the legal requirements for proving sanctity date back to the twelfth and thirteenth century, he does not emphasize that papal authority over canonization developed gradually.

\textsuperscript{77}Burke, "How..." 51-52.

\textsuperscript{78}Burke "How..." 52-53.
throughout the Middle Ages. Instead, he singles out Gregory IX (1227-1241) as the pope who "formalized the rules of canonization" and reminds us that this was the same pope who set up the tribunal of the Inquisition."\[70] Most other historians have started the history of papal control at the end of the twelfth century and do not give such prominence to Gregory IX.\[80] Even Urban VIII invoked the decrees of Alexander III as his precedent. Burke deliberately connects the increase in rules with repression. The sixteenth century, according to Burke, brought an intensified desire to control and define the sacred; both saints and heretics--two ends of the Christian scale--came under renewed scrutiny.\[81] Burke's view of the seventeenth century as a time when the ecclesiastical hierarchy imposed their ideas and symbols on lay or popular religious practice reflects the long-standing assumption that religious culture is divided into two categories: the "popular" religion of local communities (Burke's "periphery") and the "elite" religion of the institutional Church and its hierarchy (Burke's "centre"). A further assumption, that saints rightfully belong to the former category--and are therefore misused or appropriated by the latter--also has a long history in the scholarship.

\[70] Burke "How..." 45.

\[80] Kemp, Kuttner, Löw, and Molinari all cite the twelfth century popes as the originators of papal canonization. See note 19, p.21 above as well as text on p. 23-24.

\[81] Burke "How..." 46.
SAINTS IN "POPULAR" RELIGION

Among scholars there is a well-established tradition of identifying the
cult of the saints as an essential dimension of "popular religion" that is, the
beliefs and practices of most lay Christians. Peter Brown observes that
historians have long interpreted the rise of the cult of the saints as a
capitulation on the part of the Church Fathers to practices and mentalities
deeply ingrained in citizens of the late Roman Empire. Furthermore, says
Brown, the idea of a "two-tiered" structure in religion--an "elite" theology or
rational religion and a "popular" superstition or magical (irrational)
religion--dates back to the eighteenth century. Hume, in his famous essay
"The Natural History of Religion," contrasted the monotheism of the
cultured elite with a "natural" polytheism of "the vulgar." Hume made this
polytheistic and idolatrous mentality of "the masses" appear universal,
unchanging, and ineradicable. Hume further suggested, Brown reminds us,
that certain ages in history were more "enlightened" than others and that
the degree of rationality could be attributed to "the relative pressure which
the views of one side could exert upon those of the other." This "two-tiered"
model became an established part of the historiography of European
Christianity, and was frequently invoked to explain major changes in

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\(^8\) Brown 14.

\(^9\) Brown 15.

\(^10\) Brown 15.
religious paradigms. "Popular" religion in this scheme largely represented a diminution, misconception or pagan perversion of "real" Christianity. It was understood, explains Brown, that any failure on the part of "the masses" to accept fully the religion of their more rational and educated "betters" in no way implied a failure on the part of the elite but was always ascribed to the abiding limitations of "the vulgar." \(^{85}\)

Modern scholars of canonization, who have inherited this tradition of popular/elite distinction, generally assume that the laity acclaims and promotes saints, the Church scrutinizes and revises them. This polarity between the Church, vaguely defined higher clergy and administrative officials in the Vatican, and the people, vaguely defined as the peasants and poorer townspeople, is pervasive throughout the literature on saints. Hume's definition of "vulgar" religion remained especially vivid for scholars of sainthood. Perhaps the most famous scholar of saints is the Bollandist Hippolyte Delehaye.\(^{96}\) In his classic work *The Legends of the Saints*, Delehaye seeks to uncover the historical "kernel" buried within popular legends of the saints--a project which presumes an inevitable obliteration of "elite" ideas and events by a "childlike" mentality of "people at large."\(^{97}\)

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\(^{85}\) Brown 19.

\(^{96}\) The Bollandists are a group of Jesuit scholars, founded in the seventeenth century, whose ongoing project is the compilation of authentic and scholarly materials about the saints. See p. 96ff below.

Delehaye clearly assigns historians to the class of the "elites" and cautions that scholars of sainthood must not "scandalize" the faithful with their findings. 88

Many historians of early modern Europe have relied upon the same dichotomy. Until quite recently, most histories of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries regarded the change in "popular" practice effected by Catholic reforms as a good thing. Instruction in the catechism, insistence on the regular reception of the sacraments, regulation of moral and social behavior, and guidance in the selection of saints were generally regarded as good and necessary correctives for an unreflective laity and a recalcitrant parish clergy. As recently as the 1960s this was the view expressed in most standard histories. The move from a world of magic and superstition to a world of rationality--and historians--could only be for the better. While few contemporary historians adhere to the old view, the new vogue among historians simply reverses the "two tiers." Historiography since the late 1970s has radically revised the assessment of popular religion. The change, says John Bossy, came about as the result of two influences emerging in French scholarship: the idea of a quantitative sociology of religion as the foundation for religious history and the redefinition of history as a discipline.

concerned with human society in all its dimensions.\textsuperscript{99} This later idea was championed in the journal \textit{Annales}.\textsuperscript{90} Popular religion, so it now seems according to the \textit{Annales} school, had been misunderstood from the perspective of elite religion; it was henceforth considered better and more "natural" than institutionalized religion whose hyper-rational form, it turns out, is to blame for a perverted and diminished Christianity.

**POPULAR RELIGION IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE**

In 1971 a French scholar in the \textit{Annales} tradition reconsidered the religious changes of sixteenth seventeenth century Europe. Jean Delumeau, in \textit{Le Catholicisme entre Luther et Voltaire} developed the thesis that the two "Reformations" (Catholic and Protestant) constituted complementary aspects of a massive effort of "christianization" aimed at reforming a pre-Christian, essentially pagan population.\textsuperscript{91} Delumeau also demonstrated the necessity of a long-term analysis of the process in order to trace the effects of this imposition of doctrine by ecclesiastical elites on the uneducated lay "masses" of Europe.\textsuperscript{92} This work was widely read and debated. The discussion of


\textsuperscript{90}Also cited as \textit{Annales: Economies, Societes, Civilisations}.


\textsuperscript{92}Delumeau 203ff.
religious reform in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries became more pointed with the 1978 publication of Culture populaire et culture de élites dans la France moderne by Robert Muchembled. This work drew a sharper distinction between learned and literate culture in opposition to popular and oral culture. The forced imposition of elite norms on popular religion in order to achieve conformity with elite culture was termed "acculturation" by Muchembled. Drawing on the early work of Foucault, Muchembled opines that while the medieval world had allowed people relative freedom and imposed little direct supervision, the seventeenth century brought the "constraint of bodies and submission of souls." The reforms of the Catholic church in the mid-sixteenth and seventeenth centuries are described by Muchembled as systematically dismantling a dynamic popular religious tradition. While Delumeau apparently considered "popular" religion somewhat "primitive," Muchembled clearly values popular religion over repressive institutional forms. A 1992 article by Jean-Pierre Dedieu on the success of Catholic reforms in New Castile reveals that the theories of Delumeau and Muchembled remain influential but now carry an

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94 Muchembled 187.

95 Muchembled 4-5.
increasingly positive evaluation of popular religion. The project of "christianization" is described by Dedieu as the imposition of an intellectual conception of Christianity imposed over another one which was "no less Christian." Acculturation, the imposition of elite culture on the rest of society, is seen to take place always at the expense of (and progressive extinction of) popular religion.

Many historians in the United States, including some who avoided the term "acculturation," accepted the opposition of "popular" and "elite" religion. Philip Hoffman, Peter Burke and John Bossy are some of the best-known scholars who wrote histories which reflect this premise. Peter Burke in his 1978 book on popular culture asserted that both Protestant and Catholic reformers disliked popular customs because they considered them pagan survivals again in a 1984 article Burke argued that the Counter Reformation was a period in which the "reform of popular culture" consisted

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57Dedieu 21. Even though Dedieu deplores the imposition of cultural values, on the one hand, he sees "christianization" as accomplishing its objective of increasing Christian practices.


in "the systematic attempt by some of the educated...to change the attitudes and values of the rest of the population." Philip Hoffman puts things more strongly still. The Counter-Reformation, he says, mounted "a ferocious attack" against popular religion in which "parish priests served as agents of urban elites who sought to bring the countryside under control." A 1979 collection of essays edited by James Obelkevich revealed a relatively wide variety of relationships between "the people" and the clergy which ranged "from near identity to outright conflict" and included influences in both directions, "downward" and "upward." Still, says Obelkevich, the prevailing opinion among scholars remained that the end of the sixteenth century, "as the Reformation and Counter-Reformation gathered force," inaugurated an era of "one-way" religious pressure which did not permit the "mutual influence" of earlier times. As Michael Mullett has so succinctly observed: "from the perspective of the acculturation theory, the Catholic Reformation represents an internal cultural imperialism which resulted in a class victory."

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100 Burke, Popular Culture 207.


103 Obelkevich 5.

The popular/elite dichotomy has contributed to yet another problematic understanding of saints by making saints and heretics two ends of a single spectrum. In Burke's article on Counter-Reformation saints, we have already encountered the idea that saints and heretics are part of a single category. A recent book on religion in early modern Europe expands on this same idea. David Gentilcore describes the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as characterized by a struggle between local communities and the church to control and define the sacred in all of its manifestations. While the Church endeavored to bring about conformity to an ecclesiastically mediated religion, local communities searched for local sources of sacred power: relics, holy places, and especially healers, prophets, and wonder-workers from among their own people. Gentilcore is correct in noting that "[s]anctity was defined by two Church tribunals, the Congregation of Rites and the Holy Office. The former was concerned with deceased servants of God, the latter examined people suspected of 'simulated' or questionable sanctity while they were still alive." Unfortunately, Gentilcore uncritically accepts all of the figures popularly

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105 Refer to page 49 above.


107 Gentilcore 163.

108 Gentilcore 177.
claimed as local representatives of divine power as potential candidates for sainthood. The failure of most of these popular figures to be recognized by the church as official "saints" stands, in Gentilcore's eyes, as an indictment of ecclesiastical repression. Perhaps he misreads some of these popular figures, like Judith Brown's nun Benedetta,\textsuperscript{109} by assuming that all of them should have been saints.

Jean-Michel Sallman has noted that many women later declared to be saints were first examined by the Inquisition as heretics or frauds.\textsuperscript{110} Acclaim as a saint—or condemnation as a witch—required three elements, says Sallman: an agreement (or complicity) between the witch/saint claiming supernatural power and an immediate circle of followers; a group of informers/sponsors who agreed and amplified the "rumor"; and the church authorities of the Inquisition/Congregation of Rites who would certify their status.\textsuperscript{111} Of the three sixteenth-century women whose cases he presents, all were accused of being "false" saints. Their chief faults, says Sallmann, were two: being too poor and/or too radical.\textsuperscript{112} Women who were too socially or financially impoverished to enter a convent lived alone or in

\textsuperscript{109}Judith C. Brown, \textit{Immodest Acts: the life of a lesbian nun in Renaissance Italy}, (New York: Oxford UP, 1986). Brown does not suggest that Benedetta was a saint who should have been canonized.


\textsuperscript{111}Sallman 683.

\textsuperscript{112}Sallman 698.
small groups as "tertiaries." In an era when nuns were being forced into stricter enclosure, tertiaries were vulnerable because they were perceived as outside of male/institutional controls.\textsuperscript{113} According to Sallmann, the fault of radicalism for which women's sainthood also suffered, was the threat they presented to male gender roles by calling for reform of the Church. Women of the sixteenth century were not allowed to adopt public roles; to refuse their place either in the home or in the convent was considered in itself subversive.\textsuperscript{114} In the case of Orsola Benincasa, a 16th Century Italian nun, the negative verdict was overturned, but she was forced to live the rest of her life cloistered. When she was at last beatified in the eighteenth century, no mention whatsoever was made of her trial and the report of the Roman Inquisition is unavailable. The event is recorded only in her vita which was written fifty years after her death and was placed on the Index of forbidden books.\textsuperscript{115}

The embrace of this popular/elite distinction has crippled research on the saints in two very significant ways. First of all it has often failed to distinguish between two different aspects of the reform: institutional control of local cults and the changes in juridical procedure and standards of sanctity. Because these two things are treated together as part of a broader

\textsuperscript{113}Sallmann 702.

\textsuperscript{114}Sallman 701.

\textsuperscript{115}Sallman 690.
attack on "popular religion" their separate effects on the selection of saints have not been evaluated. Secondly, the assumption that "official" saints and "popular" saints symbolize radically different interests of opposing groups has prevented scholars from seeing saints as points of intersection for various community interests. Likewise, the assumption that the recognition and canonization of saints consist primarily of a selection process has prevented scholars from understanding saints as social creations whose identities are woven from multiple strands of discourse. The important issue--how different cultural groups collaborate to construct a saint's identity--is largely overlooked.

"Official" Religion

Craig Harline has written a recent assessment of the state of scholarship on "popular" religion and concludes that while this new style of history has added valuable detail and perspective to our understanding of the "popular," it has failed to understand the variety and complexity of "official" religion.116 This fundamental shortcoming, says Harline, is at least part of the reason why the relationship between popular and official religion remains vague. "Just as religious historians once glossed over the laity in order to concentrate on the hierarchy, now the situation is largely

reversed." Harline astutely points out that the older studies, both Protestant and Catholic, of church officials and institutions do not suffice as their methods and assumptions are no longer adequate by modern historical standards. Richard Trexler, years ago, commented on the lack of books on "elite" or "clerical" religion. "Indeed," observed Trexler "elite religion is more likely to be called something else, like 'spirituality'."

Harline's contention that the most serious problem facing scholars of religion is a lack of modern studies on "elite" religion is confirmed by the scarcity of literature available for the seventeenth-century church. While contemporary scholarship on the saints and "popular" religion is flourishing, no comparable renewal of interest exists for popes and cardinals. If the approach of most historians of "popular" religion has implied a coherence and unity in the doctrinal positions of Catholic leaders, neither unity nor uniformity among Church officials has been detected by those few scholars who have studied them. Several recent books have begun to uncover the complexity within the Church hierarchy and to profile the members of Church leadership. One of the few church leaders who has attracted the

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117 Harline 240.
118 Ttrexler 245.
119 Harline 239.
attention of scholars is Carlo Borromeo. John Headley and John Tomaro have published a collection of scholarly papers on Borromeo which reflect the scope and depth of recent work. The story of Borromeo's canonization reveals the bitter factions within the ecclesiastical hierarchy and dispels the notion that "elite" saints have a single "elite" identity.

Giuseppe Alberigo, a recognized authority on Borromeo, has taken special interest in Borromeo's struggle to redefine the model of bishop—not only in the eyes of the church but in keeping with his private ideals of the Good Shepherd. The way in which Borromeo's identity was preserved after his death, says Alberigo, obscures the complexity of the man himself. Bishop Borromeo was acclaimed in Milan both for his integrity and for his generous and charitable work among his flock. At the time of his death, the people of Milan proclaimed him a saint.

Alberigo points out that Borromeo stood, in the eyes of manychurchmen, as a bishop pledged to the implementation of the reforms mandated at the Council of Trent. His reforming zeal had provoked at

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120 Carlo Borromeo (1528-1584) Bishop of Milan and later a cardinal, was one of the most influential participants at the Council of Trent. He was canonized in 1610.


least two attempts on his life. The identification of Borromeo with the Council of Trent and his reputation as a reformer made many cardinals in Rome uneasy.\textsuperscript{123} Championed by bishops and those in Rome who favored his reforms, his canonization was nevertheless initially blocked by Cardinal Bellarmine and other opponents of his reform. The publication of the biography of Borromeo written by his faithful secretary Carlo Bascapè was "doggedly obstructed" says Alberigo.\textsuperscript{124} Meanwhile Cardinal Bellarmine outlined an acceptable image of Borromeo, maintaining that his sanctity consisted only in private virtues and conspicuously avoided all references to Borromeo's pastoral concerns and reforming activities.\textsuperscript{125} When at last the cause was approved, Borromeo was made a saint--but with the proviso that his formal iconography would depict him always as a cardinal and never as the Bishop of Milan.\textsuperscript{126} The "real" Borromeo, says Alberigo, was deliberately revised by a faction of cardinals in Rome who did not wish to hold up as a model to other bishops a man who had fought to strengthen episcopal power and initiate reforms at a diocesan level without Rome's approval. While Borromeo's personal asceticism was directly linked to his dedication to his ministry, this link was deliberately severed by the faction led by Bellarmine.

\textsuperscript{123} Alberigo, "The Council" 250.

\textsuperscript{124} Alberigo, "The Council" 220-221.

\textsuperscript{125} Alberigo, "The Council" 221.

\textsuperscript{126} Alberigo, "The Council" 221.
who influenced his final, canonized image. Clearly, simple "popular" and "elite" categories fail to adequately apply to either Borromeo's identity or to his supporters.

CRITICISM OF POPULAR/ELITE CATEGORIES

A great many scholars in the social sciences have abandoned the concepts of "popular" vs. "elite" religion and the acculturation model. Scholars of sainthood, unfortunately, remain mired in these outdated categories. Other field of research like Sociology and Anthropology may continue to utilize the division of "popular" versus "elite" (now sometimes called "official" or "institutional") in research on religion and culture but most scholars in these fields now recognize that the dichotomy must not be too strongly drawn. For that reason, I will review briefly some of the scholarly critiques of this position and present a few examples of scholarship which illustrate the complexity of religious culture.

As a term, "popular religion" is problematic. Stephen Wilson has observed that "popular" means both "of the people" and "widely liked."

These two meanings are usually conflated and set in opposition to the other term, "elite," by which is understood both "of the clergy or intelligentsia"

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and "not widely liked." The remedy Wilson suggests is that all social groups be examined without giving any the privileged position or the label "popular." As a category, "popular religion" is also unsatisfactory. The masses are assumed to be mostly rural peasants and some townspeople. The elites are understood to be the literate intellectuals and upper classes. In reality, the two categories are not easily separated and, in fact, correspond to no actual population groups. Parish clergy, most notably, fall into both categories—or neither one; they must be differentiated by social and educational status. The differences within groups—now demonstrated by research to be considerable—are often ignored. Richard Trexler, finally, complains that the struggle to define the first half of the term ("popular") has by now obscured the meaning of "religion."

Jean Wirth, a vocal critic of these cultural categories, points out that these theoretically opposite groups, in fact, had much in common. Patrick Geary warns that the practice of devotion to the saints and their relics was much the same for rich, poor, kings, clergy, and laity despite differing

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129 Wilson 518.


\end{footnotes}
interests and adaptations among these groups.\textsuperscript{132} Natalie Davis, who has been particularly influential in bringing popular religion to the attention of American scholarship, has emphasized the shared suppositions among all sorts of Christians and the difficulty of ascribing the impetus for change to only one class or group.\textsuperscript{133} Much seems to depend on the bias of the historian. While Hoffman has argued that the elaboration of Eucharistic devotion was an imposition of the new Catholic reform piety,\textsuperscript{134} Mullett has countered that this change might be plausibly argued as a response to perceived and long-standing popular devotional demands.\textsuperscript{135}

A number of studies have revealed that reforms (sometimes instigated by the laity and not by the clergy) achieved only mixed results. Natalie Davis's study of late seventeenth France suggests that the Catholic Reformation's effect on lay culture was largely one of appearances.\textsuperscript{136} In other places, apparently, things may have been different. In Spain, William


\textsuperscript{135}Mullett 497.

Christian argues, Catholic reforms and local customs did not generally conflict. Moreover, says Christian, by improving the credibility of the local religious system (reforming the clergy, verifying local relics, accrediting the saints) popular religion as local religious practice was strengthened. Lay reaction to reform, as it turns out, is rarely an overt rejection but rather an appropriation and revision of the official program. For many scholars, the interaction between different cultural groups is best described in terms of mutual misunderstanding and adaptation rather than in terms of imposition and resistance. Two examples of this recent and more moderate style are Marc Forster's 1992 book on Catholic reform in Speyer which takes as its major theme the dynamic relationship between Catholic Reform and popular reaction and Ellen Badone's 1990 collection of articles on Modern European culture written by anthropologists of religion.

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One of the first studies to identify the misunderstandings and adaptations which take place within cultural interactions was the 1984 study of Catholic reform in Germany by David Sabeaⁿ.¹⁴¹ Sabean, describing the differing interpretations of church regulations and sacraments by clergy and laity, suggests that religious culture consists less in shared values and beliefs than in shared relationships and discourse.¹⁴² Each social group within a community, says Sabean, contributes its own misunderstandings of the others and employs different strategies of argumentation in social negotiations. The result is a collaborative construction not of shared ideas but of a shared discourse in which to debate. It is through this ongoing interaction, says Sabean, that different cultural groups negotiate (formally or informally) for control over religious symbols and rituals. Sabean concludes that even when authorities seem to control the discourse, other groups still affect the outcome of the "conversation." In most cases, he finds, this takes the form of outward acceptance of church practices with subsequent reinterpretation of their meanings to meet specific community needs.¹⁴³ While Sabean does not discuss saints specifically, I think Sabean's


¹⁴²Sabean 94.

¹⁴³Sabean 59.
model is an especially helpful and appropriate one for scholars of canonization.

Typically, studies of canonization of saints have lacked explanations of how the discourse of different social groups contributes to the identity of a saint but this cultural interaction is precisely the focus of Sara Nalle's 1990 article on San Julián. Nalle unravels the history of the revival of this Spanish saint in order to discover by whom and for what reasons he was valued as a saint.

**NALLE'S STORY OF SAN JULIÁN**

In 1518 the body of the twelfth-century bishop San Julián was moved to a new resting place within the cathedral of Cuenca. When the coffin was opened, it reportedly revealed a sweet fragrance and the incorrupt body of the all-but-forgotten saint. News of the miracle spread and people thronged to the cathedral; in the presence of San Julián's relics many miraculous cures were reported and carefully recorded by the canons of the cathedral chapter. Members of the city council wrote letters to Rome on behalf of Julián's cause hoping that the canonization of the saint would be

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145 Nalle 28.

146 Nalle 29.
good publicity for the city and attract pilgrims.\textsuperscript{147} Throughout the sixteenth century, local clergy and bishops of Cuenca tried to win papal recognition and local acclaim for their saint but with no success. There were two problems, says Nalle, with Julián's cause.

The first problem was the sponsors' presentation of Julián to the Roman tribunal.\textsuperscript{148} Julián's cause was initially promoted not on the basis of his life but on the basis of the miracles associated with his new-found relics. "This tactic was ill-chosen," says Nalle, because by this time many officials in Rome and many Catholics throughout Europe had come to see relic worship as an embarrassing superstition.\textsuperscript{149} Rome refused to grant Julián formal recognition and many locals remained aloof from the new cult.\textsuperscript{150} In the 1580s, however, Julián's cause was revived by the canons and city fathers of Cuenca and this time he was promoted, not on the basis of his miraculous relics, but on the basis of his virtuous life as an exemplary bishop.\textsuperscript{151} In addition, Nalle points out, "ambitious authors" had gone to

\textsuperscript{147}Nalle 31.

\textsuperscript{148}Nalle 30. Nalle observes that the cathedral canons seemed unaware of the moratorium on canonizations which existed from after the closing of Trent until the establishment of the Congregation of Rites in 1588.

\textsuperscript{149}Nalle 32.

\textsuperscript{150}Nalle 32.

\textsuperscript{151}The Council of Trent had indeed placed great emphasis on the role of bishops and the proper supervision and direction of his flock. Nevertheless, Nalle's evidence suggests that, knowing Rome's interest in model bishops, the local canons and bishop in Cuenca revised Julián's identity--not the
work to "refashion and popularize the saint's public image." In 1594 the Congregation of Rites granted Julián formal recognition as a saint and granted his cult its own service with lessons taken from the saint's life. This was in effect an "equivalent" canonization for an established cult. The cathedral canons were still not satisfied; in 1613 they won further prestige for Julián when Rome granted the saint his own service with octave and a special mass.

The second obstacle to making Julián a saint, says Nalle, was his initial lack of public support. Julián had presumably been canonized centuries before--his feast was on the local calendar--but there was no evidence of any history of a cult surrounding his relics before their fortuitous rediscovery in 1518. In an effort to promote public interest, local authorities tried moving the saint's feast day from January to September when the town fair and warmer weather would improve attendance at the celebrations. Despite such tactics, and despite the saint's formal recognitions in 1594 and 1613, the popularity problem was only solved in

Congregation in Rome.

Nalle 33-34. Local clergymen wrote nine biographies of San Julián between 1520 and 1700.

Nalle 38-39.

Nalle 34.

Nalle 31.
1637 when plague struck Cuenca.\textsuperscript{156} In the face of such dire affliction, all possible remedies were sought and Julián had the chance to impress the local citizens. A finger bone of San Julián was sent by the cathedral to a nearby convent and reportedly effected several cures; a miraculous painting of the saint was said to have protective powers. Word spread and soon more miraculous cures and protections were attributed to Julián's relics and icons which were now widely circulated in the area around Cuenca.\textsuperscript{157} A popular cult soon sprang up around San Julián. The cathedral canon's, encouraged by this response, applied to Rome in 1642 to have Julián's service extended throughout Spain; this last request was finally granted in 1672.\textsuperscript{158} By the close of the seventeenth century, Cuenca had taken its saint from obscurity to national prominence.

Nalle's close examination of one saint's public history provides a clear demonstration of the constructed character of a saint's identity. First recognized as a potential source of prestige for their cathedral town by the canons and city fathers, Julián's initial emergence from obscurity was as a miraculously incorrupt relic. The enthusiasm of local church and civic leaders was not sufficient, however to effect either a lasting public cult or

\textsuperscript{156}Nalle 43.

\textsuperscript{157}Nalle 43.

\textsuperscript{158}Nalle 34.
approval from Rome.¹⁵⁸ Nalle identifies Rome's concern to maintain credibility: relics had too often proved fraudulent. Barbed criticism from humanists and Protestant reformers had drawn public attention to abuses and hoaxes and even officials in Rome were skeptical.¹⁶⁰ Exemplary bishops, on the other hand, Nalle observes, were exactly what the post-Tridentine Church was seeking. When Julián was presented to Rome with a new identity as a bishop, he received formal recognition. Finally, however, it was the healing and protection miracles in time of plague that won Julián his popular image as patron of Cuenca. This identity was not foisted upon him by the canons nor was it an identity which Rome held up for veneration. It was an identity constructed by the people of Cuenca—and in their own good time. Multiple groups of people contributed in different ways to the making of San Julián. Each of these groups had, one might say, its own version of the saint. Nalle's story demonstrates what Sahean describes as "shared discourse:" all parties were talking about Julián, canonization, miracles, sanctity but the content of that discourse, the saint San Julián, differed for

¹⁵⁸Pierre Delooz has observed that the cause of Blessed Claude de la Colombière is another example in which the petition for a saint by a particular group was blocked by the inertia of the wider social group. Claude would seem to have all that could be required of a Catholic Reformation saint: he was a Jesuit, a devotee of the Sacred Heart, and a confessor to another saint, Marguerite-Mary Alacoque. He would seem assured of canonization but he lacked one of the two requisite miracles—"popular support was not strong enough to effect it." See Delooz, "Towards..." 201.

¹⁶⁰Nalle 32.
each group. While Nalle identifies the greater complexity of the cultural situation in Cuenca, she does not move past the old popular/elite distinction.

In addition to providing the details by which a saint was constructed by and for different cultural groups, Nalle's study gives a valuable revision of some historical assumptions concerning the power relations between Church and society in the early modern period. Because Julián's official "canonization" came forty years ahead of the emergence of a significant popular cult, it would have been easy for the historian to assume that the tardy popular devotion was the result of Church propaganda. Nalle insists that this was not the case. In contrast to histories which depict popular piety as passive and directed by the Church, Nalle's history depicts the citizens of Cuenca as mildly skeptical, "informed consumers" of saints and miracles who did not accept a cult "engineered" by local clerics and promoted by the town council. They did not flock to the saint simply because he had been recently honored by Rome and granted elaborate liturgical commemoration. The local community of Cuenca demonstrated their capacity both to resist coercion and actively to define the identity of the saint they venerated. It seems clear from Nalle's research that while enthusiastic popular acclaim was no longer a prerequisite for canonization, it would be erroneous to conclude that saints canonized during this period no longer retained their traditional value as protectors and miracle workers for a local community.
Nalle, who specifically cites Peter Burke and the work of other social historians, expresses surprise at her own findings.\textsuperscript{161} The efforts of the local elites to invent a patron saint for their city leads Nalle to remark first that "Julián's case effectively illustrates some of the aspects of cultural control as work during the Counter-Reformation."\textsuperscript{162} That may well be true, but Nalle seems to accept the commonplace assumption that saints of this period are usually handed down from Rome to impose new models of piety on people who preferred miraculous relics. Later, she concludes that the commodation of "potentially conflicting identities and clients" in the figure of San Julián demonstrates the "success" of the Counter-Reformation.\textsuperscript{163} Because Nalle sees Julián's case as exceptional, she does not permit the history of San Julián to revise our understanding of the social interactions which underlie the reputation of every saint.

Nalle, like Peter Burke whom I introduced earlier, draw their understanding of sainthood in different historical eras from the sociological research on saints done twenty years ago.

\textbf{The Sociology of Sainthood}

The scholarship on sainthood from the 1970s and 1980s is characterized by the utilization of sociological methods to discover trends in

\textsuperscript{161}Nalle 42.

\textsuperscript{162}Nalle 26.

\textsuperscript{163}Nalle 44.
the selection of saints for canonization. One of the chief assumptions underlying these studies is that the "making" of a saint, either in its early aspect by local reputation, or in its final aspect by papal canonization, consists of a recognition and selection process. That is to say, the saint is assumed to possess characteristics which either do or do not match some group's ideas of what a saint should be. The success of his or her saintly reputation and career is largely determined by the "fit" between the saint and conventional ideas of sanctity.\(^{134}\) A second assumption underlying the sociological approach to sainthood is that it is worthwhile to formulate a "typical" or "average" saint from tabulations of characteristics and virtues. In this way, so scholars claim, sainthood can illuminate the characteristics and virtues most highly regarded in Christian culture during given periods.

The idea that saints represent a cultural "type," mirroring the values of European society and changing over time, is not new. John Mecklin was one of the first to elaborate on the historical change in saints. His 1941 sociological essay, *The Passing of the Saint*, unfortunately polarized religion into the superstition "of the inarticulate masses" on the one hand, and the inaccessible but articulate and rational religion of the theologians on the

\(^{134}\) The influence of Max Weber's ideas of ideal types is strong as is his theory of social crisis which prompts groups to look for charismatic figures. See my note 9, page 10 above.
other. The work's insistence on this strong dichotomy places it among the
most extreme examples of the "two-tier" model of religion described earlier.
A different, more empirical early attempt at a sociological analysis of
sainthood is that of Katherine George and Charles George who, in 1953,
tabulated data on saints' social background to determine the role of social
class in achieving sainthood. An interesting work which contradicts the
very premise that social class is a relevant dimension of sainthood is a 1978
book by Alexander Murray. Murray argues specifically against ascribing
social class to saints. He bases his ideas on evidence that medieval saints
drew devotees from all ranks, from hagiographical accounts of the social
diversity of the crowd who attended the saints' funerals, and from
collections of miracles which indicate wide class-distribution of saints'
intercessory favors. Saints, says Murray, were "socially amphibious" in a
culture which was very class conscious. All of the attributes of saints,

165John Mecklin, The Passing of the Saint: A Study of a Cultural Type
(Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1941).

166Katherine George and Charles George, "Roman Catholic Sainthood
and Social Status" (1953) Reprinted in Class, Status, and Power by
Reinhard Bendix and Seymour Lipset, 2nd edition (New York: Free press,
1966). This study was seriously flawed by its reliance on the data provided
in Butler's Lives of the Saints—an incomplete and unreliable source of
demographic information.

167Alexander Murray, Reason and Society In The Middle Ages (Oxford:

168Murray 400-401.

169Murray 386-387.
not just their social class, have been tabulated over the years by researchers: their ages, sex, and nationalities, prominent virtues and devotional habits, occupations, educations, and affiliations with religious orders. It is from such tabulations of the characteristics of saints that many scholars draw their understanding not only of the saints themselves but, their assumptions about the process as well.

The most ambitious modern study of canonization is that of Pierre Delooz. This French sociologist, who published *Sociologie et Canonisations* in 1969, was the first to reconstruct changes in the European social understanding of sanctity from the *vitae* of canonized saints. Today his project is still considered the most comprehensive and accurate compilation of officially recognized saints. Delooz made the famous but now clichéd and over-quoted observation that "one is never a saint except for other people." Deelooz went on to investigate the answer to his own question: *for which other people?* Deelooz asserts that studying the canonization process and the attributes of candidates who succeeded in obtaining official recognition gives sociologists important insight into the commonly held values of historical eras. He stresses the fact that canonization is always initiated by a public cult on behalf of a candidate. Deelooz stands in sharp contrast to those scholars who see the official criteria by which candidates

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\(^{170}\) Delooz 7.

\(^{171}\) Delooz 41,429.
are judged as selective for saints "of the church" instead of saints "of the faithful."

Delooze describes the centuries-long transformation of canonization from a liturgical act to a legal procedure as simply keeping pace with the evolution of a broader European culture toward increased bureaucracy, centralization, standardization, definition and verification.172 Most scholars who cite Delooze's work (and most scholars of sainthood do cite Delooze), ignore the implications of the broad cultural dimension of canonization reform.174 Delooze is correct in asserting that the change from a rudimentary procedure to a highly formalized one is, of itself, independent of transitions of power but formalization is inherent in the centralization of the procedure.174 Delooze says that in order to form an objective evaluation it became necessary to formalize the transmission and elaboration of the materials. He sees the growing emphasis on verification and authentication as part of a progressive, critical attitude which profoundly changed canonization but which was part of a larger trend, not indicative of any papal or curial agenda.175 Today few readers can share Delooze's optimism

\[172\] Delooze 38.

\[173\] Woodward, discussed above, is one of the few who have at least seriously considered the effects of standardization, definition, and verification upon the materials of a saint's life.

\[174\] Delooze 43.

\[175\] Delooze 38, 43.
about the handling of information exchanged between local tribunals and the Congregation in Rome. To post-modern scholars it seems naive to assert, as Delooz does, that the "homogenization" or standardization of information used in the procedure neither circumscribes nor narrowly defines what information is presented but rather prevents a worse distortion of the material.\textsuperscript{176} Similarly Delooz does not portray the Congregation's juridical structure as a filter for information concerning the candidate but as a "reasonable test of sufficient and sustained popular pressure" supporting the candidate's petition for canonization.\textsuperscript{177}

Delooz proposes a sociology of saints to reveal the collective mentalities of cultures in different epochs. His elaborate methodology, which now seems somewhat arbitrary, reveals an awareness of the complexity of correlating saints with specific eras which remains more sophisticated than that of many of his followers. He emphasizes the need to distinguish between levels or degrees of official recognition and to observe changes in the canonization processes and scrutinies between saints and between historical time periods.

\textsuperscript{176}Delooz 44.

\textsuperscript{177}Despite his claims about the predictable and fair procedure, Delooz presents evidence which contradicts his optimistic views; for example, he cites a remark of Pope Leo XIII to the effect that, where miraculous healings of women are claimed, the Congregation of Rites is more on its guard and demands extraordinary proofs to make more certain of the miracles; Delooz 120.
One of Delooz's most important observations--and one unfortunately disregarded by too many scholars--is his recognition of the need to distinguish between the saints who lived in a given historical period (as identified by the dates of their lives) and the saints who were officially honored in a given period (as identified by the dates of canonization or beatification.) Delooz wisely cautions that the saint who lived in the twelfth century but was canonized in the seventeenth may represent early modern ideas of sainthood as much or more than medieval ideas.\textsuperscript{178} Delooz notes that failure to observe these distinctions may produce false conclusions. For instance, while the seventeenth century saw a sharp rise in martyrdoms, most of those martyrs were not canonized until the twentieth century. It would be hard to say which century's values those martyr's most represent. Delooz does recognize the active role of the community in identifying and remembering as well as promoting the saint. Nevertheless, his distinction between "real" saints (by which he means historical figures) and "constructed" saints (by which he means legendary figures with no apparent base in an historical individual) reveals a failure to recognize the extent of the community's creative role in the construction of any saint's identity and reputation for sanctity.

American scholarship draws heavily on the pioneering research of Delooz. The 1982 book by Donald Weinstein and Rudolph Bell, \textit{Saints and

\textsuperscript{178}This would certainly be the case for San Julián discussed above.
Society, is a study of saints as indicators of changing social perceptions of sanctity.\(^{170}\) It has received wide recognition and, despite very serious criticism,\(^{180}\) still continues to be cited in almost all English language studies of saints. Like Delooz, Weinstein and Bell chose a long period of time (seven centuries), and they drew their sample directly from Delooz's lists of saints.\(^{181}\) Instead of examining canonization processes and official standards for judging saints, Weinstein and Bell study the written biographies of saints as indexes of changing perceptions of holiness and popular configurations of piety. The authors see vernacular biographies as representing "broader culture" than canonization documents.\(^{182}\) They describe the hagiographer's task as "shap[ing] the received material" to meet the expectations of devotees, religious communities, and local bishop.\(^{183}\) It is all the more remarkable, then, that they virtually disregard the date of the source materials themselves. From their survey they then

\(^{170}\)Donald Weinstein and Rudolph Bell, Saints and Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom, 1000-1700 (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982).

\(^{180}\)Extensive criticism of Weinstein and Bell's study have been set forth by John Howe in "Saintly Statistics" Catholic Historical Review 70.1 (1984) 74-82. See also Kleinberg 17. In addition to elaborating on the many methodological problems, some of which I mention here, Howe's article casts serious doubt on the reliability of their citations from the source materials.

\(^{181}\)Weinstein and Bell 278.

\(^{182}\)Weinstein and Bell 12.

\(^{183}\)Weinstein and Bell 13.
identify five principal components of saintly reputation: supernatural power, asceticism, charitable activity, temporal power, and evangelical activity. 184 They then score individual saints on each of these components based on his or her presentation in the hagiographic sources. Each saint is given equal weight regardless of the types and dates of sources used. 185 Scores are then compared for different epochs, genders, nationalities, etc.

The statistical analyses presented in the book imply a level of precision in the data which is simply not warranted.186 In the first place, the methodology is circular: it extracts characteristics from a set of sources and then applies these characteristics back to the same material. In the second place, not all the saints were equally popular nor equally representative of popular attitudes. Papal elevation of a family member, for example, should not be weighted as the equivalent of a widespread cult; a relatively unknown saint revered in one small town is not as representative of "Western ideas of sainthood" as is Saint Francis of Assisi.187 More seriously, perhaps, Weinstein and Bell's sources-ranging from one generation to nine centuries after the subject's death--are not only weighted equally but are all

184 Weinstein and Bell 159,285.

185 Weinstein and Bell 280.

186 See the criticisms by Howe and Kleinberg cited previously: note 180, p.82.

187 Kleinberg 15. Kleinberg gives an excellent critique of Weinstein and Bell. See also Howe, "Saintly Statistics" cited above.
assumed to reflect the values of the saints' own historical periods. Despite
the fact that they do not use canonization processes as textual sources, the
authors repeat the cliché that official canonizations do not reflect popular
perceptions of holiness.

Failure to distinguish between life dates, canonization dates, and
source material dates renders suspect Weinstein and Bell's conclusions
about sainthood for specific historical periods. For example, in obvious
disregard of Delooz's warnings, they pronounce that the powerful bishop or
temporal ruler saints of the High Middle Ages are replaced in the sixteenth
and seventeenth centuries by martyrs who sacrifice their lives for the
faith.\textsuperscript{188} This conclusion fits a commonly accepted notion about the values of
the Counter-Reformation but fails to take into account Delooz's observation
that most of those martyrs were not canonized for another three hundred
years and that, in fact, martyrs do not represent a more prominent category
of canonizations after Trent than do founders and reformers of religious
orders (some of whom had died centuries before).\textsuperscript{189} A significant problem
with \textit{Saints and Society} (and one for which the authors cannot be blamed) is

\textsuperscript{188} Weinstein and Bell 161, 289.

\textsuperscript{189} Compare Burke’s tabulation, for example, using the same data for
saints of the period. For an interesting study on the importance of martyrs
in the early modern period, see Robert Kolb, \textit{For All the Saints: changing
perceptions of martyrdom and sainthood in the Lutheran Reformation}
(Macon, GA: Mercer University Press, 1987); Kolb suggests that martyrs were
more important to Protestants than to Catholics in the sixteenth century.
its enduring popularity and uncritical acceptance by other scholars. The categorization and simplification of the overwhelming quantity of data is tempting to those looking for broad generalizations or general background material on sainthood. *Saints and Society* is still very widely cited in the most recent literature where research on specific saints tries to relate to "the big picture."

By contrast, the study of canonization by Andre Vauchez is widely praised for its thorough scholarship. *La Sainteté en Occident aux derniers siècles du Moyen Age* (1981) is the most widely acclaimed study of canonization for a given historical period. Using the available papal canonization proceedings of the period between 1181 and 1437, Vauchez compiled an analysis of regional preferences for types of saints and qualities of sanctity most frequently recognized by papal approval. He identified some significant trends. He notes how the broad range of humanity represented among the saints before 1300 (shepherds, princes, bishops, widows, etc.) diminished after the fourteenth century; how the reformed sinners became less popular and world-renouncing ascetics and defenders of the faith became prominent types. Of particular importance, says Vauchez, was the

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growing emphasis on virtues instead of miracles for assessing the sanctity of the candidate. Vauchez concludes that, by the end of the Middle Ages, canonized saints served the faithful less as miracle workers and increasingly more as exemplars of Christian virtues. Although the expression "making saints" was coined in this work,\textsuperscript{191} Vauchez nevertheless embraces the sociological perspective which views canonization as a selection process consisting primarily of matching candidates with currently acceptable models of sanctity.\textsuperscript{192}

The strength of Vauchez's work lies mainly in his careful analysis of the canonization documents themselves. But although he demonstrates the historical value of the documents for examining ecclesiastical views of sanctity, he fails to fully consider how changes in canonization procedures (the increasing reliance on written documents over the course of this period, as one example) might have affected the candidates available for Rome's selection. Furthermore, Vauchez makes assumptions about society's views of saints from a very limited sample.\textsuperscript{193} Of the seventy-one known papal canonization processes in Vauchez's selected time frame, only thirty-three resulted in official canonizations. In addition, official recognition was

\textsuperscript{191} \textit{fabrique des saints}

\textsuperscript{192} For Vauchez' criticism of Delooz see H. Deroche, J. Maitre, and A. Vauchez "Sociologie de la sainteté canonisée" in \textit{Archives de sociologie des religions}, 30 (1970) 109-115.

sought for only a very few candidates out of the hundreds of saints venerated throughout Europe. Vauchez's conclusions about the significance of his findings for European piety as a whole seem unwarranted. Nevertheless, Vauchez is still highly regarded as the first to explore thoroughly and systematically the medieval canonization records themselves.

Another scholar of medieval saints, Michael Goodich, was one of the first scholars to focus attention on the identity of the parties promoting and financing the candidate's petition for canonization. In contrast to those scholars who focus on the attributes of the saint selected for canonization, Goodich highlights the papal history contemporary with the canonization and on the political value of large public cults. Goodich gives particular attention to the bulls of canonization themselves, to the wording and the official reasons cited for conferring sainthood. He also compares the content of Lives based on the official documents to earlier versions. He demonstrates that Rome was guided as much by the candidate's politics, and by the politics of those supporting the cause, as by the candidate's claim

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to a virtuous life or to miraculous power.\textsuperscript{195} In contrast to Vauchez, who tended to ascribe moralizing and instructional motives to the Holy See, Goodich identifies political motives--particularly the papacy's ongoing battle against heresy--as key factors in the selection of candidates for sainthood. Saints who battled against heretics or who could be held up as witnesses against heresy most readily found papal approval.\textsuperscript{196} Additionally, says Goodich, canonization became a way to reward political and theological allies by conferring sainthood on their favorite candidates.\textsuperscript{197}

Goodich's work has been criticized both for his sample and for his assessment of papal motives.\textsuperscript{198} Nevertheless, his use of the documented testimonies for the cause to reconstruct a picture of the saint's devotees and sponsors is most instructive. Goodich describes the canonization process itself as it existed at the end of the late twelfth to early fourteenth century, noting questions put to witnesses, letters of support, and legal requirements; in this regard, Goodich's work far exceeds other examples cited here for appreciation of the mechanics of the process. Goodich's consideration of saints as reflections upon or representatives of the group which sponsors them adds an important dimension to the picture of

\textsuperscript{195}Goodich, "Politics" 180.

\textsuperscript{196}Goodich, "Politics" 188.

\textsuperscript{197}Goodich, \textit{Vita Perfecta} 47.

\textsuperscript{198}A good critique of Goodich and other "sociologists of sainthood" is offered by John Howe, "Saintly Statistics" cited above.
canonization usually overlooked by writers who cast saints as representatives of some broader, popular mentality. Goodich's research utilizes a breadth of sources which is rare in the scholarship. Unfortunately, Goodich does not move beyond the then-current methodology, the tabulating of data for a large sample of saints, in drawing his conclusions. Thus, like the other scholars presented above, he tries to understand canonizations by examining the results—not by examining the process.

**NEW SOCIAL STUDIES**

Current scholarship on saints has largely abandoned the sociological approach which strives for a broad analysis of European sanctity. The usefulness of constructing a model of the "average" saint or even a "typical" canonization for a given age is now questionable.\(^\text{190}\) Nevertheless the sociologists' insistence on the social nature of sainthood pointed the way for important new directions in research; in particular, the reconsideration of the respective roles played by the local sponsors and by the officials of the Roman tribunal in jointly creating a saint's reputation for sanctity. Newer research tends to explore one geographical area or even a single saint in order to focus on the details of cult and sponsors.

In these postmodern times, canonizations and saintly careers are not expected to disclose vague cultural norms, "heroic ideals," or "concepts of

\(^{190}\)Kleinberg 17.
sanctity;" instead, they are considered as case studies in political strategy and social control. For our society, demystification of the process is everything. Accompanying this shift in perspective is a shift in terminology: a few scholars have begun describing the making of a saint in terms of construction, revision, and promotion rather than in the more traditional terms of selection and recognition. Kenneth Woodward’s examination of modern causes, and Sara Nalle’s study of San Julián, both presented earlier in this paper, exemplify this new approach. Lorenzo Polizzotto’s study of the canonization of Saint Antonino, a fifteenth-century Florentine monk, is another excellent example of new trends in research. Like Woodward and Nalle, Polizzotto describes the wide social and religious issues which converge upon the canonization of the saint and the deliberate construction of his image to fit the needs of all parties.

Polizzotto begins with the history of the cult of Antonino. At the death of Antonino in 1459, great reverence was shown to his body as befitting one who enjoyed a local reputation for sanctity. An early cult arose in his city of Florence emphasizing Antonino’s great learning and theological wisdom. Ten years later, however, his reputation had declined and no miracles were attributed to him after 1471. A small cult, sponsored by his own Dominican order continued at his tomb in San Marco. It was,

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however, among the intellectuals of Florence that the memory of Antonino was kept alive through the circulation of his writings on theology and religious practice.\textsuperscript{201} The Medici family initiated canonization proceedings under Pope Innocent VIII in 1488 but this attempt failed because of strenuous opposition by enemies of the Medici.\textsuperscript{202} By the early sixteenth century, reports Polizzotto, even Antonino’s writings had been largely forgotten. Polizzotto frames these events with the history of Florence and the persecution of that city, San Marco, and the Dominican order in particular, because of their sympathy with Savonarola.

Antonino’s cause was initiated once again in 1516 under Pope Leo X. This time, observes Polizzotto, the same groups who had opposed the earlier canonization took control of the cause in order to co-opt it for their own political and religious agenda.\textsuperscript{203} Leo wanted the canonization to improve papal relations with Florence and with the Dominican order; canonization of Antonino coincided with removal of the official ostracism of San Marco, the former location of Savonarola’s cult. Polizzotto emphasizes the fact that Antonino was made a saint not by the people of Florence but by the pope, the archbishop Giulio de Medici, the Signoria and the Master-general of the Dominican order. He observes that the friars of San Marco took no

\textsuperscript{201} Polizzotto 365.
\textsuperscript{202} Polizzotto 354.
\textsuperscript{203} Polizzotto 354.
initiative for Antonino's canonization nor would they ever have done so while a Medici was pope. The case of Antonino, then, challenges all of the usual assumptions about "for whom" a saint is made. It does, however, support my idea that the canonization of a saint is a strategy for engaging a peripheral community in discourse with the Church.

Polizzotto's approach focuses attention on the promoters and backers of the cause and their manipulation of the saint's image for the sake of political expediency. He uses written Lives of Antonino and the canonization documents alongside one another in order to understand the changing image of Antonino in the official portrayals of the saint. He notes that the evidence forwarded to Rome for the sixteenth century process was chronologically disparate and diverse. The earliest and "most balanced" portrayal of Antonino's life, says Polizzotto, was an early work by Francesco da Castiglione written within a year of the saint's death. There is no evidence, according to Polizzotto, that this biography was written with an eye to future canonization.\(^{204}\) In it, Antonino is portrayed as a thoughtful scholar as well as a devout monk and an inspired preacher. This Vita circulated among the elites of Florence but seems to have had little appreciable influence in either of the first two canonization trials. The depositions recorded by the official notary in the local process (i.e. the taking of statements concerning the virtues and miracles of Antonino from

\(^{204}\) Polizzotto 365.
witnesses in Florence) produced a "composite image" which emphasized the social aspects of Antonino's sanctity: his mercy, charity, and striving for civic harmony. The miracles, not so numerous as might be expected, also accentuated this social dimension. Of only limited value in this composite image of Antonino was his learning, his asceticism, and his ministry of the Word—these were "played down" by the witnesses selected to testify by the promoters of the cause. "All in all," concludes Polizzotto, "the trials presented a lopsided image of Antonino which, though it did not contradict Francesco da Castiglione's depiction, substantially modified it. By 1516, says Polizzotto, models of sanctity had changed and the scholarly image of Antonino did not accord with the aims of the promoters of the canonization.

Polizzotto sees the case of St. Antonino as historically significant for several reasons. His eventual canonization in 1523 by Adrian VI formed a link between the old and new styles of canonization. It was the last canonization before the Lutheran Reformation and the last to be initiated outside the new Congregation of Rites. Polizzotto insists that many of the

\[205\] Polizzotto 368.

\[206\] Polizzotto 369.

\[207\] Here Polizzotto reveals an underlying acceptance of what I have called the "standard picture," after describing the deliberate construction of an identity which fit exactly the needs of the local situation vis à vis Rome, Polizzotto suggests that changing "models of sanctity" had been fundamental to the process—something his evidence did not point to.
practices later adopted by the Congregation were first introduced during the trial of Antonino and called for by the political difficulties surrounding it: the creation of a standing committee to select and coordinate the canonization; the primacy given to postulatory letters from eminent lay and ecclesiastical leaders; the preparation of an authenticated transumptum of the original acts of the trial for its more expeditious resolution. Polizzotto speculates that it was the effectiveness of these procedures in the face of a protracted and controversial cause which recommended them for formal adoption. Antonino’s is truly a case in which the cause itself revised the canonization procedure as much as the procedure shaped the cause.

Polizzotto’s research represents an important new scholarly interest in the evolution of and the diversity of documents about a particular saint. Polizzotto’s attention to the changes in Antonino effected at each stage of the process reveals that the saint’s evolving identity was largely constructed by the Florentines and Dominicans who sought reconciliation with Rome. The materials and evidence of Antonino’s sanctity was chronologically disparate and provided a rich mine from which to take the aspects of Antonino which were the most useful. Typically, canonization studies have lacked explanations of how the image of the saint was put to the service of each interest group, how the hagiographic discourse of the groups

\[208\] Polizzotto 355.

\[209\] Polizzotto 365.
changed over time, and how the language and imagery of each group contributed to the saint's final canonized identity. Much of the newest research along these lines has been done in the area of hagiographical studies.
SECTION III: STUDIES IN HAGIOGRAPHY

The socially constructed nature of saints receives additional support from research done on the textual lives of saints. Hagiography, the biography of saints, provides two important types of evidence for my arguments. First, the interests of the community are revealed both in textual clues about the intended audience and in specific stories about the saint’s life in that community. Second, the study of hagiography gives us insight into the biographers themselves and their audiences and thereby into the process of remembering and forgetting which characterizes the construction of the saints’ vitae.

THE STUDY OF SAINTS’ LIVES

Early scholarship on the lives of saints begins with the Bollandists. This small group of Jesuits was organized in the early seventeenth century in Liège and charged with the task of providing a scholarly edition on the saints’ Lives which would distinguish between legend and authentic history.204 Their founder, Bolland, planned to collect all of the authentic documents concerning the saints and apply to them the then new critical methodology developed by scholars of classical texts. The material was organized according to the liturgical calendar. The first volumes of the

Acta, treating the saints of January and February, appeared in the 1650s. Although Pope Alexander VII had invited the Bollandists to Rome and had aided their research, their findings on the saints was not universally well received within the Church. Some, like Cardinal Bellarmine, thought that so much of the material on the saints was patently ridiculous that it was all best left unexamined. On the other hand, criticism inevitably arose as the Bollandists declared some cherished traditions false or superstitious. War was declared against the scholarly fraternity when the Bollandists recorded that there was no historical evidence for the Carmelites' traditional origins among the followers of Elijah nor for the early Carmelites' association with the Blessed Virgin. The Carmelites were furious, and shortly thereafter the Acta of March, April, and May were denounced to the Spanish and Roman Inquisitions and placed on the Index. Although eventually these judgments were reversed, thereafter the Bollandists were less outspoken. The Bollandists continued their work through the centuries and their Acta Sanctorum Bollandistarum continues to set the standard for scholarly research. Woodward claims that the Bollandists were the real protagonists of the modern historical consciousness concerning the preparation of causes for canonization.

\[210^\text{Knowles 5.}\]
\[211^\text{Knowles 15.}\]
\[212^\text{Woodward 96.}\]
For a long time, historians, in the tradition of the Bollandists, were concerned with uncovering the historical saint and retrieving facts about cults or devotions. They were interested in the oldest or most "authentic" text. Older scholarship tended to comb saints' Lives for factual information and historical significance without examining the text itself. Traditional research by philologists has focused on specific vernacular texts without reference either to Latin versions prepared for canonization proceedings or to historical considerations. More recently, however, the field of hagiographical studies has expanded greatly; scholars have shown new interest in the specifics of how and by whom the saints' lives are preserved and recounted to others. They have shown interest not only in what is remembered, but in what is left out. John Howe recently observed that the historians and literary scholars, who used to approach hagiographical texts from different angles, now converge in seeking textual evidence for cultural changes over time, the emergence of new voices, and the impact of transitions from Latin to vernacular, from oral to written.\footnote{John Howe, review of Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe, by Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell, Catholic Historical Review April 1992, 277-278.} A recent contribution to interdisciplinary work in the field is a collection of articles edited by Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell.\footnote{Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell, Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP, 1991).} These papers, presented at a 1987 Barnard Medieval and Renaissance Conference, bring
together historical and literary scholarship on medieval hagiographical texts.

As historians rediscover the value of saints' Lives, many hagiographic texts are getting a modern re-reading.\textsuperscript{215} One example of this is a reexamination of a life of St. Wilfred recently published by William Foley.\textsuperscript{216} Even though Foley makes a relatively conventional examination of the structure, topology and literary figures, his goal is to illuminate not Wilfrid but the hagiographer himself: Stephen (Eddius Stephanus). Foley searches the text for the origins of Stephen's particular understanding of Wilfrid and demonstrates the extent to which Stephen's own religious convictions shape his portrayal of the saint. While Foley fails to convince the reader that he has recovered St. Wilfrid's own theology through Stephan, he nevertheless points to the usefulness of hagiography as an historical document.

\textbf{Saints As Members of Communities}

Several recent works of particular interest to historians of canonization give attention to the ways in which the saint's community remembers the saint even before the saint's death. The specific cases

\textsuperscript{215}For decades the \textit{Lives} of the saints have been regarded as untrustworthy for historians because of their obvious biases. They were studied as a genre of literature but not as records of religious culture. In post-modern scholarship, where all texts are recognized to have biases, their importance as documentary evidence is being recognized.

discussed become relevant to the general study of sainthood as models of interaction between the saint and his or her contemporaries and their joint responsibility in defining sanctity for the community. How a saint is remembered immediately after her death by her devotees is addressed in terms of a modern saint by Guy Gaucher in his description of the varying accounts of the last days of Therese of Lisieux.\textsuperscript{217} He describes the period surrounding the death of the saint and the extraordinary documentation of the event done by her family and friends. Gaucher pays particular attention to the variations in descriptions of the event and the persistence of these variations--some of which appear to be quite inaccurate--despite contradiction in standard, published versions. The witnesses' amplification of the saint's few verbal remarks and their ascription of exact meanings and/or symbolism to them is fascinating. This work, which just recently appeared in its English translation, is extremely valuable for its attention to the multiple images and stories which vie for authority immediately after the death of a saint.

An different aspect of the interaction between saint and community is addressed in \textit{The Making of a Saint} by Catia Galatoriotou.\textsuperscript{218} This work is significant for scholars of hagiography because it is one of a very few which


takes seriously the role of the saint in constructing his or her own public image. Galatoriotou openly acknowledges her debt to Max Weber's notion of charisma but she does not allow Weber's emphasis on the "natural" response of the community to go unchallenged and unexplained. The specifics of Neophytos's case reveal how the saint, through his writings and paintings, played an active and deliberate role in shaping his community's understanding of sanctity and then in presenting himself as an exemplar of that sanctity. The visual "treatises" left by Neophytos in the form of paintings on the walls of his cell expand and elaborate upon the textual material preserved in Neophytos' writings. The utilization of these visual documents enriches Galatoriotou's discussion tremendously.

While very different in style and philosophy, Aviad Kleinberg's 1992 book, *Prophets in their own country* also presents an argument for the process of sanctification as the outcome of a continuous interaction between the subject and his or her contemporary society. Kleinberg uses the early *vitae* of four medieval saints to demonstrate that, while each saint's life and reputation is uniquely determined by the circumstances of a historical situation, the reputation for sanctity is always jointly constructed by the saint and the "audience." In marked contrast to other writers on sainthood, Kleinberg downplays the role of church officials in determining saintly

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23Galatoriotou 255ff. As I mentioned earlier in the introduction, such an acknowledgement is rare.
identity and asserts that the crucial definition of identity occurs at the local level among the saint’s contemporaries. Like Galatoriotou, Kleinberg finds that "[r]ather than trying to fit individuals to a clearly defined ideal, communities shaped their ideas of sainthood around specific individuals." Kleinberg’s important contribution to my project lies in his demonstration of hagiography’s value for reconstructing the complex social relationships which characterize sainthood. Using the earliest biographies of four medieval saints perceived as holy during their own lifetimes, he demonstrates that a variety of relationships—between saints and their contemporaries, between a community and their local saint, and between subjects and their biographers—shape and refine local notions of sanctity and perceptions of the saints. The models of interaction Kleinberg describes reveal that saints always participate in creating their own reputations of sanctity, regardless of whether or not they were formally involved in or removed from the social life of the community. In contrast to the prevailing wisdom, Kleinberg rejects the modern assumption that saints exist only for others as perceptions or models or fictions. Instead he treats the historical documents as records of saints who existed for themselves and in relationships with other individuals in an historical community. Kleinberg’s interactive models of social relationships between saint, community, and

\footnote{Kleinberg 21.}
\footnote{Kleinberg 5.}
biographers are as useful for understanding the reputation earned by a less well-known figure like Christina of Stommeln (who was never sponsored for canonization) as for reevaluating the fame of Saint Francis of Assisi with his immense following.

Kleinberg's research focuses on the early vernacular Lives of these saints in order to catch the saintly reputation at its most complex and least stylized point. Oral tradition is assumed to be simplified for mnemonic ease and, like later biographies, considered largely formulaic (i.e. mentioning only those events or aspects of character that were positively indicative of holiness).²²² He argues that the early vernacular Lives were aimed at a local, lay readership who were not usually in a position to alter the saint's official status, and so these Lives are less likely than later Latin versions to be tailored to canonization requirements or official guidelines for sanctity.²²³ These early biographies, says Kleinberg, contain the most information about the saint's immediate community because the contemporaries of a holy person were anxious to be on record as associated with and helpful to a servant of God. The trend in the late Middle Ages, according to Kleinberg, was toward greater authenticating detail (implying a firsthand account) and decreasing emphasis on the saint's conformity to a "type." Kleinberg here offers convincing arguments against the older scholarship which asserts

²²²Kleinberg 122.
²²³Kleinberg 122.
that conformity to fixed patterns of sainthood was essential to the perception of sanctity. Furthermore, in an attempt to include eyewitness detail and to record the community's participation in the saint's holiness, early biographers were most likely to include the extraneous stories which were omitted from later hagiographical accounts as not contributing directly to a saintly reputation. If special note for scholars of canonization is Kleinberg's assertion that biographers were not, in fact, content to present the subject as another example of some ideal saintly "type." The hagiographers of living or recently deceased saints were anxious to differentiate their own particular candidate from others and to convince the readers of the authenticity of the account by the addition of details not required by convention.224 In general, asserts Kleinberg, the life of a "new" saint had to face greater skepticism than the life of a saint from the distant past although within the intimacy of a small community, a consensus about the saint had often formed before a biography was begun.225 The latter point has been skillfully made by William Cook in his examination of the construction of the image and life of St. Francis by members of his order.226 The identity of this saint, claims Cook, had been written and revised within

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224Kleinberg 26.
225Kleinberg 40.
Francis' religious community with different "versions" tailored for the laity and for the Franciscan brothers. Cook is one of the few scholars who identifies those elements chosen by writers to educate or inspire the laity in contrast to the elements chosen to preserve or enhance community identification within the religious order. Cook's work is outstanding in the scholarship for its examination of the paintings of St. Francis commissioned by the Franciscans which reflect and parallel developments in the textual identities of the saint. More research of this type is needed.

A recent book by Thomas Head on the cult of saints in medieval Orléans offers further support for the claim that early written accounts of the saints' lives--the first ones written down after the death of the saint--served as guarantees of sanctity and as safeguards of the community's claim to the saint's patronage. "Patronage" of saints is the reciprocal relationship which includes honor shown to saints by devotees and the reciprocal favors performed by the saint on behalf of the community. Like the possession of relics, says Head, the written record of the community's participation in the saint's life guaranteed that community priority over other communities in obtaining the saint's divine assistance. Head shows

27 Cook 266.
28 Cook 288.
30 On the similar role of relics for communities during this time period, see Patrick Geary 38-40. For the continued importance of local claims on a
how written hagiographic texts sealed the relationship between saint and community, often even explaining the foundation of that community. This binding relationship remains paramount in all of the hagiography, says Head, even when the predominant imagery of saints changed from one era to the next.

Hagiography is not, however, the same in all periods nor does it always strive for the same effects on the audience. A brief mention of *Sacred Biography* by Thomas Heffernan may serve as a reminder of this. Heffernan analyzes the writings of Augustine and Gregory of Tours in order to find what early Christian writers and their audiences expected of narrative lives of saints. His findings place these ancient writers and their audiences in sharp contrast to the late medieval hagiographers described by Kleinberg describes in which hagiographers and their audiences wanted a record of concrete events connecting the saint with the local community. Heffernan, rather, finds that sacred biographers of antiquity did not feel bound to relate events that readers (or audiences) would recognize and identify with. Instead, says Heffernan, sacred biographers were expected to provide a narrative medium for the symbolic representation of heaven made present on earth in God's saints. While Heffernan's analysis of the ancient

\footnote{Thomas J. Heffernan, *Sacred Biography: Saints and Their Biographers in the Middle Ages* (New York: Oxford UP, 1988).}

\footnote{Saint's patronage, see Kleinberg 29; Christian, *Local Religion* 126-141; and Bilinkoff 68-69, 172-179.}
hagiographical tradition is good, I believe that his assessment of hagiography in early medieval England is tied too strongly to those precedents. His examination of the texts fails to illuminate their construction or the complexities of medieval hagiography in the way that the work of Kleinberg and Cook have. Heffernan’s emphasis on the continuity of the hagiographical tradition from ancient Greek biographies to medieval English hagiography fails to acknowledge what is innovative and distinctive in saints’ Lives from different historical periods. Most importantly, Heffernan does not adequately address the fact that use of hagiographical conventions (and even direct quotations) does not mean that those traditional elements retain the same meanings or elicit the same responses in new textual settings.

**Gender Issues**

The relationship between saints and their biographers is even more problematic when gender issues are considered. The kind of material included in a saint’s vitae, scholars discover, depends a great deal on the sex of the subject. Differences in the hagiography of male and female saints are

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232Kleinberg concurs with Heffernan on some points concerning hagiographies of the early Middle Ages (up to the twelfth century); Kleinberg notes that hagiographers stressed their subjects’ identification with other well-known saints. See Kleinberg 21.

the express concern of Richard Kieckhefer in a recent article. In the late fifteenth century, says Kieckhefer, when lay piety and devotion were increasingly visible and complex, it became important for biographers of saints to distinguish their subjects from other devout Christians. Women's biographies became longer and adapted to accommodate a new emphasis on inward experience and revelations. Biographies of male saints were much shorter, observes Kieckhefer, and their writers employed more traditional hagiographic devices and conventions to distinguish the saint from his pious brothers, such as stories of miracles occurring during prayer and accounts of horrible temptations which beset the saint. Male saints were described in ways that emphasized their outward conduct and religious pedagogy. By contrast, the biographer of a woman saint was much more likely to mention her reading and meditation because reading was an activity increasingly associated with inward piety. Kieckhefer's work illustrates the importance of considering the social context of hagiography and of comparing the hagiography of both sexes. Kieckhefer's study also reveals the important fact that when traditional elements are taken from earlier lives, they are

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235Kieckhefer 291, 297.

236Kieckhefer 292,304.

237Kieckhefer 302.
inevitably given new meaning or new significance in the contemporary
saint’s biography—a point which Heffernan, above, seems to miss.

Another scholar of the influence of gender on hagiography, Jacques
Le Brun, reveals that the vastly different opportunities for men and women
in the sixteenth century prompted a creative modification in the
interpretation of women’s spiritual experience.\textsuperscript{238} The aspiration to
martyrdom was strong in the sixteenth century, says Le Brun, but women
did not fight battles nor did they often go abroad as missionaries. In
biographies of pious women, however, Le Brun finds the idea of martyrdom
adapted to include physical mortification (martyrdom of penitence), illnesses
and surgeries (martyrdom of providence), and spiritual anguish (martyrdom
of love)—all of these experiences within a woman’s sphere.\textsuperscript{239}

The central debate in modern hagiography studies surrounds the
appropriate way to handle texts about female saints written by male
hagiographers. This is important because most female saints are known
only through texts written by male biographers. Many scholars have noted
the close male devotees surrounding female saints: often these are the
saint’s confessors and biographers as well. Richard Kieckhefer invoked a
great deal of criticism with his 1984 book \textit{Unquiet Souls}. This otherwise

\textsuperscript{238} Jacques Le Brun, "Mutations de la Notion de Martyre aux XVIIe
Siècle d’Après Les Biographies Spirituelles Feminines," in \textit{Sainteté et
Martyre dans les Religions du Livre}, ed. Jacques Marx, (Brussels: Editions
de l’Université de Bruxelles, 1989).

\textsuperscript{239} Le Brun 88.
useful study of fourteenth-century saints treated the records of female saints' experiences written down by their male biographers as "quasi-autobiographical" thus failing to acknowledge that the vitae reflect the hagiographers' experience of the saints as much as or more than they reflect the saints' own experiences. With Carolyn Bynum's 1987 book *Holy Feast and Holy Fast*, the issue took center stage. Bynum argued that women's writings from the Middle Ages reveal a picture of feminine spirituality and asceticism different from the picture presented by male biographers of medieval women saints. The stories which men told about women, says Bynum, "reflect not so much what women did as what men admired or abhorred."240 Bynum criticized Vauchez as well as Weinstein and Bell for accepting men's preoccupation with sexual temptation as a key concern of women.241 A particular target for Bynum was Rudolph Bell's book *Holy Anorexia* which interprets medieval women's use of fasting as a denial of sexuality.242 Bell's interpretation, Bynum notes, was drawn exclusively from male biographers' written accounts of such practices. Bynum argues that while men most often associated self-restraint with sex and chastity, women, by contrast, focused on food and fasting. It is important, Bynum

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240 Bynum 28

241 Bynum 319. While Bynum does accept the general descriptions of "typical" saints for the medieval period as presented in Weinstein and Bell, Vauchez, and Kieckhefer, she suggests that these profiles apply only to men and not to women.

notes, to examine the women’s own writings: women did not tend to use
inverted symbols of masculine power, nor did they tend to reverse social
facts; instead women both emphasized their inferior position and centered
their spirituality around household symbols. Another scholar of
hagiography, John Coakley, concurs with Bynum. He finds that men’s
biographies of women reveal a heightened awareness of gender, that is to
say, they tend to portray women as "more different" from men than the
women perceive themselves to be.243

A recent work which tries to address issues of gender in hagiography
is Sainted Women of the Dark Ages.244 In this book, JoAnn McNamara and
John Halborg present the lives of female saints of the sixth and seventh
centuries as "models of womanly power, womanly achievement, and
womanly voices".245 This is a remarkable assertion in the face of their own
evidence that these women saints had to exhibit exemplary obedience to
male superiors and "temper their own talents...with qualities...that
recommended them to the male hierarchy who controlled the historical
tradition."246 Furthermore, say the authors, women striving for sanctity

243 John Coakley, "Friars as Confidants of Holy Women in Medieval
Dominican Hagiography" Images of Sainthood in Medieval Europe. eds.
Renate Blumenfeld-Kosinski and Timea Szell (Ithaca, NY: Cornell UP,
1991) 224.

244JoAnn McNamara and John E. Halborg, Sainted Women of the Dark

245McNamara and Halborg 15.

246McNamara and Halborg 13.
were guided by priests who set norms of behavior that defined their success. As the woman acted out the role provided for her by the clergy, her male advisor then "enshrined the results" in a text that these authors claim still represents a "collaboration between the saint, her clerical biographer, and their audience."\(^ {247}\) Fortunately, other new works on women saints are more credible.

Anne Clark, in a new book on the twelfth-century mystic Elisabeth of Schönau, has closely examined the role of Eckbert, Elisabeth's brother, who recorded her visions.\(^ {248}\) Eckbert, Clark assures us, was not a passive secretary but his sister's interpreter and career manager. The picture of Elisabeth which predominates in the texts is one which Eckbert allowed to emerge.\(^ {249}\) Nevertheless Clark does not dismiss Eckbert's writings; she finds much which bears witness to the religious and political environment which influenced Elisabeth and much which reveals Elisabeth's own creative adaptation and transformation of inherited symbols.\(^ {250}\)

An excellent new treatment of Teresa of Avila has been done by Alison Weber.\(^ {251}\) Contradicting most Teresan scholarship, Weber asserts

\(^ {247}\) McNamara and Halborg 13.


\(^ {249}\) Clark 131.

\(^ {250}\) Clark 3.

that Teresa's rhetoric of femininity and subordination was deliberately
adopted for perlocutionary effect.\textsuperscript{252} Teresa called herself "little woman"--
the same term used in public discourse to dismiss women's importance. She
repeatedly referred to herself as "weak" and "stupid." Says Weber, the ploy
worked: Teresa's words were taken as ingenuous and therefore were not
dismissed as feminine wiles by male clerics.\textsuperscript{253} But this rhetoric of self-
deprecation, which gave her writing a spontaneous and unpretentious
quality and allowed Teresa to be heard, did nothing to dispel the clergy's
conviction that women were not to be taken seriously. Weber says that
Teresa was first a prodigy because of her sex--the very proof of a miracle
was that such virtue and wisdom should present itself in a woman--and
then made a saint in spite of it.\textsuperscript{254} Ironically, Weber reports, as Teresa's
fame spread her gender was transformed: she was described in her
canonization process, in \textit{vitae}, and in sermons as a "virile woman" and a
"manly soul."\textsuperscript{255} Because of this transformation of gender, paradoxically
made possible by her deliberately "feminine" rhetoric, Teresa does not, in

\textsuperscript{252} Perlocutionary effects are the results of speech, either intentional or
unintentional, which are subsequent to and indirectly achieved by what was
said. For example, if an employer criticizes an employee for making an error
on the job, the direct result of what was said might be the employee's
apology and correction of the error. The \textit{perlocutionary effects} might include
the employee's leaving the room in a hurry and deciding not to ask for a
raise at that time.

\textsuperscript{253} Alison Weber 159.
\textsuperscript{254} Alison Weber 165.
\textsuperscript{255} Alison Weber 17.
Weber's work does not focus on the hagiography about Teresa but rather on the saint's own writings. Nevertheless, Weber's discussion of the change in gender, recorded in written and visual texts celebrating Teresa, is highly suggestive for subsequent research into the process of saint-making in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

Conspicuously absent from most recent work on hagiography is evidence of the hortatory or inspirational role of written lives. It seems odd that the exemplary role of the saint, which historians like Vauchez and Woodward have asserted to be a primary consideration in canonizations from the thirteenth century onwards, does not emerge more clearly in the literature on hagiography. Polizzotto identifies a "hortative purpose" to the early vitae of St. Antonino but he suggests that this dimension is lost, not emphasized, in the Lives influenced by canonization documents. This suggests that Antonino's value is not tied to his value as a model of Christian Virtue—especially since that material existed in the tradition and could easily have been given greater prominence.256 A few scholars such as Gábor Klaniczay have studied the role that saints' Lives have played in providing role models for other to follow257 but no recent studies other than

256Polizzotto 365.

Cook's examine the written *Lives* to ascertain what strategies or devices they employ to instruct and model behavior for others. Evelyn Birge Vitz believes that the sixteenth century marks a shift *away* from Lives intended to be read aloud as inspiration and toward Lives intended to claim historical status and authority.²⁵⁸ Saints' *Lives* in the Middle Ages, which fused elements of both oral and written traditions and which were more prone to amplification and variations, were clearly constructed to elicit piety and devotion from the audience, says Vitz.²⁵⁹ She does not find this emphasis in the written Lives of the early modern period.

The evidence in hagiography does not support the traditional claims by scholars like Peter Burke that saints were recognized chiefly because they matched widely recognized "patterns" of sanctity. Additionally, the evidence fails to reveal the emphasis on example and instruction of the laity which scholars insists forms the rationale for writing saints' lives. Instead, it seems clear from the texts, stories of saints focus primarily on forging links between the saint and his or her community. Issues of authority and credibility emerge as well. What is most striking, and what lends support to my arguments, is the evidence in hagiography for the creative roles


²⁵⁹It is unclear just how these findings fit with Kieckhefer's suggestion above that private reading was associated with an intensely affective devotion.
played by the saints, their followers, and their biographers in presenting their saint as a member of their community. It is that creatively constructed image of the saint, the image which anchors the saint to the community, and which is subsequently presented (in some form or variation) to Rome for canonization. It is this early local image that all subsequent images of the saint must either compete against or revise.
CONCLUSION

A careful reading of the available literature on sainthood and canonization reveals that the process of making saints in the seventeenth century is not simply an exercise in papal prerogative but a creative process which constructs the identity of the saint through a collaborative process. This process engages multiple groups within both the saint’s local community and the hierarchy of the church. Furthermore, I have suggested that by failing to see the collaborative dimension of canonization, scholars have failed to recognize that the process is about constructing an image of the Church as well as constructing the image of the saint. Three major factors, I have argued, prevent scholars from seeing this collaborative dimension. The first is the depiction of saint-making as a selection process instead of a creative process. The second factor is the commonly accepted distinction between popular and elite religion which has prevented scholars from recognizing the diverse groups which contribute to (or oppose) the canonization process at local and ecclesiastical levels. The third factor has been a failure to consider the early hagiographies alongside the canonization documents and thus connect both ends of the saints' public careers.
The standard picture of the process of canonization is tied to a widely accepted history of canonization which is usually sketched in three phases. Ancient canonizations, so it is claimed, were the recognition by a bishop or pope of martyrs and saints already acclaimed by a local community. Matching widely recognized patterns of sanctity, the sainthood of these revered individuals was seldom disputed. Canonizations in the medieval period were more formal and consisted in the recognition by the pope of saints who not only were acclaimed by a local community but who also fit a somewhat narrower ecclesiastical definition of sanctity. Scholars depict canonizations in these first two periods as the natural outcome of a popular response to a charismatic individual and sometimes as the logical or expedient choice of an ecclesiastical evaluation--implying no need to deconstruct either the relationship between the saint and the community or between the community and the Church. The third historical phase is marked by the formation of the Congregation of Rites in 1588 and Urban VIII's subsequent decrees that all saints had to be approved by Rome. Scholars interpret this change in the saint-making process as a deliberate attempt to give the pope and the curia control of the selection process in order to promote saints who reflected orthodox practice and ecclesiastical values. Canonizations conducted in this third phase are depicted in the literature as selections reserved to an elite group, and they are analyzed primarily as tools for political influence or religious propaganda.
I have argued that this simplified history is inaccurate. Close attention to the material cited reveals that even the early canonizations were not done simply to confirm popular reputation. Since the Middle Ages, the political, theological, and even the commercial value of canonizations have been exploited by both popes and local sponsors. Clearly, the reforms of the seventeenth century were the culmination of a very long process of centralization; what was new was the power and authority to enforce its decrees and new administrative means to deal with the project. Significant changes in the presentation of saints undoubtedly resulted from the adoption of these new administrative and documentary procedures—but the effects of the procedures have yet to be studied. No evidence exists to prove that changes in the types of saints, or in the types of stories about those saints, seen in the early modern period, were intended or directly produced by the papal and curial reformers.

Most scholars of sainthood persist in drawing a strong dichotomy between "popular" and "elite" aspects of religious culture. Few works in the field exhibit the caution and flexibility of categorization that cultural anthropologists and social historians now exercise in their discussions of religion. It remains puzzling to the attentive reader that even the most perceptive critics fail to see that when community leaders, financial backers, devotees, clergy and Congregation of Rites work together in a single process, simple binarism is inadequate. Many scholars ignore the complicitous
nature of the canonization process even as they document it. Saints are still treated by many scholars either as popular symbols of local sanctity or as examples of official propaganda aimed at reforming popular religion.

Scholars' commitments to the anti-institutional bias against the early modern Church and its "elite" saints blinds them to the implications of their own research. For example, Nalle fails to see that Julián's case overturns the standard picture of elite saints imposed by Rome onto popular religious culture. Instead she sees Julián as an exception to a set of rules she does not challenge. Nalle describes an interactive process but she refuses to acknowledge the implications of her own data. The widespread assumption that saints are perceived and represented by means of commonly accepted roles or categories of sanctity has been challenged by modern hagiographical studies which indicate that the community's immediate experience of the saint actually constructs or revises these definitions of sanctity and Christian virtue. Nevertheless, the evidence has not revised the standard picture of saint-making which envisions it at both local and institutional levels as a selection process whereby candidates are chosen as saints according to how well they "fit" the "type."

Just as seriously, the assumption that early modern canonizations are under the exclusive control of Rome has diminished scholarly interest in the saints of this period. Unfortunately, by neglecting the study of early modern canonizations, scholars have overlooked the best-documented cases.
The seventeenth century marks a time when increased documentation and formal argument gives us access to the information of when and by whom specific aspects of the saints' identities were constructed as well as to evidence of how the bureaucratic process and formal requirements influenced the final outcome. I am not suggesting that the early modern church did not try to impose new ways of thinking on the laity and clergy, nor am I denying that the cardinals and theologians in the Congregation of Rites did not try, whenever possible, to dominate the discourse about saints. What I am concerned about is the scholarly tendency to ascribe to the canonization process features and problems discovered in other aspects of seventeenth-century religious culture (trials of the Inquisition, new styles of preaching and catechetical instruction, imposition of sexual mores, etc.) before the process by which saints are made is adequately studied.

David Sabean has offered an excellent approach for examining the relationships between the different cultural groups involved in canonization by revealing that it is their discourse which unites them—not an agreed upon definition of sanctity or a common view of what saints roles should be. The outcome of their negotiations, says Sabean, will inevitably be appropriated, adapted, and revised by each group according to its particular needs. Such a model would seem to agree with the findings of Nalle, Alberigo, and Polizzotto who trace the changing identities of particular saints over time and for different groups of people. Sabean's model also fits
the evidence that in the seventeenth century, despite their differences, local communities and the cardinals in Rome continued to canonize saints together--saints who continued to hold significance for many different groups of Christians.

Sabeau’s discursive approach can be further enriched by the addition of Roland Barthes’ understanding of myth. Barthes’s observation that human beings mythologize to meet their need for unity, security, and resolution of conflict is fitting for the canonization process. Another scholar of myth, John Dominic Crossan, says that myth’s value lies in its ability to offer resolution of conflict and contradiction in a way which creates belief in the possibility of a permanent reconciliation of all parties. The social function of canonization, in my opinion, is the creation of a myth of harmony and consensus within the church. Canonized saints are symbols of reconciliation: between God and humanity, between diverse social and cultural groups in the saint’s local community, and between that community and the Church of Rome. As I pointed out in the introduction, the process of making saints involves two discursive levels: the first constructs the myth of the saint; the second constructs a myth of the Church. The discourse allows even radically different parties involved in determining the sanctity of the candidate to construct a myth of cooperation and agreement between themselves. The challenge to scholars of sainthood is not only to identify the

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political speech "beneath" the construction of the saints but, more importantly, to reveal the mythologizing strategies of both sides.

The nature of this collaborative discourse of canonization will, in turn, challenge the now-accepted view of early modern canonizations and revise our understanding of institutional and cultural imposition to include dimensions of participation and collaboration. If, as Sabean claims, participation in the discourse is the only thing which can bind different groups together, then the Church's insistence on bringing all groups into the conversation is a unifying, not a repressive, strategy. By insuring that the saints can be made within a shared discourse and not within isolated communities, the Church reasserts a basic function of canonization: to create the Church as well as the saints. John Paul II is today renewing the discourse that Urban VIII created in the seventeenth century. Urban made the process more "objective" and rigorous at the same time that he made it mandatory; John Paul made it easier and less expensive in an effort to expand participation in the conversation. Faced with growing skepticism and cultural diversity, both popes reformed the canonization process in an attempt to keep the conversation going.

Most scholars have not compared different kinds of documents to evaluate just how either local testimony or ecclesiastical documents are revised over the course of the canonization process. The scholarship which now exists examines pieces of information for the saints: one scholar
compares several biographies of a particular saint; one looks at the
canonization bulls of fifty saints; one discusses the legal process; another
mentions the political situation. Few studies follow particular saints from
their earliest biographies through the local process, through the papal
process, all the way to the final bull of canonization. Few scholars attempt
to unravel the multiple strands of discourse woven into the vernacular Lives
of the saint in order to reveal how the local identity of the saint is arrived
at, which voices contribute to the "authorized" picture, which voices
forgotten. Even fewer scholars trace the nature and extent of the changes in
saintly image over the course of the canonization process to see where, how,
and by whom the major revisions are imposed.

I believe that the saints of the early modern period should receive
further attention. Not only have they been neglected by scholars who tend
to prefer medieval saints, but, as I have pointed out above, the sixteenth
and seventeenth century canonizations provide a documented exchange
between community and tribunal. In the next phase of research on this
project I propose to examine the earliest biographies as well as the
testimony of local witnesses taken in the local process to obtain indications
of the saint's popular reputation and to identify the saint's local supporters.
That information, along with commissions for biographies and paintings of
the saints, should expand our understanding of the saint as promoted by
the local sponsors and promoters. Then I propose that the evidence for the
saint's local identity mentioned above be compared to the image presented to the Congregation in Rome. Was he or she, like Julian, "revised" by local sponsors in order to impress the judges? Or, like Carlo Borromeo, was the saint's identity changed to mollify his detractors and political opponents in Rome? It would be instructive to know when and where which changes occur. Throughout the examination of the documents, attention must be paid to procedural details of the process: how have the interrogatories (the lists of questions posed to the witnesses) shaped the responses, to what extent does the official definition of virtue highlight or omit salient features of the saint's individual character? What changes can be detected in translations and transcriptions of the materials? These details are important for clarifying the ways in which the recording, writing, and standardization of the materials affects the identity of the saint as much as deliberate revisions do. Moreover, the image of the saint which emerges in the documentation above needs to be compared to the final canonized identity of the saint as presented in the official iconography, hagiography, and liturgy. Finally, the analysis of all of these documents must consider in what ways the materials document not only the construction of the saint's identity but the negotiation of a relationship between Rome and the local community.

The importance of considering paintings as texts for the study of saints has been demonstrated in the work of Cook and Galatoriotou above.
One further example, however, will make a fitting close to this paper by reminding the reader that the saint retains special significance for local communities even when the attributes most obviously valued by that group appears "lost" in the final canonized version. The story of Carlo Borromeo, as told above, stands as a serious indictment of the canonization process and confirms scholars worst suspicions that the cardinals in Rome could and did obliterate the identities of saints which appealed to their followers. But the story of Saint Carlo Borromeo does not end where Alberigo leaves off. My research into paintings of Borromeo, commissioned shortly after his death and even well after his final canonization reveal that his identity as Bishop of Milan was not lost or forgotten. With few exceptions, paintings of Borromeo celebrate his pastoral work in Milan. Of the scores of paintings extant (Borromeo continues to be a very widely revered saint) almost all depict scenes from his life as Bishop. There are few portraits of him as a cardinal--and they hang in Rome, not Madrid.
APPENDIX

A BASIC OUTLINE OF THE PROCEDURE FOR BEATIFICATION AND CANONIZATION

Appreciation for the complexity of the canonization process and for its specific effects on the biographical materials about the saint is important for evaluating just how the saint's canonized identity is formed. The biographical material about a saint from which his or her image emerges includes not only written accounts, but from oral testimony from witnesses in all of the towns or villages in which the saint may have lived. These materials are written down, in most cases, according to a predetermined questionnaire, then summarized, translated and re-presented multiple times over the course of the canonization process. To the testimony of witnesses are added various other reports and evaluations which are then re-summarized and debated according to formal court procedures. A review of the steps involved should serve to emphasize the importance of examining the procedures themselves as a first step to understanding how or by whom a saint's identity is created. Comparative examination of texts as they are generated by that process is likewise important to trace and explain the occurrence of revisions—even subtle or inadvertent ones—which affect the saint's canonized image.

The following section presents a compilation of information gleaned from several sources and it is intended to provide both a brief outline of the
steps involved in canonization and a glossary of technical terms. The canonization process described is a summary of the procedures codified in De Servorum Dei beatificatione et canonizacione by Prospero Lambertini (later Benedict XIV). This eighteenth-century work utilized both the seventeenth-century decrees of Pope Urban VIII and the evolving practice of the Congregation of Rites.

**The Reformed Canonization Process As It Existed at the Close of the Seventeenth Century.**

I. The Institution of the Cause:

If a diocesan bishop deemed that sufficient reputation or **fame of sanctity** or martyrdom existed in the community concerning a deceased person, the bishop could institute a **cause** for the candidate's canonization. In most cases, the bishop was not the official sponsor of the cause; the **sponsor** was usually a representative of the saint's own community or religious order. In addition to the bishop's initiative, petitions were also sent to the Pope on behalf of the candidate; these petitions were sought from authoritative persons: kings, princes, governors, city councils, cardinals, archbishops, bishops, or heads of religious orders. Throughout the course of the process, the candidate is never referred to as a saint but simply as a **Servant of**

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261 Most of this information can be found in the articles by Molinari and Löw. Supplementary material has been added from Delooz and Blaher, both of whom discuss the process in great detail. Information concerning the modern reform is taken from Woodward.
God. The institution or official opening of the cause called for a tribunal to be convened in the candidate's local community (in every community, in fact, in which the Servant of God lived or worked and in which a fame of sanctity is said to exist.)

II: The Ordinary Process

The process by which the tribunal evaluated the candidate's local reputation was called ordinary because it was conducted by authority of the ordinary of the local diocese. It is sometimes called the informative process because its purpose was to furnish the Congregation of Rites at the Vatican with the information necessary to determine if formal introduction of the cause was warranted.

II. a) The local tribunal: the purpose of the tribunal or panel of judges was to gather evidence about the candidate's reputation, in what that fame consisted, its foundation, and extent. Witnesses were summoned and asked a set of questions, called interrogatories. The original acts of this process were to be preserved in the archives of the diocese and a sealed copy of them, called the transumptum, sent to the Congregation in Rome.

II. b) Investigation of Writings: Before a cause could advance, it was necessary to ascertain whether the writings of the candidate reflected doctrinal orthodoxy and to be sure they contained no heresy. The tribunal demanded copies of all of the remaining personal correspondence, published
writings, and private papers known to have been penned by the candidate over his or her lifetime. These were examined by theologians who reported their findings to the Congregation.

II. c) Investigation into Cult: According to Urban VIII's decrees, no cause could progress until it had been established that no unauthorized public cult has been accorded to the Servant of God. This requirement represented a major step toward the enforcement of papal authorization of cults. An official inspection of the site of the candidate's tomb and dwelling as well as an inspection of local churches were conducted to establish whether or not evidence of a public cult existed. While it has always been necessary to establish a widespread and enduring reputation for sanctity for the candidate in order for canonization proceedings to begin, it became, after Urban, just as necessary to prove that no public worship or liturgical honors had been performed (either at shrines or in local churches) nor public images erected. It was also important to establish that the prayers for the dead were not suspended on behalf of the candidate--his or her presence in heaven being not yet proved. Acceptable public acclaim was limited to a widespread conviction that by appealing to the Servant of God for intercession, special favors or even miracles might be granted by God. Private prayers and devotions to the memory of the Servant of God were allowable.
II. d) Preparation of the Cause: The candidate's cause was presented to the Congregation of Rites through the postulator who had the duty of preparing the evidence and discussing the cause with competent judges. In the course of study and presentation of the candidate's cause, the postulator worked with an advocate-procurator from the Congregation. This advocate prepared a legal brief based on the testimonies and documentary evidence which proved the existence of a true reputation for sanctity and demonstrated the advisability of formally introducing the cause. The initial documents prepared by the advocate-procurator were in two parts: the informatio (a systematic exposition of the life and reputation of the candidate) and the summarium depositionum (a summary of the depositions of the witnesses.)

II. e) The Promotor of the Faith: Also known as "the devil's advocate," the Promotor was an appointed member of the Congregation of Rites who examines the documents prepared above and proposes his objections, or animadversiones, to the advocate's arguments or evidence. The postulator and advocate are then given the opportunity to give answers, or respondiones, in reply to these objections. This exchange or debate gave the canonization process the format of a courtroom debate. The position of Promoter of the Faith was established in the early sixteenth century by Pope Leo X.
II. f) The Positio: A printed volume, called the positio, was prepared containing all of the material thus far described: the informatio, the summarium depositionum, the animadversiones, and the responsiones. In addition, the results of the investigation of cult and of the investigation of (the candidate's) writings were included. The positio was then presented to the prelates of the Congregation of Rites.

II. g) The Introduction of the Cause: After due examination of the positio, the members of the Congregation discussed their judgements; if they agreed that the cause was worthy, they so informed the Pope. When and if the Pope decided that it was opportune, he decreed the so-called introduction of the cause and initiated the next phase of the process with the signatura commissiones. In the thirteenth century, the canonization process was complete at this point, culminating in the Pope's signature ratifying the decision of a local or ordinary process. By the seventeenth century, however, a second part of the process had been instituted. At this point, the Servant of God was declared venerable and passed on to the next round of investigations.

III. The Apostolic Process

The decree of introduction passed the candidate's cause from the jurisdiction of the bishop to the exclusive jurisdiction of the Holy See. This phase of the process established the candidate's practice of Christian virtue or
established martyrdom. The judges for this process were members of the Congregation of Rites (delegated by the Pope) and the general and particular questions to be used in the interrogation of witnesses were prepared by the Promoter of the Faith.

**III. a) The Depositions of Witnesses:** In addition to the witnesses from the candidate's own community who might have testified during the ordinary process, new witnesses might be summoned and interrogated specifically concerning the candidate's life and virtues. The list of witnesses was required to include some who did not support the cause for canonization in order to be considered a sufficient sample of opinion.

**III. b) The Presentation of the Cause:** All of the testimony given by the witnesses according to the formula and questions prepared by the Congregation was collected into a volume of the acts and given to the postulator of the cause. Because testimonies might be collected in more than one tribunal (a different tribunal might be established in each of the major cities in which the saint lived, for example) the postulator often had to prepare translations of some materials. The postulator and the advocate-procurator then prepared a new study that presented the evidence for the candidate’s pious life and practice of virtue (or for the candidate's martyrdom). Again the material was presented in the form of an *informatio* and a *summarium depositionum*. 
III. c) **The Validation of the Process:** Before proceeding further, the Congregation stopped to evaluate the documents gathered to this point in order to establish that due process had been followed and that reliable information could be assumed.

III. d) **Examination by the Congregation:** The cause was presented to the Congregation as before with the case on behalf of the candidate presented by the promoter and advocate-procurator and with objections raised by the Promoter of the Faith. The promoter and advocate-procurator again were given an opportunity to reply.

III. e) **The Positio Super Virtutibus or Super Martyrio:** A printed volume was prepared containing all of the materials collected to this point: *informatio, summarium, animadversiones* and *responsiones.* This was distributed to the members of the Congregation.

III. f) **The Congregations:** The Congregation's officials and consultants discussed their judgments at the **Antepreparatory Congregation.** Any difficulties or reservations expressed in the course of this discussion were recorded by the Promoter of the Faith as *novae animadversiones.* The postulator and advocate presented their responses to these and everything was discussed again at a **Preparatory Congregation.** This whole process was repeated one more time with *novissimae animadversiones,* etc. The final discussion took place at a **General Congregation** or **Congregation corum Sanctissimo** at which the Pope presided.
III. g) Verification of Miracles: Even with a favorable outcome in the General Congregation, two miracles ascribed to the intercession of the Servant of God were required for beatification. Inquiries were conducted to establish both that God truly performed a miracle, i.e. that no other natural or human cause for the event could be found, and that the miracle is to be ascribed to the intercession of the candidate under consideration. If two miracles could be successfully verified, the candidate might be beatified.

III. h) The Decree de Tuto: A final General Congregation was required in the presence of the Pope for the purpose of confirming that it it "safe to proceed" with the beatification. When and if the Pope deemed it opportune to do so, he ordered the publication of the Decree de Tuto and selected a day for the solemn celebration of the event.

III. i) Beatification: At the time of Urban VIII, beatification was not required as a preliminary step for canonization although this was commonly done. Under Pope however, the formal distinction in honor and title between beatification and canonization was made and beatification was set as a prerequisite for further canonization. The ceremonies began with the promulgation of the Apostolic Brief by which the Pope granted the Servant of God the title of Blessed. Subsequently an image of the newly beatified was unveiled, a solemn Te Deum is sung and a pontifical Mass celebrated. Veneration of the Blessed was usually restricted to a local community: a city, diocese, religious order, etc. A special prayer and Mass
and a proper Divine Office was authorized for use in this limited celebration
of the Blessed's Feast Day (usually assigned to the date of death or
martyrdom).

IV. From Beatification to Canonization: If further miracles were
reported and if the fame of the candidate continued, and if the sponsors of
the candidate's cause were so inclined, the cause could be reopened for
possible canonization. New processes or inquiries were made along the lines
already described. If the Congregation deemed that evidence existed for
further miracles performed through the intercession of the Blessed, then
they advised the Pope that it was safe to proceed with the solemn
canonization of the candidate. As before, the actual decision of the
Congregation did not dictate when or if the Pope would actually confer
canonization—that was always left to the Pope's discretion.

V. Canonization: Canonization is considered the final and definitive
pronouncement not only of the virtue and exemplarity of the candidate's life
but also of his or her presence in heaven. Canonization confers the title of
Saint upon the candidate previously titled Blessed. Veneration of the saint
is extended to the universal Church and exalts his or her function as
heavenly intercessor. The solemn ceremony has for centuries included: a
procession that precedes the Pope into St. Peter's in which a standard
bearing the image of the new Saint is carried; a triple petition (instanter, instantius, instantissime) directed to the Pope asking for canonization of the Blessed; the singing of the Veni Creator Spiritus; the reading of the pontifical Bull of Canonization in which the virtues or the Saint are proclaimed; the solemn singing of the Te Deum; a pontifical Mass, and the presentation of special, symbolic gifts at the Offertory.
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