INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps. Each original is also photographed in one exposure and is included in reduced form at the back of the book.

Photographs included in the original manuscript have been reproduced xerographically in this copy. Higher quality 6" x 9" black and white photographic prints are available for any photographs or illustrations appearing in this copy for an additional charge. Contact UMI directly to order.

UMI
A Bell & Howell Information Company
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor MI 48106-1346 USA
313/761-4700 800/521-0600
RICE UNIVERSITY

CHAINS OF VIRTUE:
SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY SAINTS
IN SPANISH COLONIAL LIMA

by

ALICE L. WOOD

A THESIS SUBMITTED
IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

APPROVED,
THESIS COMMITTEE

John M. Stroup, Director
Harry and Hazel Chavanne
Professor of Religious Studies

Edith Wyschogrod
J. Newton Rayzor Professor of
Philosophy and Religious Thought

Patricia Seed
Professor of History

HOUSTON, TEXAS
May, 1997
Copyright

Alice L. Wood

1997
ABSTRACT

Chains of Virtue: Seventeenth-century Saints in Spanish Colonial Lima

by Alice L. Wood

Seventeenth-century Lives of colonial saints in Peru reflect the Spanish colony's growing independence and changing missionary strategies. Lives of saints Luis Bertran, Francis Solano, Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo, Juan Macias, Rose of Lima, Martin de Porras and the unrecognized Nicolas de Ayllon reveal the symbolic resolution of alterity as a dominant theme. Concern with alterity appears most prominently in discourses about language and bodies. Hagiography provided Creole communities with religious narratives of self-legitimization and self-definition. This questions a general scholarly assumption that saints of the Early Modern period are the creations of the ecclesiastical powers in Rome. Likewise, the assertion that hagiography is written in order to provide exemplars of virtue for ordinary people is qualified by my study. The Lives mirror two phases of colonial development: the first phase described Spanish evangelization and confrontation with native populations. Saints were strongly identified with Europe and their Lives reflected the cultural struggle with external others and the need to justify Christian missions. Hagiographers focused on the power or language and gave little attention to the physical world of bodies. The second phase was marked by an increasing sense of Creole identity. Hagiographers shifted the focus from words and language—now treated as suspect—to the body itself. Lives of these saints showcased mortifications of the body in order to dissociate the saints from inferiorities associated with their race or gender.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

This dissertation was written with the support of a 1996-1997 American Dissertation Fellowship awarded by the American Association of University Women. Additional support for research in Lima, Peru was provided by a travel grant from the Dean of Humanities at Rice University. Graduate funding from Rice University provided support for the initial phases of this study. I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to Dr. John Stroup, my dissertation director, for his support and scholarly advice on this project. His love of history and his sense of humor make him a wonderful mentor. I wish to thank Dr. Patricia Seed for having encouraged me to undertake South American research and for showing such interest in my project. Her teaching provides my inspiration and her confidence sustains me. I am also indebted to Dr. Edith Wyschogrod whose thought-provoking questions and shared interest in saints' Lives aided my study in numerous ways.

I am deeply grateful to Violetta Carlín and to her family for welcoming me into their homes and hearts in Lima. My research would not have been possible without them. Special thanks go to Lily Carlín for her friendship, for her assistance as guide, translator and interpreter, and for her skill in dealing with taxi drivers, clerks, and officials everywhere. Señora Edith Begazo and the staff of the Biblioteca Nacional de Perú not only assisted me but made my research more efficient and highly enjoyable. I wish also to thank Father Lino Dolan, O.P., Prior Provincial of
the Dominican Province of San Juan Bautista del Perú, and Father Jorge Cuadros, O.P. for allowing me access to the library at the Dominican Convent of the Rosary in Lima. It was a rare privilege to be able to work in such a beautiful setting.

I want to extend special recognition to the staff of the Fondren library at Rice University, and in particular to Sarah Bentley, for the help and good humor they have provided me almost daily. The library has felt “like home” in many ways. Over the years, Sylvia Louie in the department of Religious Studies at Rice has been my invaluable guide and ally. Paula Platt and Nancy Parker in the department of History befriended me—and gave me coffee!

Dr. Margaret Edwards offered valuable editorial advice on this manuscript as well as essential sisterly support during my summer in Peru. Without her help and encouragement, this project would have taken a great deal longer to complete. I wish also to thank Dr. Jeannine Klein for her attentive reading and helpful advice, especially on the more theoretical aspects of the project. Her editing and computing skills saved the manuscript several times and her friendship has repeatedly saved my sanity. Mary Ann Clark listened to me think through, talk out, and agonize over every stage of this dissertation. She has exhibited heroic patience and charity.

Graduate school would not have been possible without the support of my family. My parents have supplied critical funds and supportive phone calls throughout the years. I wish my father had lived to see me get the title “Dr.” Dick, Tracy and Harrison Rupp have been a superb cheering section—they helped more than they realized. My three daughters, Sarah Grace, Laura Beth, and Hannah Lea
have remained loving, forgiving and affectionate despite my long hours at the library and on the computer. My husband Howard deserves infinitely more thanks than I could ever express here. He gave me the courage to embark upon this journey and sustained me through it. He has demonstrated *all* the virtues to a heroic degree and deserves, at the very least, the title of “Venerable.”
TABLE OF CONTENTS

Acknowledgments........................................................................................................... iii
Table of Contents ............................................................................................................. vi
Preface.............................................................................................................................. viii
Introduction: Saints In Chains ..................................................................................... 1
The Standard Picture.......................................................................................................6
The Revised Picture ........................................................................................................ 23

PART I: EUROPEAN SAINTS IN THE NEW WORLD.......................... 32

Chapter One: The Missionaries .................................................................................. 32
St. Luis Bertran (1526-1581) .................................................................................... 34
Francis Solano (1549-1610) ..................................................................................... 59

Chapter Two: Saints in a New World ....................................................................... 90
Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo (1538-1606) ............................................................. 91
Juan Massias (1585-1645) ......................................................................................... 117

PART II: CREOLE SAINTS IN LIMA......................................................... 134

Chapter Three: The Flowering of Creole Lima ....................................................... 134
Rosa de Santa Maria .................................................................................................. 138

Chapter Four ............................................................................................................... 173
Martin de Porras (1579-1639) ................................................................................. 173
Nicholas de Aylôn (1632-1677) .............................................................................. 190
Conclusion ................................................................. 207
Appendix: Timeline ..................................................... 216
Bibliography .............................................................. 218
  Primary Sources ....................................................... 218
  Secondary Sources ................................................... 220
Preface

The primary sources used in this study are seventeenth-century published Lives of the saints. With a few exceptions, these books were read at the Biblioteca Nacional de Perú in Lima. None are available in English translations. In addition to these printed sources, I have drawn supporting material from manuscript sources in the Archivo Arzobispal in Lima. In presenting the narratives from the Lives, I have chosen to paraphrase the stories in English within the body of the text and offer the original Spanish in the footnotes. In the English versions, I have tried to improve the clarity and readability by inserting punctuation and, occasionally, words where necessary. Many of the seventeenth-century texts have been damaged by age and bookworms; occasionally I have noted [damage] where portions of the page were unreadable. Furthermore, the pagination of these documents is frequently irregular or missing altogether. Where mispagination occurs, I have noted it in the citation.

In the Spanish text I have made some orthographic changes — inserting missing letters where indicated by a tilde (") in the original, using the modern “s,” and distinguishing “v” from “u” — but not others. I have left the original spellings (and misspellings) and have included the original accents. Unlike modern Spanish, seventeenth-century Spanish uses vowel accent grave (è) and uses a cedilla (ç) instead of “z.” Orthography was not standardized at the time these books were printed and
variations occur according to the tastes of different authors and printers. In this lies much of their charm.
INTRODUCTION: SAINTS IN CHAINS

The adolescent Rose of Lima—a beautiful and pious girl by all accounts—wore one item of personal adornment which she tried to conceal from her parents and confessors: a tightly cinched iron chain, encircling her waist beneath her clothing. For some time she had used the chain as a scourge but her confessors had insisted that she cease this practice.¹ In obedience to their orders, Rose ceased her flagellations but bound the chain so tightly that she inflicted new tortures. Fearing discovery, she locked the chain with a padlock and got rid of the key.² Toribio Alfonso de Mogrobejo, Archbishop of Peru, “disciplined” himself daily with iron chains until the blood ran in streams down his back.³ Martin de Porres, a Dominican lay-brother at the convent of Nuestra Señora del Rosario, astonished his religious brothers by wearing beneath his habit chains which bound his flesh so tightly that they became permanently incorporated into his body, unable to be removed for the flesh that had grown around them.⁴

¹ Gonzales Acuña, 1671, 82.
² Popular legend says that Rose threw the key down a nearby well—which well has become a focal point of her shrine in Lima. Gonzales de Acuña says Rose gave the key to a sympathetic confessor; another account says simply she hid it. Molina 10, 113-114. Yet another version reports that she was forced to surrender the chains to her confessors as proof of her obedience and that this sacrifice of her chains, her “favorites,” was so distressing as to be the severest mortification of all. Ferrer de Valdecebro, 1669, 74.
³ Diego de Córdova Salinas, Corónica de la Religiosísima Provincia de Los Doce Apóstoles del Perú, (Lima: Jorge Lopez de Herrera, 1651).
⁴ Bernardo de Medina, Vida Prodigiosa del Venerable Siervo de Dios Fr. Martin de Porras... (Madrid: Domingo García Morrás, 1675).
Chains are a recurring theme in the Lives of saints in Spanish Colonial Peru. I see in these chains multiple metaphors for the roles of saints within their communities and for the public construction of sanctity in the Early Modern period. Chains were popular instruments of virtue in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and prodigious self-mortification is highly valued. The saintly use of chains, however, must be read carefully for it is, at the least, “doubly-coded.” Modern readers are frequently repelled by these stories, seeing only the pathological implications of these religious practices. By contrast, the hagiographers of the seventeenth century do not portray physical chains as particularly severe afflictions. The saints in their narratives suffer far more from constraints imposed by families and confessors. At the same time that these saints used chains to subdue, afflict, and negate the physical body, they inscribed that body with meaning and cordoned it off from the cultural constraints applied to other bodies. Thus, the discourse about saints’ bodies becomes bound to the ongoing cultural discourse. Further, as Francisco Antonio Montalvo wrote, in a 1683 life of Saint Toribio, “all the virtues are chained together and cannot be separated.” This seventeenth-century understanding of interlocking virtue was reflected in revisions of canonization procedures which strongly linked the proof of saintly life to a candidate’s exceptional practice of all the virtues. This development, some scholars argue, not only minimized the role of miracles (and, thereby, the

---

5 "Only if hagiography is read as doubly coded, that is, only if it has passed through the lens of modern and postmodern criticism so that it is no longer offered in its first naiveté, can it surmount [the]charge [of being kitsch]." Edith Wyschogrod, *Saints and Postmodernism: Rewriting Moral Philosophy,* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990), p. xviii.
6 "Aunque todas las virtudes estan de suerte encadenadas, que no pueden desunirse, sin deshacerse, no obstante ay algunas tan parecidas, que solo se differencian por los nombres, a por la atencion de sus efectos." Montalvo, *El Sol del Nuevo Mundo,* 1683, p. 277.
popular appeal of saints) but shackled sanctity to theological concepts and to an institutional insistence on morality. 

To extend the metaphor, Catholic saints form chains across time and space, encircling the community, linking monasteries to their founders, as well as citizens to their towns, and connecting this world to heaven. As the embodiments of these connections, the saints are the focus of a discourse that forges links between a local community and the Church in Rome. The most important “double coding” within this discourse is that which allows the saints to represent both the actual and idealized identities of their communities.

Saints are also inevitably linked to other saints by deliberate imitation of past saints and by association with contemporary ones. (It is said the saints always recognize each other.) Those who write about saints, repeat their stories, and promote their canonizations are “chained” together, both connected and constrained, by what I call a “discourse of sanctity.” It is this discourse that is the focus of my study of seventeenth-century Spanish Colonial saints in Peru whose lives link past, present, and future as well as Old and New Worlds. My title, “Chains of Virtue,” calls attention

---

Footnotes:
2. The 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 the way in which arguments for sanctity are constructed and the way in which conclusions about a saint’s life are reached. This expanded use of the term “discourse” points to the work of Michel Foucault. Foucault’s use of the word “discourse” includes the relationship between language and social institutions and the ways in which discursive practice forms power relations and structures knowledge.
to the metaphor which so aptly describes many features of sainthood and of the public discourse of sanctity in the seventeenth century.

This project revises the standard picture of seventeenth century saints as flat, formulaic icons of Catholic Reformation morality chosen by Rome. Instead, I represent the saints of Lima, Peru, as powerful embodiments of community identity which are subsequently used to create, in concert with Rome, the appearance of consensus and a mythological resolution of cultural alterities. When Spanish Christians met the New World, the confrontation with alterity was staggering. It is not surprising that, faced with this historically unprecedented encounter, Spanish Colonial society turned to the figures of their saints for expression of and symbolic resolution of their profound sense of alienation and estrangement from European Christendom. The transposition of religious and cultural assumptions from the old culture to the New World could not proceed quietly and subtly but involved violence, rupture, excess. The saint, always a liminal and transgressive figure, was suddenly forced to self-construct in radical ways in order to reach the rapidly receding boundaries of the Early Modern world. The excess of the saintly population itself in Lima points to the power of the lives of saints, themselves figures of excess, to negotiate the crisis of identity for colonial culture and church.

---

12. Between 1582 and 1645, there were never fewer than four saints living in Lima within walking distance of one another. See timeline provided in Appendix.
This was a world where martyrdom and self-mutilation seemed far less frightening than separation from the "civilized" world.11

A great deal of scholarly work focuses on early Christian and medieval hagiography. Seventeenth century saints (with the exception of major figures such as Teresa of Jesus, John of the Cross, Ignatius Loyola) and particularly those in the New World, have been generally neglected until quite recently. Religious studies scholars have largely abided by the standard academic picture that the Lives of these later saints are formulaic and sterile—not inviting topics for research. The work in this field has largely come from cultural historians examining the seventeenth-century saints as cultural and sociological icons, and thus investigations have tended to yield only pictures of saints as institutional propaganda.

From the perspective of most present day scholars, Early Modern discourse about saints is assumed to be a "totalizing discourse." That is to say, it appears to be a dialogue between a local community and the Vatican which, by the seventeenth century, was so thoroughly dominated by the voice of Rome that sainthood was completely defined and circumscribed by institutional concerns. The seventeenth-century lives in my study, however, do not support this picture of saints and canonization; instead, they reveal an intense preoccupation with issues of local concern. This project, then, revises the standard picture of seventeenth century saints as flat icons of Catholic Reformation morality chosen by Rome. Instead, it represents the saints of Lima, Peru, as powerful icons of New World colonial identity.

THE STANDARD PICTURE

Our traditional view of seventeenth-century saints comes from various sources. Historians of popular religion and culture assert an internal polarization of Catholicism during the Catholic Reformation whereby the role of saints' cults in popular religion threatens the institutional Church in Rome because it competes with the importance of the sacraments.\textsuperscript{12} Saints, in this view, are largely the constructions of the College of Cardinals and have little to do with popular values. A second source for the standard picture comes from the sociologists of sainthood\textsuperscript{13} who look at attributes of canonized saints and, from those, trace "trends" in sanctity tied to political concerns. Those scholars who focus on the canonization processes themselves argue that both popular and ecclesiastical recognition of saints was based on the candidate's conformation to historical norms of sanctity and conventional saintly profiles.\textsuperscript{14} In this view, canonization hinged on the extent to which a candidate could be made to match the official checklist of virtues required of saints by the Congregation of Rites—and made to serve papal and curial interests.

Three dominant assumptions underlie the standard depiction of sainthood in scholarly literature: (1) that canonization is a process of identification and selection; (2) that religious culture (and, therefore, sainthood) is polarized into "popular" and

\textsuperscript{12} For example, see A. D. Wright, The Counter-Reformation: Catholic Europe and the Non-Christian World (NY: St. Martin's Press, 1982).

\textsuperscript{13} Delooz, Goodich, Weinstein and Bell. See discussion of their work in next section.

“elite” types; and (3) that the increasingly centralized Church authority over saint-making precludes any significant role for local communities. In fact, as my review of literature will show, all three assumptions grow out of a scholarly suspicion of the power of ecclesiastical institutions and are based on an extrapolation from other aspects of post-Tridentine Catholicism. Most scholars have limited their examination of canonization to official documents and have overlooked contrary evidence in the vernacular Lives.

In 1984, Peter Burke published the article “How to Be a Counter-Reformation Saint” which continues to be widely cited by social historians. Burke’s article reflects all three major characteristics basic to the standard picture: a view of canonization as a selection process, a strong polarization of saints in to popular and elite categories, and the depiction of seventeenth-century canonization reforms as repressive strategies which eliminated popular participation in the canonization process. Despite his assertion that canonization involves an “interaction” between Vatican officials and local lay communities, Burke claims that, in the Counter Reformation period, all of the power in this exchange shifted to the papal curia. Burke, in fact, does not describe any interaction at all; instead, he proposes a set of criteria by which saints were selected. It is regrettable that Burke looked more superficially at the process behind the making of a saint, than he did at the parallel

---


16 Ibid, p. 45.

17 Ibid, p. 50-52. His criteria for sanctity are derived from the tabulation of the attributes of canonized saints—a circular reasoning.
construction of the public figure of the king, a process he brilliantly set forth in his 1992 book, The Fabrication of Louis XIV. Burke—and others influenced by him—have failed to see that saints, like other public figures, are social constructions as well as historical figures.

The first assumption—that the process of saint-making is one of identification and selection among worthy candidates—naturalizes the canonization process, obscuring its deliberately constructive nature. Beyond that, the standard picture does not adequately differentiate between stages of the process: the identification of a saintly individual within a community and the qualification process conducted by the Congregation of Rites in Rome—only the virtues, characters, and priorities of the two groups are seen to differ. As a result of this first assumption, scholars traditionally focus either on the charismatic personalities of the saints or on Rome's selection criteria.

At one time, canonization by Rome was presented as a process whereby the Church authenticated and corroborated the community's choice. Over the course of this century, opinions have varied widely as to the nature and results of this process. Canon Macken, an English cleric, was the first to outline the process of canonization for lay readers. In his 1909 book, he describes canonization as an "exact science," in which careful deliberation and accurate investigation not only eliminated deception

---

16 Aviad Kleinberg, Prophets in Their Own Country (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1991), p.4. Max Weber's idea of charisma seems to be the underlying basis of this assumption, but religious scholars have not acknowledged this debt. Kleinberg is one of the few to understand the importance of Weber's ideas in shaping the modern understanding of the relationship of saints to their local communities. See Max Weber, The Theory of Social and Economic Organization (NY: Free Press, 1964), pp.358-363.
and error, but permitted the truth to shine forth.²² Few writers since have shared Macken’s optimism, but then few have reacted as strongly as Cunningham who, in 1980, denounced the canonization process as one which “sanitized” the saints and reinterpreted “deviant charismatic symbols” in order to foster “conforming identification.”²¹ Most contemporary scholars, like Burke, present the canonization process as a second, independent selection process based on the pope’s or the curia’s own set of criteria (catechetical, political, or cultural).²² André Vauchez, a venerable historian of saints in the late medieval period and one of the first to examine comprehensively both Lives and canonization documents side by side, nevertheless infers from them a set of selection criteria.²³ Because the proclamation of a saint has for so long been portrayed as the natural outcome of two relatively independent selection processes, scholarship has focused almost exclusively on who was chosen, inferring the why and by whom from that list of saints, without adequate additional investigation.

The second feature of traditional scholarship on sainthood is its division of saints into "popular" and "elite" categories. Peter Brown, in The Cult of the Saints: Its Rise and Function in Latin Christianity, observes that historians have a well-established tradition of identifying the saints as an essential dimension of the beliefs and practices of lay Christians. Brown traces the “two-tiered” structure of religion

---
²² This is the canonization as “quality control” assumption held by scholars in the 1930s and 1940s such as Kuttner, Kemp, and Blamer whose work will be discussed below.
into "elite" theology (or rational religion) and "popular" superstition (or magical religion) back to the eighteenth century and Hume's "natural" or "vulgar" religion of "the masses." The standard picture of sainthood remains strongly influenced by the sociology of the 1970s which drew sharp distinctions between "popular" and "elite" cultural practices. While scholars in other disciplines have abandoned such sharply delineated categories, many scholars of sainthood remain mired in the old dichotomies. These scholars generally assume that while the laity acclaims and promotes saints, the Vatican scrutinizes and revises them. David Gentilcore describes the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries as characterized by this struggle between local communities and the church for control of the sacred. While the church endeavored to bring about conformity to ecclesiastically mediated religion, local communities searched for their own sources of sacred power: relics, holy places, and wonder-workers among their own people. Gentilcore links the functions of the two church tribunals, the Congregation of Rites and the Holy Office of the Inquisition, as they both define sanctity: "the former was concerned with deceased servants of God, the latter examined people of 'simulated' or questionable sanctity while they were still alive." Gentilcore uncritically accepts all figures popularly acclaimed as potential candidates for sainthood and the failure of most of them to be recognized by the church stands, in his eyes, as an indictment of ecclesiastical repression. For

---

25 Not 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.
27 p. 177.
example, he misreads Judith Brown’s work on the nun Benedetta by implying that she should have been a saint—something Brown herself never suggests. Jean-Michel Sallman, like Gentilcore, believes that acclaim as a saint and condemnation as a witch were closely related phenomena.

For the past thirty years, saints have been studied almost exclusively as cultural indicators. Historians of Early Modern Europe have been strongly shaped by two influences 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. This idea was championed in the journal *Annales*. Popular religion, according to the *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 they blamed for a perverted and diminished Christianity. In 1971, Jean Delumeau, in *Le catholicisme entre Luther et Voltaire*, developed the thesis that the two Reformations constituted complementary aspects of a massive effort to Christianize an essentially pagan European population. This work was widely read and, in 1978, Robert Muchembled drew a sharp distinction between learned and popular culture. The forced imposition of elite norms on popular religion, in order

---

26 This point will be argued extensively in Section II, “Saints as Cultural Indicators.”
28 Also cited as *Annales: Economies, Societies, Civilizations*.
to achieve conformity with elite culture, he termed “acculturation.” Drawing on the early work of Foucault, Muchembled opined 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.”

Other recent 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. Michael Goodich examines saints of the eleventh century in great detail and creates a political profile of the saints approved for canonization. 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 sociological approach, saints canonized before the Council of Trent are deemed to be a natural outgrowth of "popular" religion. Saints who originated in popular cults served as miraculous symbols of God’s direct participation in human life; the criteria for popular acclaim focused on miraculous interventions. In this role, say traditional scholars, popular saints are fundamentally opposed to or in competition with church

---

authority and therefore come under new scrutiny in the sixteenth century. By the
seventeenth century these popular saints, they maintain, were co-opted to serve the
interests of "elite" religion as a strategy for social control. This view of saints implies
that, since saints have no ontological status except as political and social constructs,
the only rational criteria for judging them must be based on their effectiveness as
manipulative tools—providing a neatly circular rationale for proving that saints are
strictly political constructs.

Most scholars who follow this line of saints as political constructs build on the
ambitious study of canonization done by Pierre Delooz, *Sociologie et canonisations,*
which asserted that studying the canonization processes and attributes of candidates
who succeeded in obtaining official recognition gives scholars important insight into
the commonly held values of historical eras. American scholarship draws heavily
on the 1982 book by Donald Weinstein and Rudolph Bell, *Saints in Society.* This
study of saints as indicators of changing social perceptions of sanctity continues to be
cited in almost all English-language studies of saints. Instead of examining
canonization processes and official standards for judging saints, Weinstein and Bell

---

17 Again, the scholarly assumption that saints represent opposition to authority stems, at least
in part, from Max Weber. A fundamental component of the Weberian notion of charisma is the anti-
authoritarian nature of charismatic leaders. In particular it is sharply opposed to "bureaucratic
authority" (bound to rules) and to "traditional authority" (bound to precedent.) See Max Weber,
p.361. While this dimension of saintly appeal exists, it does not permit the nuanced understanding of
saints' roles which is required.

38 Liège: Faculté de Droit, 1969. Delooz himself assumed that the cultural values reflected
were broadly held and he would not have distinguished between saints "of the church" versus of saints
"of the faithful." Furthermore, his assessment of the official criteria for selection was generally
positive and fostering a certain fairness and standardization; in contrast, his followers have considered
these criteria as narrow and repressive.

39 *Saints in Society: The Two Worlds of Western Christendom 1000-1700.* (Chicago: University
of Chicago Press, 1982).
use written biographies of saints as indexes of changing perceptions of holiness and popular configurations of piety. They describe the hagiographer's task, however, as shaping the "received material" to meet the expectations of devotees, religious communities, and local bishops.\textsuperscript{42} It is all the more remarkable that they virtually disregard the dates of the source materials themselves. From Delooz, they identify five principal components of saintly reputation: supernatural power, asceticism, charitable activity, temporal power, and evangelical activity.\textsuperscript{41} They then score the individual saint on each of these components, based on his or her presentation in hagiographic sources. Each saint is given equal weight in the tabulation regardless of the extent of his cult and regardless of types and dates of sources used for establishing his or her "characteristics."

Weinstein and Bell's analysis implies a level of precision in the data which is simply not warranted.\textsuperscript{42} 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 either popular attitudes or "Western ideas of sainthood." 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, they pronounce that the powerful bishops or temporal ruler-saints of the High Middle Ages are replaced in the sixteenth and

\textsuperscript{42} Ibid. p. 13.
\textsuperscript{41} Ibid. pp. 159, 285.
seventeenth centuries by martyrs who sacrificed their lives for the faith. This conclusion fits the commonly accepted notion about values of the Counter Reformation but fails to take into account the fact that most seventeenth century 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, for example, founders and reformers of religious orders.

The third characteristic feature of standard scholarship on saints is the assertion that the increasingly centralized Church authority over saints in the Early Modern period signals a watershed in the history of canonizations. In 1634 Pope Urban VIII outlawed the making of saints at a local or diocesan level and decreed that all candidates must pass the scrutiny of the Vatican before being publicly acclaimed. The standard picture of canonization highlights Urban VIII’s concern with increasing the power of the Holy Office. The importance of Urban’s canonization reforms is inevitably presented by scholars as Rome’s increasing control over the types of saints canonized. According to this picture, the primary criterion for successful candidates was their usefulness as exemplars of approved Catholic virtue and piety. In addition, scholars emphasize, the revision of the procedure for canonization provided a means for Rome’s elimination of candidates for sainthood who were deemed either unsuitable in character, theologically or politically suspect, or so popular as to

---

43 Weinstein & Bell, p. 161, 289.
44 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), p. 82. Wright sees the influence of Urban VIII’s reforms on lay piety as “enormous.”
compete with other devotions promoted by the Church. I maintain this is a very simplistic picture of an extremely complex process.

Kenneth Woodward describes the process of canonization as following 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 from the contemporary point of view. He 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."45 Despite the fact that standard references on the history of canonization46 offer no evidence that the reforms of the seventeenth century were unusually concerned with altering patterns of popular devotion or with revising the types of saints canonized, many historians present these reforms as marking a radical shift away from popular saints who had appeal for the average layperson toward elite saints chosen by the Vatican for propaganda purposes.47

By the end of the sixteenth century, it is claimed, the interests of the Church as an institution widely diverged from the interests of the laity. In this view, the canonization reforms are subsumed under the larger issues of the "zealous" Catholic

---

45 Woodward, p. 95.
Reformation which strove to ensure orthodox belief and practice throughout Europe.\(^4\) Local communities, according to this view, were forced to adopt saints chosen by Rome with devotions enforced by the Inquisition. Local saints, in their role as charismatic wonder workers, are seen as direct challenges to church authority. Living saints were forced to endure the scrutinies of the Inquisition before they died and the trials of a bureaucratic process before they could be canonized. Local cults surrounding these saints after their deaths are seen as competing against the Church-mediated sacraments and devotions. Canonized saints of this period, on the other hand, are portrayed in the scholarship either as total creations of the Church hierarchy or as local figures so radically revised to fit Church criteria that they retained little connection to their local communities. These saints, say scholars, are icons of ecclesiastical power rather than symbols of popular piety. They are objects of propaganda, not objects of devotion.

While most of the scholarly works I cite deliver some portion of the "standard picture" I have outlined above, several of the more recent works, which study the hagiographical history of individual saints and the details of their posthumous

\(^4\) I will avoid the use of the terms "Counter-Reformation" (most commonly used, especially by Protestants) and "Catholic Reformation" (preferred by most Catholics). Both of these terms have been debated for years (Jedin, Evennett, 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 combating Protestant heresy—either by their actions against or despite Protestant heretics or for their conspicuous embrace of "good works" and Catholic theological premises. The term Catholic Reformation emphasizes the internal reform which began in the church in the late Middle Ages and was renewed after 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 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 Catholicism" as O'Malley has advised to refer to this historical period. See "Was Ignatius Loyola a Reformer? How to Look at Early Modern Catholicism," Catholic Historical Review, 77.2 (1991): 177-193.
“careers” toward canonization, reveal traces of the collaborative, constructive process at work within the saints’ own communities that I want to highlight in my own work.

How a saint is remembered immediately after 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 Thérèse of Lisieux.\textsuperscript{19} 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 recently appeared in its English translation, is germane to my own interest in the of multiple images and stories which vie for authority immediately after the death of a saint.

A different aspect of the interaction between saint and community is addressed in \textit{The Making of a Saint} by Catia Galatoriotou.\textsuperscript{25} This work, focusing on the Eastern Orthodox saint Neophylos the Reclus, is significant 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 \textit{charisma},\textsuperscript{31} but she does not allow his emphasis on the “natural” response of the community to go unchallenged and unexplained. The specifics of Neophylos’s case reveal how the saint played an active and deliberate role in shaping both his

\textsuperscript{31} Ibid., p. 235ff.
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 elaborate upon the textual material of his writings. Each painting of virtue or Christian life is also the saint’s own self-portrait.

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 self-conscious interaction between the candidate for sainthood and his or her contemporary society. Kleinberg uses the early Lives of four medieval saints to demonstrate that, while each saint’s life and historical situation is unique, 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 identity and asserts that the crucial definition of sanctity occurs among the saint’s contemporaries.\(^{52}\) 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.”\(^{53}\) Kleinberg’s research focuses on 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 (mentioning only those events or aspects of character that were positively indicative of holiness).\(^{54}\) Kleinberg argues that early vernacular lives were aimed at a local, lay readership who were not usually

\(^{52}\) Kleinberg, p. 21.
\(^{53}\) Kleinberg, p. 5.
\(^{54}\) Kleinberg, p. 122.
in a position to alter the saint’s official status, thus these Lives are less likely than later Latin versions to be tailored to canonization requirements or official guidelines.\textsuperscript{55}

These biographies occurring early in a saint’s career contain the most information about the saint’s immediate community, says Kleinberg, because the contemporaries of the holy person were anxious to be on record as associated with and helpful to a servant of God. The trend beginning 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.” Furthermore, in an attempt to include eyewitness detail and to record the community’s participation in the saint’s activities, early biographers were most likely to include extraneous stories omitted from later hagiographical accounts as not contributing directly to saintly reputation. Hagiographers of living or recently deceased saints were eager to differentiate their own particular candidates from others and to convince readers of the authenticity of the account by the addition of details \textit{not} required by convention.\textsuperscript{56} Kleinberg thus offers convincing arguments against the older scholarship. 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.\textsuperscript{57}

This 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 the Franciscan

\textsuperscript{54} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{55} Kleinberg, p. 26.
\textsuperscript{56} Kleinberg, p. 42.
order. The identity of this saint, claims Cook, was repeatedly revised within the religious community and different versions were tailored for the laity and for 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.

The relationship between saints and their hagiographers is even more complex when gender issues are considered. The kind of material included in a saint's Life, it appears, depends a great deal on the gender of the subject. Richard Kieckhefer, in a recent article, says that as lay piety and devotion became increasingly visible and complex, it became important for biographers of saints to distinguish their subjects from ordinary devout Christians. Women's lives became longer and adapted to accommodate a new emphasis on inward experience and revelations. Biographies of male saints were shorter and emphasized their outward conduct and religious pedagogy. Kieckhefer's study also reveals the important fact that, when traditional elements are borrowed from lives of earlier saints, they are inevitably given new meaning or new significance in the contemporary saint's biography.

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. The aspiration to martyrdom was strong in the sixteenth century, says

---

Le Brun, but since women could not fight battle nor go abroad as missionaries, their biographies adapt the idea of martyrdom 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{41}

With Caroline Bynum’s 1987 book, \textit{Holy Feast and Holy Fast}, gender issues took center stage. Bynum argued that women’s writings from the Middle Ages reveal a picture of feminine spirituality and asceticism radically different from the picture presented by male biographers of women saints. The stories which men told about women, says Bynum, “reflect not so much what women did as what men admired or abhorred.”\textsuperscript{42} Bynum argues that while men most often associated self-restraint with chastity, women, by contrast, focused on food and fasting. 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.”\textsuperscript{43} Another scholar whose work on women and the perceptions of their bodies by men confirms these observations and proves helpful in my analysis is Margaret Miles.\textsuperscript{44} Miles points out that female bodies are descriptively displayed to the reader of hagiography in ways that male bodies are not.

\textsuperscript{41} Le Brun, p. 88.
\textsuperscript{42} Bynum p. 28.
\textsuperscript{44} Margaret Miles, \textit{Carnal Knowing: Female Nakedness and Religious Meaning}. (Boston: Beacon Press, 1989).
An excellent treatment of Teresa of Avila has been done by Alison Weber.⁶⁵ Contradicting most Teresan scholarship, Weber asserts that Teresa’s “rhetoric of femininity” and subordination was deliberately adopted. Teresa’s rhetoric of self-deprecation, which gave her writing a spontaneous and unpretentious quality, allowed Teresa to be heard without challenging the clergy’s conviction that women were not to be taken seriously.⁶⁶ Weber reports that, as Teresa’s fame spread, her gender was transformed: she was described in her canonization process, in Lives, and in sermons as a “virile woman” and a “manly soul.”⁶⁷ This transformation of gender was paradoxically made possible by her deliberately “feminine” rhetoric. Grace Janzen has demonstrated that the transformation of gender required of women saints has a long history in the Christian tradition.⁶⁸ She argues that because spirituality is associated with the masculine and corporeality with the feminine, a woman whose spirituality was incontestable had to be made “an honorary man.”⁶⁹

THE REVISED PICTURE

My revised picture was developed in response to close readings of the seventeenth-century vernacular Lives of the saints of colonial Lima. These Lives, and additional evidence offered by seventeenth-century testimonies given on behalf of the candidates’ causes for canonization, do not provide support for the standard picture

---

⁶⁶ Weber, p. 159. A recent article arguing that Teresa’s writing deliberately adopts a style used in judicial proceedings is Carol Slade, St. Teresa of Avila: Author of a Heroic Life, (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).
⁶⁷ Weber, p. 17.
⁶⁹ Jantzen, p. 51.
of saints and canonization commonly presented in histories of this period.\footnote{These Lives were mostly published in Spain in the 17th century. A few were printed in the New World; others were published in Rome or elsewhere in Europe. They are preserved by the saints' local convents and in the Biblioteca Nacional de Perú in Lima. Original manuscripts of canonization testimonies are preserved in the Archivo Arzobispal in Lima.} To the contrary, my sources indicate that the process of making saints is a creative one which constructs an identity for the saint within the community, usually even before the saint dies, and engages the participation of laity, local officials, and religious orders with which the saint was directly or indirectly affiliated. The construction of sanctity takes place on many levels. The first, and least often mentioned, is the self-construction of the saint by the saint. The second takes place en famille, among the saint's closest group or community. Yet another level takes place in public, for the wider public community. Only after the candidate has proved to be a strong icon of community identity can he or she acquires yet another persona for canonization in Rome. It is only after a community has constructed a saint with whom it can strongly identify that the subsequent process of promoting the cause for canonization begins.\footnote{Official canonization procedures construct a second-level discourse which requires a dialog between local community and the Vatican and creates through this exchange an icon of consensus in the figure of the saint. This shared discourse of canonization was the real object of the canonization reforms of the seventeenth century: rather than focusing on the identity of the saints or on the definition of sanctity, these reforms were primarily strategies to insure Rome's participation in all important dimensions of Christian culture.} Furthermore, there is no indication that Rome revised the saint's local image even when the canonized "version" emphasized different aspects or virtues.

My revised picture, which highlights the ways in which saintly Lives forge links of identity between saint and community, portrays saints as focal points for issues of intense concern to those communities. Because we know the saints' stories
through the texts written about them, the "saints" to whom I refer are always constructions. Saints may participate in the constructions of their lives but we know of their words and actions only through the stories preserved by hagiographers. My readings of the saints’ lives neither accepts nor discounts the veracity of the hagiographers’ narrated relation of events. What interests me as a scholar is the way hagiographers use the anecdotes, testimonies, and historical records to create a "living" saint who addresses the historical concerns of the colonial community.

The hagiographical project which emerges from the lives of the colonial saints in Peru is one of constructing saints who reflect colonial identity. Just as the North American colonists would, in the eighteenth century, begin to define themselves as American rather than British, so too the Spanish colonies in Peru began, in the seventeenth century, to define themselves independently from Spain. There are a number of parallels in the developments of these two colonial entities, yet the fact that Peru’s economic independence was not accompanied by a move toward political independence has meant that this struggle for a new colonial identity has been largely overlooked by North American scholars, whose own patriotic identity began with the Boston Tea Party. In fact, recent work on the decline of Spain’s economy during this time is revising the historical picture to describe a shift in economic power within the empire from Spain to the New World. The colonies were taking the economic lead. And though they took no political action for independence, they were nonetheless beginning to reformulate their self-image as they began to invest colonial
resources locally. By the mid-seventeenth century, "home" was no longer Spain but the New World.²²

Seventeenth century Lima presents a unusually rich field for the study of saints: no less than five individuals later canonized as saints lived in Lima in the 17th century: Francisco Solano, Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo, Rosa de Santa Maria, Martin de Porres, and Juan Macias. They were surrounded by a score of others mentioned in histories of the period but never given official status; I examine one other candidate whose cause, while initiated in the seventeenth century, was abandoned by supporters in Lima and never reached canonization.²³ For the sake of comparison, I include one Spanish saint, Luis Bertran, who was a missionary to Peru twenty years before Sts. Solano and Toribio arrived. These saints include a wide assortment of demographic types: an archbishop, one Franciscan and one Dominican friar, a layman, three Dominican tertiaries, a mulatto, a woman, several Spaniards, and an Indian. There are a few well-known saints, and a number of obscure ones.

I have focused my study on saints whose textual lives are constructed from testimonies given within two generations of their death and are written within a hundred years of their deaths. Of course, over the period of a century, a society's self

²² For histories of the Spanish colonies which treat the emergence of Creole identity, see the introduction of Chapter Three, below.

²³ A candidate for recognition as a saint is officially referred to as a "Servant of God." The title of "saint" is reserved, strictly speaking, for those individuals who have received official canonization by the Vatican. Saints are considered worthy of veneration by the universal Church, they may be depicted with haloes, and churches may be dedicated to them. "Venerable" is the title given to candidates once their lives have been examined and found to be exemplary in virtue but to whom no miracles have been attributed. "Blessed" is the title which designates that an individual may be considered not only virtuous but especially blessed by God. It is usually considered the "first step" toward canonization. "Blessed"s may be venerated, and their feast days celebrated, only within their particular community or religious order.
image changes. The fact that we can see evidence of changing discourses within the Lives of these saints is, I believe, further evidence for the fact that the construction of saints is very closely tied to local concerns and historical events. Although the saints discussed here lived over a span of 130 years, the hagiographical texts I have used as my sources were all written within 50 years of each other; the common themes between them, contrasted with the very different perspectives and judgments revealed by the authors, provides convincing evidence that the Lives of saints in the early modern period offer sources for historical analysis.

STRANDS OF DISCOURSE

In analyzing the construction of saintly figures as icons in which a community's irreconcilable differences are mythologically "reconciled," the work of Roland Barthes has proved insightful. Two particular strands of discourse will be crucial in my project: discourse about the body and discourse about words and language. The saints' corporeality is what we share with them, what gives us our identification with them, what chains them to this world. Saintly activity is physical activity; it is a life embodied, performed, demonstrated, acted. It is the activities of the saints—seldom their words—which commands the attention of hagiographers. Saints' bodies carry the text of their lives, making it readable for

---

75 "Saintly life, like any other existent, requires material conditions for its emergence." For the importance of the corporal dimension of the saintly life see Wychogrod, Postmodern Saints, p. 14.
76 Woodward claims that saints who write present a real liability for canonization.
others. The shining face, the levitating form, the ascetic garb, the chains—all of these markers of sanctity require a body. The scholarship of Elaine Scarry and Richard Valentakis, among others, provides useful categories for understanding the body as text.7 The use of the individual body as metaphor for the body social has a long tradition, but the work of scholars such as James Farr calls particular attention to the importance of bodies—and attendant discourses of purity, obedience, discipline and gender—for conveying the hierarchical relationships at work in early modern Catholicism.78

The second crucial discourse concerns words and language. The ideological importance of language for Spaniards as they confronted the New World is the subject of several recent works. Patricia Seed has shown that pronouncements such as “the Requirement” were characteristic of all Spanish power relations in the New World; her work has suggested new perspectives on the “preaching” and dramatic processions described in hagiographies of missionary saints. The work of Walter Mignolo concerning the importance of words—and their complex relationships to voice and writing—for Spaniards in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries demonstrates that these relationships extend as well to words and bodies.79 Mignolo has pointed out that as speech (and writing) were used to distinguish “barbarians”

---

from Spaniards, those who spoke Spanish, it acquired a new dimension in the control of social behavior and status.

All of these discourses are particularly evident throughout the seventeenth-century Lives of saints who lived in Lima between 1580 and 1680. While certainly there are revisionist dimensions to my project, it is important to state up front that I am not suggesting that these Lives do not contain formulaic hagiographical material; they do. The “formulaic” stories, however, borrowed and re-borrowed in countless saints’ Lives, have no context until they are placed into one by the hagiographer. They provide continuity with the Christian hagiographic tradition, thereby identifying the saint with other saints, but the assumption that this is their sole function is false.

For example, most of the saints in my study fall into a river at some point—a common hagiographic event. While the trope is predictable enough, it is interesting to note that each saint is rescued a little differently, and the event occurs at strategically different points in the narrative and as part of different discourses. Another example of such formulaic stories are “temptation” narratives: all of the male saints in this study are, at some point, accosted by “fallen” women who try to lure them into breaking their vows of chastity. St. Luis Bertran is thus tempted because some sinful men, angry at his vehement sermons against adultery, decide to trick him. They pay the prostitute to proffer herself to the saint when he is alone one night. Bertran surprises the woman and her conspirators by going to the church and flagellating himself so severely that the evildoers are overcome by remorse in the face
of such heroic self-punishment and they all beg his forgiveness. Juan Macias, arriving for the first time in the "wicked" city of Frontera, meets a group of "fallen women" who befriend him and take him home. Just as they awaken new desires in him, his guardian spirit, St. John the Evangelist, physically manifests himself to John, which startles the young saint and "brings him back to his senses." St. John picks up Juan's clothes and hurries him out of the house. Nicolas de Ayllon receives his temptation in the streets of Lima. But we are told that the brazen women make Nicolas aware of his own "frailty" provoking a crisis of conscience and self-awareness. From his experience he develops a sense of compassion for "fallen women" and a prescriptive use of physical mortification to extinguish sexual passion.

The first of these stories is told as part of a discourse about physical austerities as conferring authority and credibility, a prominent theme in Bertran's life; the second story is part of a discourse about physical purity and angelic protection which characterizes the sanctity of Juan; the third story combines two discursive threads, one of social prejudice against Indians as sexually promiscuous, and the second one of physical mortification as strategy for overcoming vices. So too the anecdotes (which exist as small narratives strung together like the beads of a chain) in testimonies given by witnesses on behalf of the saint are recast by each author who refers to them, and they are changed significantly by the context into which they are placed. The stories are all similar, it is true, but they serve very specific purposes in their respective narratives. How stories are used within the Lives and how they fit into the larger
strands of discourse into which they are woven are what make even the "formulaic"
parts of this hagiography interesting and relevant to my project.
PART I: EUROPEAN SAINTS IN THE NEW WORLD

CHAPTER ONE: THE MISSIONARIES

The first saints associated with the New World were not native-born but came from Europe as missionaries. Evangelization, the ostensible reason for Spain's presence in the New World, was given top priority by the religious orders—the Franciscans, Dominicans, Augustinians, and later, Jesuits. The primary focus of this evangelization was not the town Indians but the larger population of *encomienda*\(^1\) Indians, meaning those who lived and worked outside the limits of the Spanish Peruvian world.\(^2\) *Encomienda* Indians resided in their own villages but owed heavy obligations to local Spaniards in the form of produce, textiles and, often, their own labor.

While life in the rapidly-growing colonial towns was increasingly well-ordered, more sanitary, and European, the world of the Indians remained dangerous and forbidding. Missionary work was tied to the *encomienda* system, and each Spaniard receiving Indian tribute and labor was obliged to offer room and board to

---

\(^1\) *Encomienda* is derived from the Spanish verb *encomendar*, to entrust. The *encomienda* was based on a feudal, manorial concept involving reciprocal rights and obligations. Under this arrangement, Indians were to labor for the Spanish *encomenderos* who, in turn, were expected to provide protection and religious instruction for the natives. The *encomienda* was not a landed estate but a legal arrangement which, ideally, was to have been mutually beneficial but, in practice, was simply a means by which Spaniards obtained an indigenous labor force. From James S. Olson, *Historical Dictionary of the Spanish Empire, 1402-1975*, (Westport, CN: Greenwood Press, 1992), p. 243.

the missionary (or doctrinero) assigned to his region. Usually the missionary would be responsible for two or three encomiendas scattered over a large geographical area. Since each encomienda was comprised of multiple towns and villages, the number of Indians covered by such a charge was substantial. It was impossible to visit every part of so large a region, so the friars usually went to the larger Indian settlements and focused their efforts on the intensive instruction of the children. The severe hardship of traveling from one settlement to the other constituted its own form of martyrdom. Simple survival was considered evidence of divine protection and approval of their work. Furthermore, in addition to these the heroic dimensions of missionary faith and self-sacrifice proved by their travels, life among the Indians in the jungles and desert mountains of South America offered hagiographers plentiful material with which to illustrate courage, self-discipline, austerity, and perseverance.

These missionaries, however, spoke more to their own cultures than to that of the Indians. While they traveled great distances to preach the Gospel in the New World, they remained, at heart, firmly rooted in Old World patterns of thought and action. Likewise, the construction of these figures by Spanish hagiographers relied on saintly models familiar to Spaniards and on the broader European values and prejudices which they reflected. In particular, attitudes about bodies and language revealed within this discourse of sanctity (by the saints in the stories and by the authors writing them) are revealed to be attitudes which make genuine embrace of one culture by another impossible. The stories of the European missionaries were,

---

1 Ibid., p.51-52.
2 Ibid., p.53.
even in these seventeenth-century texts, already stories of the failure of evangelism to
the Indians in the New World. The failure, after all, was what made the evangelism
heroic and self-sacrificial—i.e., saintly.

ST. LUIS BERTRAN (1526-1581)

The first saint associated with Peru was the Spaniard Luis Bertran. Born in
Valencia, Spain, he lived almost all of his life there as a Dominican friar. It was
largely on the basis of his life in Spain that he was canonized in 1671, alongside the
most famous New World saint, Rose of Lima. Still, Luis spent about seven years
(1562-1569) in South America as a missionary. Tales of his adventures followed him
back across the Atlantic and were included in Loarte's 1672 History of the Life,
Miracles, and Virtues of Glorious Saint Luis Bertran, published in Madrid after
Bertran's canonization. These narratives form only a small part of the saint's Life,
and they are treated primarily as evidence of his good credentials as a Christian—he

---

5 Alternative spellings of his name include Bertrand and Beltran. He was beatified in 1658 and
canonized in 1671. He was noted not only for his missionary work in South America but also for his
heroic charity during a plague in Valencia in 1557. See John J. Delaney, Dictionary of Saints (Garden
City, NJ: Doubleday, 1980), p. 105. Also see Lorenzo Galmés Más, La vida maravillosa de San Luis
Bertran. Evangelizador de América, (Caracas: n.p., 1985, 2d ed.).

6 He was in several different places, among them Cartagena, Santa Marta, Tenerife, and
Tabara—places in modern-day Venezuela and Colombia. Bertran, nevertheless, was considered by
Dominicans in the seventeenth century to have been on of their first missionaries to Peru because, as
the historian Melendez points out, at the time Bertran was in South America these areas were still
considered part of Peru. The division of the two Dominican provinces (San Juan Bautista in Peru and
San Antonio in New Grenada) was not effective until 1571.

7 Lucas Loarte, Historia de la Vida, Milagros, y Virtudes del Glorioso San Luis Bertran, (Madrid:
Francisco Sanz, 1672). Loarte writes that much of his information about Bertran's years in Peru came
from a Dominican from the [West] Indies who visited the monastery in Spain shortly before Bertran's
death. Historia, Lib.I, 11, p. 42. The first life of Bertran was written by Vincente Justiano Antist and
published in Seville in 1585. Other seventeenth-century Lives include one by Bartolome Aviñón
(Rome, 1623); another Spanish Life by Vicente Saborit (Valencia, 1651); and a French version by Jean
Baptiste Feuillet (Paris, 1671).
did his moral duty to carry the gospel to the far corners of the earth. That is to say, the author's depiction of Bertran's missionary activity centers more on Bertran's willingness to go to the New World and his bravery than on his activities or accomplishments while he was there.

Loarte's *History of the Life, Miracles, and Virtues of Glorious Saint Luis Bertran*, written nearly one hundred years after Bertran's death, is important as a beginning for the present study because its narratives about natives, idols, sermons, prophecies, austerities, and saintly disciplines reflect not only traditional hagiographical discourse about saints but also European attitudes toward cultural otherness. Loarte's *Historia* of Luis Bertran provides a rather typical seventeenth-century European model of sainthood with which I will later contrast Spanish colonial models. There are two major strands of narrative within Loarte's *Historia* which I wish to highlight: the first centers around Loarte's description of Bertran's physical austerities and mortifications as a means of establishing saintly virtue and authority among Bertran's fellow Christians—and for Loarte's readers. A second narrative strand, comprising only a few chapters of the Historia, concerns Luis' missionary campaign. This discourse of evangelism locates Bertran's actions within the landscape and indigenous peoples of the New World and directly addresses problems of cultural difference. Of special interest are the miracles of language associated with Luis Bertran's missionary work, and the events chosen by hagiographer Loarte to illustrate St. Luis's power as a Christian evangelist. In this life of Luis Bertran, the saint's contempt for his own physical body parallels his contempt for native bodies and cultural "others;" his
physical self-denial marks a self-absorption that precludes any profound experience of radical identification with a sensuous Indian population. While Loarte presents the saint’s desire for martyrdom as evidence of charity “that suffers all things,” Bertran’s contempt for his own body, as demonstrated by his mortifications and austerities in the stories that follow, must have made it difficult for him to respond to the physical and material needs of the Indians of Peru.⁵

Even dead bodies are seen as mere markers of the boundary between life and death, and yet even as such, corpses traditionally command respect from the living. For Luis Bertran, however, dead bodies, like living bodies, were only helpful in so far as they supported his spiritual work. Loarte recounts that a visitor to the convent in Valencia, who had come to speak with Fr. Luis, found him saying Mass in a chapel. On the floor next to the altar, in front of Fr. Luis, was a dead body. After Mass was finished, the visitor asked about the corpse. St. Luis replied that he had been obliged to say a funeral Mass that day.⁶ Because liturgical requirements specify that at least two people perform the ritual, and because it happened that there was no one in the entire convent that day who could assist him, Luis had enlisted the soul of the departed to serve at the Mass said in her own behalf (emphasis mine).⁷ Bodies, once dead, were not even gendered in Bertran’s eyes; (live) women would never have been allowed as altar servers. The body as marker, however, is indispensable here—Bertran

---

⁵ Loarte explicitly cites this desire for martyrdom as the chief indication that Beltran possessed great charity and love of neighbor. Historia, Lib.II. 3, p. 156-157.
⁶ In accordance with custom, the relatives of the deceased had paid in advance for a Mass to be recited, and acceptance of payment required St. Luis to perform the service on the day specified.
⁷ Historia, Lib.I. 23, p. 91
did not simply invoke a spirit or ghost to “assist”—however, its corporeality is insignificant to him beyond its ability to mark a symbolic presence. To manipulate and utilize a corpse in this manner was neither desecration or disrespect. In Bertran’s way of thinking, the flesh is too insubstantial to be of such consequence. This attitude towards dead bodies mirrored his contempt for living bodies—for his own as well as others’.

Virtue and Contempt for the Body

Loarte gives little description of Bertran’s physical appearance; neither the reader nor Luis’ contemporaries are directed to “look” at the saint’s body, but, rather, to listen to his words and follow his advice. In fact, Loarte’s hagiography is noteworthy for its paucity of physical descriptions of all varieties. In reading Loarte, no vision arises of Bertran, no “picture” of the landscape, no portrait of the Indians he encounters. This is in marked contrast to the hagiography written for the Creole saints, which we will come to in later chapters. For Loarte, and presumably for Luis Bertran, the body itself confers no identity, but only serves to register an interior, spiritual state which is the crux of a self. Only for the proof of sanctity does Loarte describe Luis’s appearance or condition—the happiness on Luis’s face when he holds up the host at the altar, for example, or the “light” that shines out from his face

---

11 The male saint’s body is seldom the object of the “gaze” (à la Foucault) as are the bodies of female saints—a difference made striking in Lives of St. Rose. For the difference in hagiographical treatment of male and female martyrs’ bodies, see Margaret Miles, Carnal Knowing: female nakedness and religious meaning in the Christian west (Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 1989), p. 61. Nevertheless, some male saints in my study, like the Franciscan missionary Francis Solano and the Creole St. Martin de Porres, used their bodies to “live out” their words and get the audience’s attention. Bertran is very different.
while deep in prayer in his own oratory.12 Significantly, these features are set down as miracles reported by eye-witnesses; the evidence of spirituality can be “read” in saintly bodies by ordinary people.

Loarte’s narrative presents the young Luis Bertran as distinguished among his Spanish Dominican brethren for his extraordinary self-mortifications and for his zeal as Master of novices. He fasts far more strictly than the Rule requires and his devotion is such that he stays awake all night to pray. Loarte reports that Luis “disciplined” himself from an early age and, despite the great favors he won from heaven, never allowed this grace to diminish the rigors of his penance. No matter the severity of his physical abuses, Bertran never considered his penances “sufficient.”13 When bodies are identified with interior states, the saintly body is constantly forced to bear the signs of striving for perfection and to show visible evidence of penance for failure. As Luis gets older, his chronic illnesses are identified by Loarte as occasions for greater self-abasement, tributes to the unrelenting self-denial of the saint, and outward signs of his martyrdom to Christian service.14 Loarte admiringly tells how Bertran did not mitigate his penances even when ill. When confined to bed on the

---

12 Loarte makes several references to this celestial radiance, a standard hagiographical feature of saints: “Dezian muchos, que siempre, que avia de predicar el Siervo de Dios, se recogia primero en la Sacristia, donde tenia la oracion tan profunda, que saliendo de ella al Pulpito, le vieron varias veces cubierto el rostro de un gran resplandor que salia de el.” Historia, Lib. I, 7, p. 26; also “los rayos de luz. y claridad con que ilustró Dios a San Luis Bertran.” Ibid., Lib.II, 7, p. 126; also, Loarte offers an eyewitness’s testimony that Bertran, along with friend and fellow saint V.P.Fr. Nicolas Factor, were seen to shine with a celestial glow when they were praying in the cell of San Vincent Ferrer. Ibid., p. 128.

13 “Tenia tan gran deseo de hacer penitencia que por mucha que hiziese, le parecia poca.” Ibid., Lib I, 3, p. 14.

14 Bertran’s death is hastened by his own persistence in attending Mass daily despite doctors’ orders to stay in bed. Ibid., Lib.II, 16, p.183.
orders of the prior, the sick man put tiles against his flesh to prevent sinful enjoyment of a soft bed.\(^{15}\)

While the saint’s “marvelous” ability to withstand physical punishment is presented by Loarte as evidence of his sanctity and humility, the stories, all taken together, can be seen as constructing an alternative image of virility, a *machismo* equal to that of the conquistadors, an indifference to pain and a manifestation of sheer physical bravery which makes Luis “manly” and “Christ-like” in his voluntary embrace of suffering. This construction of the saintly body is traditional in Christian hagiography of male saints.\(^{16}\) It would be impossible, implies the hagiographer, for the [merely] human body to endure this treatment.\(^{17}\) Physicality, taken as the opposite of spirituality, is the lesser of these two dimensions of human life and the former must be forced to serve the latter or be destroyed.\(^{18}\) Loarte never presents the pain of Bertran's physical self-discipline as a means to ecstasy or heightened consciousness. Instead, description of the external act and its effects on the body are offered as *evidence of* heroic fortitude and penance. Proof of excessive self-mortification is, in Loarte’s *Historia*, the thing which won Luis the admiration of his fellow religious and proved at least one dimension of his sanctity. Loarte reports that Bertran wore chains as well as a hairshirt and often flagellated himself to the point

\(^{15}\) Ibid., p. 132.
\(^{16}\) Jantzen; *Power, Gender and Christian Mysticism*, p. 53.
\(^{17}\) “Desde tiempos años comenzó a maltratar su cuerpo con ayunos, y vigilias, y era tanto, que parece imposible que un cuerpo humano se pudiesse sustentar con tanta abstinencia.” Loarte, *Historia*, Lib. II, p. 130.
\(^{18}\) This is the attitude toward bodies and physical existence which is most familiar to modern readers and, mistakenly, is often assumed to be an essential part of sainthood and mysticism. For a cogent argument on the complex relationship between saints and their bodies overlooked by many scholars, see Wyschogrod, *Saints and Postmodernism*, p. 14.
that the floors and walls were bloody. His self-flagellation is presented as being self-abasing, designed neither to train the body nor to raise spiritual consciousness, but simply to punish his body in expiation of sin and to express his contrition and devotion.

The connection between bodies, sins, and demons is made explicit in a reported instance in which Bertran, seeking in a deserted portion of the convent a secluded place to practice his mortifications, found a priest half-dead on the floor. Loarte elaborates by saying that, while disciplining himself, the priest had been “abused by demons” and nearly died. Like other saints, Bertran ostensibly practiced his self-mortification “in secret,” but he chose methods which wrote their bloody evidence on the walls—a record of an event to be read by the novices. The novices, in fact, were frightened by the spattered blood, and so they hid Bertran’s flail and reported what they discovered to the prior. Promising to be more discreet (not more moderate), Bertran afterwards tied a sheet around his waist to soak up the blood and keep it off the floor. If, as Elaine Scarry has said, physical pain resists and destroys language, this “speaking in blood” is, significantly, most characteristic of the years

---

19 “Era cosa maravillosa ver las grandes disciplinas con que castigava su cuerpo. Y aunque buscara lugares muy secretos que no se diera descubriría, una vez entre otras, que había tomado una muy rigurosa,...halló el suelo, y paredes ensangrentadas.” Loarte, Historia, Lib. I, Cap.4, p. 23
20 “De noche se disciplinava en las Capillas mas obscuras de la Iglesia, ó en una Sacristia pequeña...donde el Santo en cierta ocasion halló medio muerto al P. Castells, que disciplinando-se, los Demonios le avian maltratado.” Ibid., p. 22.
21 “La enmienda devió de ser la que él contó en secreto a un amigo muy espiritual, que algunas veces se discipulava, ciñéndose una sabana, para que la sangre se empapase en ella, y no llegase al suelo, para que nadie lo advertiese.” Ibid., p. 23.
before Bertran discovers his calling as a missionary, "finds his voice," and begins to
inflict pain with words.22

Contempt for bodily existence was most fully and heroically expressed, in the
late sixteenth century as in the Early Church, by the embrace of one's own
martyrdom. By all accounts, it was this opportunity for martyrdom at the hands of
the heathen that really excited St. Luis and called him to become a missionary.23 In
1561, an Indian from South America who had converted and become a Dominican
visited the monastery near Valencia where Bertran was living. The Indian's tales of
missionaries being tortured, killed, and eaten inspired Bertran to go immediately to
the New World.24 When Bertran first expressed his desire to go to the Indies, the
prior of the convent would not grant him permission. His religious brothers
suggested he was too frail and the prior refused him provisions.25 Luis, however, was
not easily dissuaded. He persisted over the course of months until he won a
begrudging leave from his prior, and then set off on foot for Seville.

Loarte neglects, however, to include a detail of this story which, according to
Baring Gould, was related by other seventeenth-century sources.26 In Baring-Gould's

pp.3-6.
23 Loarte repeatedly affirms Luis Bertran's desire for martyrdom:"este desseo tan firme le hizo
dexar la patria, los parientes, y su Convento, donde era ta[n] estimado de todos, y irse a las Indias,
aunque tenía poca salud para tan largo viaje, y no lo pudo estorvar las persuasiones de sus hermanos, ni
los impedimentos puestos por los Religiosos para volver atrás...". *Historia*, Lib.I, p.108.
24 "Porque segun le dixo el Indio, les quitavan la vida; y se los comian, usavan con ellos de
muchas crueldades; y quanto mas le dezian de esto, tanto mas crecia en el Siervo de Dios la sed del
martirio." Ibid., 9, p. 38. This story appears in every Life of Bertran.
25 Ibid., p. 39.
26 S. [Sabine] Baring-Gould, *The Lives of the Saints with introduction and additional lives of
English martyrs, Cornish, Scottish, and Welsh saints* (Edinburgh: J. Grant, 1914), Vol. 11, p.218. Baring-
Gould cites as his sources the Lives of Bertran by Antesti (n.d.) and Aviñon (1623).
version of this same episode, the Dominican brothers searched through Luis’s belongings as soon as he departed for Seville. Finding a hidden box full of instruments of self-torture (hair shirts, iron chains, whips, and metal strips with sharp perforations), the brothers at once showed them to the prior who promptly surrendered any persisting doubt about having let Luis go. In fact, the prior immediately dispatched a messenger to catch up with Luis and provide him with money for the trip. While modern readers might view this story askance, Loarte’s could have used some version of this episode to reinforce his depiction of Luis’s physical austerities as establishing authority within the community. Physical mortification obviously has greater “authority” than the prior himself. Why, then, does Loarte neglect the opportunity to make this claim?

Perhaps it is because of the implications that Bertran’s mortifications were, in fact, excessive. The story Loarte recounts, in which the prior reprimanded Bertran for his “excesses,” suggests that this episode could also have been viewed as evidence of disobedience. We see here evidence that Loarte, writing after the canonization of Bertran, has stripped away elements recorded in earlier, local versions of Bertran’s life which do not contribute directly to Bertran’s reputation for sanctity or which might reflect badly on the religious order. At any rate, this story serves to make clear the importance of mortification of the body in establishing credibility for the missionary; whether by virtue of the evidence of his physical disciplines or solely on the basis of his thirst for martyrdom, his embrace of pain qualifies him for the journey toward martyrdom.
One of the very first stories that Loarte tells about Bertran in the New World reinforces this idea of physical austerity as qualification for ministry. A man from Valencia named Geronimo Cardilla travelled to the Indies and there met Padre Bertran. He decided to accompany the friar as a servant and assistant, following the saint on his travel by foot and carrying his breviary and Bible. Geronimo soon discovered how uncomfortable life could be in the company of a dedicated ascetic.

Wherever Luis Bertran and Geronimo went they were well received, Loarte reports. Whenever they set out on the next leg of the journey, their hosts would offer them provisions. Bertran did not wish to accept these gifts, nor did he like for Geronimo to accept them. This annoyed Geronimo because, unlike the ascetic saint, he traveled hungry and thirsty most of the time. One day Geronimo complained loudly about the lack of provisions. Bertran told him to have patience and God would provide for them. Seeing Geronimo so disgruntled, Bertran stopped in a clearing where they found a tree like none other they had ever seen full of delicious apples. Geronimo, after satisfying his appetite, decided to pick a few extra fruits to take with them. Bertran prohibited this but Geronimo nevertheless quietly stashed a few apples in the satchels. They had not gone far before the saint discovered the fruit and threw it away, sternly reprimanding his companion. Geronimo, indignant and fed up with Bertran’s relentless disregard for physical necessities, turned back and left Bertran to continue alone."

---

Loarte, *Historia*, Lib.I, 11, p. 44; Elsewhere Loarte admiringly recounts that Bertran never ate unless directly offered food: "...mas el Siervo de Dios sino le davan de comer, no lo pedía. Su ccmida era tan poca, que a los que lo vian parecia vivia de milagro." Ibid., 14, p.52.
Just as Bertran's austerities proved his missionary vocation, so Geronimo's inability to subjugate his body disqualified him for the job. As in the story of Moses and the Hebrews in the wilderness, concern for physical needs betrayed an insufficient faith in God. Saints, through discipline and devotion, re-form their bodies to reflect the priority of spirit over matter. This profound relationship between religious faith and the painful re-making of human bodies would prove diastrous for the indigenous peoples of the New World.  

Miracles of Language

Language is a carrier of cultural identity and so it is not surprising that stories of the encounter between Europeans and natives in the New World give a great deal of attention to problems of language. Throughout his book, Loarte gives special emphasis to the miracles of preaching that attended Luis's missionary career. He was the "most fruitful" of preachers, Loarte tells us, because unlike other missionaries who relied on interpreters, Bertran was told by the Indians that interpreters were unnecessary. Loarte takes that to mean that, by a miraculous act of translation, the Indians understood Bertran when he spoke in Spanish.  

God granted him this gift, says Loarte, after an unfortunate experience with a translator who misinterpreted his words "either from ignorance or malice." Significantly, Loarte does not give us any details about the mistranslation, but he does say that the saint asked God to grant this

---

28 For a description of how these two concepts begin their association in the Hebrew Bible and continue to be interwoven in Western culture, see Scarry, *Body in Pain*, Ch.4.

42 "...le dijeron los indios, que no era necesario interprete, pues le entendían... Ibid, p.11, p.
grace of understanding. This "gift of tongues," as it was called, also linked Luis Bertran with other famous Dominicans such as St. Vincent Ferrer and St. Dominic himself. The explicit reference to the fourteenth-century St. Vincent Ferrer, a zealous anti-Semite, gives emphasis to the assertion of the scholar Rivera Pagán that the paradigm for the early missionary effort in the New World was the Spanish Reconquest of the late fifteenth century. For Bertran the fault in the misunderstandings clearly lay with the Indians: the person who failed to translate correctly was an Indian, and the Indians are the ones who fail to understand the word of God. Bertran asks God to correct the problem with the Indians and, of course, assumes that God promptly does so. In contrast to the Franciscan Francis Solano, the miracle is Divine intervention, pure and simple, and has nothing to do with the saint’s facility with speaking. This ability to be understood by others “as if” the saint were speaking in their own language is one example among many of what Stephen Greenblatt calls “the assumption of transparency of culture” which, in Greenblatt’s

---

32 “La razón porque Dios le concedió que fuese entendido hablando en lengua Española, fue porque según refirió el B.P. a cierto devoto suyo, tuvo un Interprete, que de ignorancia, ó malicia interpretava mal lo que el Siervo de Dios predicava; lo cual como entendiese, ó por revelación, ó por otro camino, rogó a N. Señor le diese gracia para que fuese entendido en su propia lengua, como San Vincent Ferrer. Oyóle Dios, dándole esta gracia, con que pudo hacer tanto fruto en aquellas almas perdidas.” Ibid.

31 The life of St. Dominic includes several similar stories in which the saint was able to be understood by German pilgrims in one instance and by French heretics in another. See Francis C. Lehner, Saint Dominic: Biographical Documents, Washington, DC, 1964

view, plagued almost every dimension of the European conquest.\textsuperscript{33} From this moment on, Bertran never acknowledges a language problem.

The Power of Words

Loarte’s greatest admiration is reserved for the forcefulness and inspirational nature of Luis’s preaching, which allowed him to convert and baptize large numbers of Indians as he traveled the countryside.\textsuperscript{34} In one place, Loarte tells us, “his words were so effective” that within three years he had baptized more than fifteen hundred Indians who publicly burned their own idols.\textsuperscript{35} At Santa Marta, St. Luis was said to have converted and baptized more than five thousand.\textsuperscript{36} These “baptismal reports,” a purely numerical accounting of the process of conversion, are like the inflated “body counts” of enemy losses in a war which not only predict imminent victory but also, later, provide the “proof” of the historical encounter.\textsuperscript{37} This is typical of a millenarian vision in which even nominal conversions count toward the coming of Christ’s Kingdom.


\textsuperscript{34} The numbers Loarte gives for converts are prodigious: in one place more than five thousand (Lib.I, 13, p. 53) and, over three years, 1500 baptized by his own hands (Ibid., 13, p. 48.) For Loarte’s own summary of Luis’ virtues as a preacher, see Lib.II, 12, pp. 144-151.

\textsuperscript{35} Loarte, Historia, Lib. I, 13, p.48.

\textsuperscript{36} “Predicando el B.P. a los de Santa Marta, convirtio y bautizó mas de quinze mil.” Loarte, I, XV, 53. Santa Marta is in what is today northern Colombia; the base of operations for the conquest expeditions into New Granada, it was an important export point for the Peruvian bullion headed for Spain. It was under the jurisdiction of the audiencia of Santo Domingo, and the viceroyalty of New Granada (eighteenth century). See Olson, Historical Dictionary, p. 549.

\textsuperscript{37} For the significance of “body counts” see Scarry, Body in Pain, pp. 116-118. Baptismal records, kept by the missionaries and archived by the diocese were used in both of these ways by the Colonial church. Loarte frequently uses the expression “as written in the Baptismal record” (como esta escrito en el libro del Bautismo) to authenticate his report.
According to Loarte, these tremendous public conversions were due to the power of Bertran's spoken words. His preaching was so inspired, says Loarte, "that there was never a sermon that did not move listeners to tears and turn sinners away from their wickedness and into the service of God."38 Remarkably, many of the stories chosen by Loarte to illustrate St. Luis' gifted preaching also reveal the many ways in which Luis's words got him into serious trouble. For example we are told that his preaching against the horrors of sin was "so vivid" that once someone in the audience (whose guilt was unbearable) decided to retaliate by destroying Luis's own spotless reputation for chastity.39 This person persuaded a woman to name Luis as the father of her tiny infant. Luis, however, commanded the baby: "You, who knows not how to talk—nor how to tell lies—in front of everyone, tell if I am your father." The baby, in a clear voice, responded, "It is not you, but another who fathered me." 40 The story is remarkable, even if formulaic, because it depicts Luis's preaching as the provocation for this act of aggression against him and the power of his words which, likewise, exonerates him.

Another similar example—again while Bertran is preaching on "the sin of sensuality"—describes how, in the middle of a sermon, an Indian arose "in fury" and fired an arrow directly at Luis. Immediately a tree sprang up from the ground in

39 Loarte. Historia, Lib. I. 19, pp. 66-67. The "sins" that apparently concerned Bertran the most were idolatry and "sensuality."
40 Ibid. The ability of saints to determine the truth in legal or criminal matters is a standard trope. St. Macarius is said to have asked a corpse to reveal if the accused was his murderer. In these cases, as in this one, the saint's power is directed at exonerating the innocent accused not at implicating the guilty.
front of the saint, miraculously intercepting the arrow and astonishing the crowd. Once again, Loarte offers the story as proof of the righteousness of Bertran’s preaching and his special protection by God and opposes the evils of the flesh to the power of righteous words. It seems, however, significant to modern readers, that whenever Luis preached, he provoked unabashed hostility. This reaction to saintly words is common in hagiography: another famous Spanish preacher, San Juan de Sahagun, was known for his boldness in attacking sin—and for his related knack for making mortal enemies among Spanish society. This Augustinian saint, who lived in the fifteenth century, was canonized in 1690 and many of the stories about Juan de Sahagun are very similar to those told about Luis Bertran. This trope of righteous words provoking anger in the wicked is an old one in the Christian tradition, but I call attention to it here because it does not work well in the context of New World evangelism. When Loarte tells these same stories about Bertran’s preaching in Spain, it is clear that the saint’s words separate those in the audience who are “outside” the flock of believers. His words “heal” the body of the faithful by revealing the sick members within it. When these stories are used in this new context of ministering to the Indians, they evoke a very different picture. Here these narratives make it appear that all of the natives are sinful and one out of many simply acts upon what all are feeling. The Indians, thereby, are presented “in league with the devil” who, traditionally, is sparked to violence whenever saints are close to winning souls.

41 Loarte reports that this type of tree was thereafter called “Arbol Santo.” He also acknowledges his source for this story as the work by Vicente Saborit. Loarte, Historia, Lib I., 28, p.66.

42 For stories of Juan de Sahagun, see Baring-Gould, Lives of the Saints, pp. 172-175.
A more subtle, but equally pernicious implication of Loarte’s text is that no speech—in any language, from any Christian—could have hoped to have done better. Loarte’s depiction of the Spanish missionary as wise, brave, and righteous, and of the natives as ignorant, violent, demonic, and sinful comes as no surprise to modern readers. What does surprise us, however, is that this hagiographic discourse actually narrates the failure of speech to convey intended meanings and, inevitably, the failure of this cultural encounter to accomplish any significant exchange or lasting transformation. Bertran’s words not only “wound” the Indians but frequently cause an incident which threatens his own life. Furthermore, these startling effects were not just limited to his sermons but were produced by other forms of discourse between Luis and the Indians—making it clear that, for St. Luis, the “gift” by which his words could be understood by the native Indians conferred absolutely no sympathy nor understanding upon either party in the conversation.

Subjugation of the saint’s own body and his indifference to the assaults of nature set the scene for a missionary style which ignores difference, subjugates otherness, and denies the material world. For example, immediately following a report of Bertran’s amazing preaching success in Santa Marta, where he converted and baptized over five thousand natives, Loarte tells how Luis came to two villages of Caribes (reputed to be cannibals) where the natives worshipped the bones of an ancient, pre-Columbian priest. Usually, when the Indians were “converted” by the
missionaries, they were expected to publicly burn their "houses of idolatry."43 When the natives tried to hide their idols however, Bertran would take it upon himself to find and destroy them. Says his hagiographer proudly, he never lost an opportunity to burn the idols to ashes in order to prevent the recently converted from temptation to further idolatry.44 The flat refusal of these particular Indians to surrender their sacred "bodies," was taken as extreme disobedience, rejection of the Gospel, and a declaration of war.45 The devil had convinced these Indians, says Loarte, that if the sacred bones were lost the sky would fall.46 So the Indians carefully guarded the bones and held festivals in their honor.47 It grieved St. Luis that the devil had so misguided these poor folk, and so one day he seized the opportunity to hide the arquilla48 in which the bones were kept. Once again, Bertran's contempt for bodies is enacted literally by his disrespect for the Indians' sacred totem.

When the Indians learned of his crime, they came to kill Bertran, but some of his converts who "loved him" protected him and hid him. Was it coincidence that

43...los [Indios bautizados] quemaron publicamente las casas de sus Idolos, y el B.P. para hollarlos donde los tenian escondidos, se valia de los muchachos, que movidos con los alhagos que el les hazia, se los mostravan, y el los quemava." Loarte, Historia, Lib. I, p.48.
44 "y siempre que el B.P. tenia ocasion de quemar Idolos, no la perdia, porque los dava fuego hasta hazerlos cenica, para que los recien convertidos no tuviesen ocasion de idolatrar. " Ibid., p. 49. For this, he is said to have used native children to seek out and find the hidden "idols" for him. See Lorenzo Galmés Más, La vida maravillosa de San Luis Bertran, p.34.
45 Like "The Requirement," which was read to the natives before Spaniards began military and political conquest, a single sermon could be considered the Indians' first and only opportunity to freely convert to the Catholic faith. Resistance or refusal to cooperate was taken as a declaration of deliberate opposition and was interpreted by the Spaniards as aggression. As with "the Requirement" any damage and suffering which resulted from this non-cooperation was considered by the Spaniards to be the fault of the Indians. See Patricia Seed, Ceremonies of Possession in Europe's Conquest of the New World 1492-1640 (Cambridge, Cambridge UP, 1995)
46 "donde adoran van los huessa del Sacerdote dellos muy antiguo...y el Demonio les avia persuadido, que si les saltavan aquellos huessa, se caria el Cielo sobre ellos," Loarte, Historia, Lib. I,15, p. 53.
47 "fiestas con locuras ridiculas," Ibid, p. 54.
48 A box or ark.
they chose to hide Bertran in the same place where the bones themselves had been concealed? The “bones” in this case were the mummified remains of ancestors. The parallel between the substitution of the saint’s body/relics for the sacred “bones” is obvious to modern readers and, perhaps, occurred as well to the Indians, but it attracts no comment from Loarte. Angered by the sacrilege and by Bertran’s “mockery,” but nevertheless afraid to kill him openly, the “wicked” Indians conspired with an evil old priest of the village to give Bertran a poisoned drink. Why a sensible person in hiding for his life accepted a drink from his enemies is left to conjecture. Possibly the “converts” were not as sympathetic as Loarte assumes (their choice of a hiding place raises the question) or, possibly, Bertran deliberately sought martyrdom. In any event, the drink made St. Luis mortally ill. Loarte tells us that the saint commended his soul to God and was happily expecting death so that he could go to glory. Meanwhile, five Indian leaders came in and removed the stolen arquilla. Five days after taking the poison, Luis “miraculously” vomited up a “serpent” and was cured. The serpent, regarded as evil in Christian mythology, is doubly-coded here as it is also an important manifestation of deity in Andean religion. The Indians, upon seeing the saint recovered from the poison, arrived with

---

49 The cult of the saints was generally understood by the native population in terms of their own huacas (spirits) and mummified ancestral remains—the latter is undoubtedly that which Solano had taken. See Nicholas Griffiths, _The Cross and the Serpent_ (Norman, OK: 1996), pp. 18-19; and 50-53.
50 “un mal viejo Sacerdote Idolatra” Loarte, _Historia_, Lib. I, 15, p. 54.
51 Ibid.
men at arms to kill him. An exchange ensued with an Indian mediator and Bertran began preaching to the crowd about the Devil’s lies and how the sky had not fallen after all, as their legend said. In addition, Bertran pointed out, their poison had not worked—proving his Christian faith was stronger than their magic. Bertran used this occasion to prove the Indians’ words wrong; their stories and prophecies were no longer credible. He spoke “with such force” that the angry Indians repented, prostrating themselves before the saint and “many were baptized.” Loarte adds that St. Luis told this story to only a few of his closest friends (one of whom Loarte names as his source) as “he showed great disgust” that he had been too sick to prevent the Indians’ recovery of the bones and he regretted his lost opportunity for martyrdom.

Once again, however, Baring-Gould’s seventeenth-century sources report a different version: Luis indeed stole the sacred bones but, when his pursuers caught up with him and threatened his life, he reluctantly surrendered them. The Indians, grateful that he had returned their treasure, offered him some poultry and peacocks in return; Luis enraged them by refusing to accept this gesture. “He so irritated them that they nearly fell on him again, but was rescued by the caicique, who feared to embroil himself and the villagers with the Spaniards, if the [priest] was murdered.”

---

53 Luis Rivera observes: “There is an effort on the part of Spanish missionaries to show how every meaningful moment of mythology and native religion is full of lies and devoid of reason.” Luis Rivera, A Violent Evangelism, p. 158.


55 Ibid., p. 54; This point is reiterated again much later in the book when Loarte refers to this incident: “después de beelto, mostrava gran disgusto, porque quando le dieron veneno, no huviese Dios querido que muriése...” (Ibid, Lib. II, 3, p. 128.

56 A caicique is an Indian leader of great influence and political power. The Spaniards used these leaders as political intermediaries between Spanish colonial bureaucratic institutions and the Indians, in return for special privileges.

The reader wonders why Loarte includes a story which possesses a known, alternate version which reflects so poorly upon his hero. Perhaps, being aware of the other Lives of Bertran, Loarte felt obliged to include this well-known episode and give it a less damaging slant. Bertran's gullibility, in Loarte's version, is certainly preferable to the cowardice and insensitivity Bertran displays in Baring-Gould's sources. The persistence of the story, to the embarrassments of all of Bertran's hagiographers, however, may well be due to an alternate explanation of the events from the native Indian point of view: a story told by Antonio de la Calancha in his *Corónica moralizada* (1639) recounts the appearance of the same serpent *amaru*, under similar circumstances, to warn the Indians of Spanish retaliation against them for the murder of the Augustinian missionary, Diego de Ortiz.54

Not only the mummified bodies of "idols" disturbed Luis Bertran, but the Indians' live bodies were problematic as well. He railed at the Indians to wear clothes and cease bathing publicly. Predictably, the custom among the Indians to have sex with partners other than their "official" spouses created great consternation. Bertran's fiery sermons on the evils of adultery angered the leaders of the Indians in Tubara so much that, as Bertran was preaching in the doorway of the church, one of them rose up with a huge club and bought it down with both hands thinking to strike the saint on the head. Miraculously, the point of the club just missed, striking the ground just in front of the saint. The blow was so forceful, says Loarte, that the club embedded itself in the ground and it was taken as evidence of a miracle that

54 Quoted in Griffiths, *Cross and The Serpent*. p.3.
Bertran was not killed. Almost as miraculous as his survival was the fact that the saintly friar patiently went on with his work, commending himself to God, and conducting Mass in peace and devotion, as if he had never perceived the danger.59

As always, the unyielding Luis Bertran is portrayed by Loarte as untouched by his encounter with alterity. The reader, however, despite the author’s emphasis on the saint’s evangelical talent, feels witness to the fiasco of this missionary work. The stories do not, in fact, demonstrate that this saint was loved by his flock. On the contrary, we read that more than a few who heard Bertran’s preaching were inspired to kill him. Rather than portraying Luis’s desire for martyrdom, the narrative tell us that he narrowly but repeatedly survived several attempts upon his life. While the trope of righteous words inciting hatred in the hearts of the sinful has a long history in Biblical and Christian literature, it could hardly be the response an evangelist hoped for. These narratives of “failure” among the Indians of the New World are perplexing when considered only in the context of Bertran’s missionary career, but they do make sense when considered as part of Loarte’s larger project—the construction of Bertran as a Spanish saint.

A Prophet in His Own Country

It is not clear why Luis Bertran suddenly decided to return to Spain in 1579. Baring-Gould suggests that Bertran made his decision upon hearing that the great

59 “y estando el Siervo de Dios a la puerta de la iglesia predicando en pie, le tiró un golpe con las dos manos, pensando darle en la cabeza, mas dio la punta de la Macana junto a los pies del B.P. y fue tan grande el golpe (porque el Indio era de grande estatura, y muy alentado) que la punta entró en la tierra, y le tuvo por evidente milagro el no averle muerto. Mostrá aqui mucho la paciencia el Beato Padre....y se puso a dezir Missa con mucha quietud, y devoción, como sino se huviere visto en tal peligro.” Loarte, Historia, Lib.I. 13, p. 49.
Dominican Bartolome de las Casas was returning to Spain.\textsuperscript{63} Loarte could not give a reason for Luis’s decision to leave South America, but, of course, was quite sure that the saint had prayerfully received God’s permission to do so. Loarte’s admission that other authors had proffered “less than satisfactory” explanations suggests that Bertran’s motives had been questioned or that Dominican authorities precipitously recalled him.\textsuperscript{61} In any case, it is likely that criticism of the Spaniards in the New World, brought to the attention of not only the Spanish court but to all of Europe by Las Casas and others, had made some Dominicans, and even Bertran himself, uneasy.

While Luis Bertran appears to modern readers as a caricature of sixteenth-century missionaries, it is important to understand that his approach to evangelization was not the only one in use by Spanish Dominicans. Bertran was present in Spain and of an age and position to have followed the debates on the status of the Indians in the late 1540s—long before he left for the Indies. His missionary style as Loarte presents it indicates that Bertran did not embrace the ideas of his more prominent Dominican brethren such as Bartolomé de las Casas and Domingo de Santo Tomas who fought for the dignity and self-government of native populations. The Dominican historian Melendez, who praises Las Casas highly, mentions Bertran

\textsuperscript{63} The date, 1569, is not correct for the return of Las Casas but they might coincide with the departure of another famous Dominican, Domingo de Santo Tomas, who was a close collaborator with Las Casas. See John V. Murra, “Nos Hazen Mucha Ventaja: The Early European Perception of Andean Achievement,” in Transatlantic Encounters: Europeans and Andeans in the Sixteenth Century, ed. Kenneth J. Andrien and Rolena Adorno, (Berkeley: U. California Press, 1991), p. 79.

\textsuperscript{61} Bertran had just been appointed prior of Santa Fe but left before he took office. “Los motivos que tuvo San Luis para venirse a España, y devar los Indios en que hizo tanto fruto, solo Dios lo sabe, porque aunque los Autores que escriben su vida disen varias cosas sobre esto, ninguna satisface.” Loarte, Historia, Lib.I. 19. p. 67.
only briefly to cite the many conversions attributed to him. While Loarte draws analogies between Luis Bertran and other saints from the distant Dominican past, he very carefully avoids presenting Bertran as exemplary as a Dominican in any way that is tied to missionary activity save in his preaching. The Dominican character of Luis Bertran, in fact, is given its emphasis in the sections of the Historia dealing with St. Luis' life and preaching career in Spain. In addition, it is important to note that the sections of the Historia which recount Bertran's experiences in Spain are filled with names and details which are lacking from the sections on the New World (where usually only locations are given) but which would be essential to establishing community identity with and devotion for St. Luis. What changes most, once Loarte resumes the narration of the saint's life in Spain, is his treatment of the community and popular reaction to the saint. The stories of Luis Bertran's failure in the New World serve to accentuate the contrasts between the evil Indians and the pious and discerning Spanish communities who support and foster Luis's saintly sermons and activities.

---

62 Fray Juan Melendez, Tesoros Verdaderos de las Yndias En la Historia dela gran Provincia de San Juan Bautista del Peru De el Orden de Predicadores, Tomo I, (Rome: Nicolas Tinassi, 1681) p. 432.
63 In particular, Loarte compares Luis to St. Vincent Ferrer on p. 206 and elsewhere.
64 By the time Loarte is writing the Historia in the 1670's, several other famous preachers, contemporaries of Bertran, have been recognized by Rome: the Italian Dominican Philip Neri, much admired in Spain, and the Spaniards Pascual Baylon and Peter of Alcantara. In addition, two more Spaniards, Juan of Avila and Nicolas Factor, were being publicly acclaimed as saints for their remarkable gifts of preaching. Nicolas Factor (eventually beatified in 1786) was said to have gone to Bertran's funeral and testified on behalf of his cause for beatification Historia, Lib. II, 23, p. 205.
65 For the importance of establishing the roles of community individuals as participants in the "drama" of the saints' lives, and thereby linking the community to the saints' holiness, see Kleinberg, Prophets in their own country, p. 122. Loarte is a Spaniard writing in Spain, and he admits that he is forced to base his information about Bertran’s missionary exploits on reports given by other travellers. He draws few connections between Bertran and contemporary New World communities.
The narrative of Bertran's life in Spain emphasizes, alongside his preaching, another gift involving the spoken word: the gift of prophecy, which included an ability to discern the hearts of others. Loarte never mentions this saintly gift in narratives about Bertran's dealings with the Indians of the New World (where it might have served him well). Most stories about Bertran among the Indians, like the one cited earlier, reveal how St. Luis involved himself in an active program to dismantle Indian mythology and disprove their prophecies. While it is possible to conjecture that the omission of Bertran's gift of prophecy reflects this Spanish struggle against the prominence of oracles and prophecy in Andean religion, the absence of this widely esteemed indication of sanctity suggests that Bertran's prophetic gift was considered specifically important or applicable to Spanish concerns. There are a few narratives in which Loarte mentions prophecies Bertran made while serving established communities in the New World (such as Santa Marta or Cartagena) but in every case that Loarte mentions, the prophecy involved Spaniards, not Indians. And in every case, the prophecy involved death: the early death of a child; the death of a close friend under bizarre circumstances; a fatal epidemic within the convent, the death of a cruel overseer. The theme of Bertran's prophesies stands in stark contrast to the prophesies of Indian oracles which usually concerned life, community welfare, and political or social order.

---

67 MacCormack, Religion in the Andes, p. 59.
served to warn or prepare Spaniards concerning death and death, Carlos Eire’s has pointed out, was a particular obsession of Early Modern Spaniards. 68

Once back in Spain, therefore, Bertran’s gift of prophecy was much admired. It was said that St. Luis could see “events” which had taken place in a person’s life but which the subject had forgotten and thereby help that person make a better confession. 69 He also could foretell the future. This gift of prophecy was well known to Bertran’s associates and he was consulted by a great many people. Loarte gives the names of many Spaniards who had been helped or instructed by Bertran’s foreknowledge of events. Furthermore, reviewing the instances in which Bertran had demonstrated this saintly gift provided his hagiographer Loarte with the opportunity to strengthen Bertran’s Spanish identity by linking him to the most famous Spanish saint of that century, Teresa of Jesus. In the early years of her Carmelite reform, says Loarte, Teresa corresponded with many “spiritual” people, and “especially” with St. Luis. 72 Loarte reports that, upon receipt of a letter from Teresa concerning some difficulties, Luis commended her problems to God and, after three or four months, he sent Teresa a prophetic reply saying that God was going to favor her enterprise

69 Loarte, Historia, Lib.I, 21, p. 78. The ability to discern hearts in the confessional was one of the special gifts of Saint Philip Neri, see note 64, above. A good confession, of course, was essential to receiving absolution before death.
72 “[Teresa] en los primeros años que comenzó a fundar la dicha Religion, consultó su intento con muchas personas de espíritu, y en especial escribió al B.P. dándole cuenta de su deseo, y de los motivos que tenía para ponerlos en ejecución, en que avia tanta dificultad.” Loarte, Historia, Lib IV, 4, pp.151-2.
and that within fifty years her religion would be “most illustrious” within the Church.\textsuperscript{71} This occasion for a prophecy of “reassurance,” however, was unique.

By far the most prominent topic on which Bertran prophesied was death. Loarte says that the saint correctly predicted the impending deaths of many individuals and that he had visions of souls in purgatory.\textsuperscript{72} These saintly gifts of prophecy and insight which receive such emphasis in Loarte’s narrative of Bertran’s life in Spain, become, like Luis’s physical mortifications, evidence of his sanctity. A Spaniard himself, Loarte makes it clear that, unlike the inhabitants of the New World, Spaniards can recognize a saint when they hear one speak.\textsuperscript{73} It is significant that St. Luis Bertran, chained to Old World culture and expectations, is most successful as a prophet “in his own country.” The heart of the cultural “other” cannot be read by the righteous Spaniard, nor can European vision foresee the future of the New World.

**FRANCIS SOLANO (1549-1610)**

\textsuperscript{71} Loarte quotes the letter Bertran sent to Teresa: “Ahora digo en nombre del mismo Señor, que os animeis para tan grande empreza, que è los ayudara, y favorecerà, y de su parte es certifico, que no pazzaràn cinquenta años, que vuestra Religion no sea una de las mas illustres que aya en la Iglesia de Dios.” Lib.II, 13, p. 152.

\textsuperscript{72} Carlos Eire has observed that “Purgatory loomed large and near in the mentality of Early Modern Spain...It was as near to them as their own graves and those of their dearly departed and was as much a part of their reality as the churches in which they were buried and the coins with which they paid for masses.” Eire, *From Madrid to Purgatory*, p.15.

\textsuperscript{73} There were a few instances in which Spanish clergy and religious in the New World were portrayed as hostile to Bertran: for example, a particularly moving sermon preached by Luis on Good Friday moved some fellow religious to such envy that they “persecuted him” afterwards and called him a hypocrite. Loarte, *Historia*, Lib.I. 12, p. 45.
Francisco Solano, a Franciscan friar from Montilla, Spain, came to Peru almost twenty years after Luis Bertran had returned to Spain. Like Bertran, Solano came to the New World as a grown man in mid-career but, unlike Bertran, he never returned home. Although Solano spent much of his missionary career as an itinerant preacher in the wilderness, towards the end of his life he became a well-known figure in Lima. The earliest life of Francisco Solano was written by Diego de Córdova Salinas, the famous chronicler of the Franciscan order in South America. The Vida, Virtudes, y Milagros del Apostol del Peru el Venerable P. Fray Francisco Solano... was printed in Lima in 1630 and reprinted, with the addition of materials from the beatification process, in Madrid in 1643. In addition, an abridged version of Solano’s Life appeared alongside the Lives of several other saintsly Franciscans in Córdova Salinas’s chronicle of the Franciscans in Peru, the Coronica de la Religiosissima Provincia de Los Doce Apostoles del Peru, de la Orden de N.P.S. Francisco de la Regular Observancia, published in Lima in 1651.

It is important to realize that Córdova Salinas, writing for the order, portrays Solano as a great saint among many, many other saintsly Franciscan friars. Even in the 1643 edition of Francisco Solano’s Life there are chapters at the back of the book

---

74 With the exception of the difference between Francis and Francisco, and the Latin version, Francisci Solani, this saint’s name is almost always spelled Solano. By way of compensation for this convenience, however, his main biographer’s name is spelled Cordoba, or Cordova, with or without accents, and commonly the two names are joined, Cordoba y Salinas.

75 I have used the 1643 edition held by the Biblioteca Nacional de Peru. A copy of the 1630 edition exists in the Franciscan convent in Lima but access to it is restricted. A third edition of the Vida, printed in 1676, includes miracles and testimonies from the canonization process; it is also available at the Biblioteca Nacional.

76 In the Coronica, ten chapters are devoted to Solano. Eight chapters are about Fr. Bolanos, missionary of Paraguay, and another five chapters are about Fr. Gomez, and so on.
devoted to other, less well-known Franciscans. Why was Francis Solano chosen out of this constellation of holy friars to be promoted as the Franciscan’s brightest star? He is not portrayed as more virtuous than these other servants of God, nor necessarily as more talented. The single most striking difference between these holy men appears to be the geographical extent and public visibility of their careers. Of all of the friars that Córdova Salinas describes as saintly in the eyes of fellow his Franciscans, Francis Solano was the most publicly familiar, the most “famous” among towns and villages of South America. That he was regarded as a saint in Spain before sailing to the New World made his cause much stronger, of course. As a saint in two worlds, Solano invited identification and loyalty on both sides of the Colonial Empire. For a candidate like Solano who had membership in multiple communities, the chance of success in Rome increased since canonization required both popular and financial support.

It is said that Francisco Solano left Spain in order to avoid fame and popularity “as a saint” after his great success as a preacher and his service to a town during an epidemic. He came to Peru in 1588 and went on to the furthest reaches of the province, to Tucumán and Paraguay, to carry the Gospel to the Indians. His zeal for evangelism, says Córdova Salinas, was immense. Three main themes

---

77 Scholarship which emphasizes Rome’s influence over the selection of saints would lead one to expect virtue to receive greater emphasis in the selection among candidates.
78 “Por huir el humilde Padre Fraíl Francisco Solano, de la veneracion que como a Santo le hazian las Ciudades, y pueblos de España, se desterrò della, y passò a las Indias” Córdova Salinas, Vidas, Lib.II, p. 411.
79 Tucumán is in what is today northeastern Argentina.
80 “...donde como fuese un sol clarissimo de santidad, queria producir en las almas de los Indios los minerales ricos del oro, y plata, de la Fè de su Criador, engendrando su divino amor en los peñascos desiertos de sus coraçones.” Córdova Salinas, Coronica, pp. 186-187.
emerge in Solano’s story: his disregard of the body, (both his own and others’), with a concomitant concern for souls; his preoccupation with dramatic language, exemplified through his miracles of preaching and prophecy; and his theatrical demonstrations of obedience which emphasized his similarity to the great St. Francis of Assisi.

Solano’s “disregard” of the body and physical concerns is different from Bertran’s contempt. To modern readers, Solano’s was a true disregard, an indifference, and not like Bertran’s alienated hostility. In practical terms, however, to neglect one’s body is often not much kinder than to abuse it. What emerges in the story of Solano is his appreciation for his body as his “assistant,” making its own appearance in a theatrical presentation of the Gospel to accompany the preacher’s dramatic sermons. More than an itinerant preacher, Solano is an itinerant performer, one who deliberately uses his body as a dramatic prop in his play. This love of the theatrical marks Solano as a true heir of St. Francis of Assisi and a true sixteenth-century Spaniard. The saintly body as a medium for the message also brings us closer to the kind of saintly body we will see constructed by the Creole saints, Rose and Martin. Words themselves, as well as the body, are used to impress Solano’s audiences. In the narratives of Córdoba Salinas, Solano’s words are powerful, almost tangible, things.

The Story of the Shipwreck

All of the major themes in Solano’s life (dramatic performance, disregard of the body, the power of words) can be introduced in the story of the shipwreck which
occurs during Solano’s journey from Panama to Peru. Córdova Salinas presents this
shipwreck narrative as one which was supplied by eye-witnesses who survived the
ordeal along with the saint.\textsuperscript{41} After a terrible storm wrecked their ship, we are told,
no one helped the other passengers in the ensuing chaos but each one thought only to
save himself. The captain and some other passengers—including a number of
religious—launched a lifeboat. They called to Solano to save himself and join them
but Solano declined, remaining on the wrecked ship out of concern for those
remaining inside, including more than eighty unbaptized African slaves.\textsuperscript{42} His
concern, significantly, was for their souls, not for their bodies and the author
Córdova Salinas makes no mention of injured or half-drowned passengers of which
there surely must have been many.

As the lifeboat was launched, Solano called out to the departing crew that his
life was freely given for the good of his neighbors. Then, holding a cross, he began to
pray and to exhort the terrified company left aboard the sinking ship to trust in God.
Demonstrating the disregard of the body which would characterize much of his
ministry, he gathered the terrified slaves together, whom he “catechized” on the
“articles and mysteries of our Holy Faith,” and then asked them if they wanted to be
baptized in order to go to heaven.\textsuperscript{43} Solano’s biographer reports that the slaves “all
raised their hands together,” in what Solano interpreted as “gestures of devotion,” and

\textsuperscript{41} Córdova Salinas \textit{Vida}, Lib.I, Ch. 9,p.32. The author cites the testimony of witnesses,
including one by a woman whose credibility he defends thus: “Contava Catalina Gomez, persona de
\textsuperscript{42} “mas de ochenta negros bocales de Guinea, muchos sin ser bautizados” Ibid.
\textsuperscript{43} “Y juntando los negros barbaros Gentiles, con palabras de cielo, les catequizó en los
artículos, y misterios de nuestra Santa Fe... y preguntándoles, si quieran recibir el santo Bautismo para
salvarse, y gozar de Dios en el cielo.” Ibid., p. 32-33.
requests for baptism—which he happily gave to them. That the slaves raised their arms together and, imploringly, held out their hands suggests that they were still manacled. Solano, in his exclusive attention to the spiritual, read their gestures only as pious entreaties for baptism and never thought to remove their chains so that they might swim or hold on to the sides of the ship. Unlike Bertran who took an adversarial role towards his own body, flagellating it and exhibiting contempt for the physical existence of others, Francis Solano simply never thought about his body, and never recognized the physical needs of those around him. Even the thought of imminent death did not impinge on Solano’s consciousness, at least as portrayed by his biographer. When a wave broke the ship in half and the front half sank into the depths dragging a large percentage of the people down with it, Córdova Salinas extols how the saint as an “instrument of God” had managed to baptize those poor souls in the nick of time.

It is notable in this account that the only quoted words are Solano’s. The African slaves have no words, but can only gesture. Whereas, when Solano gets to South America, his initial ability to be understood by Indians is cited as a miracle, here there is nothing about a miracle of “tongues” enabling either side to understand the other. This is remarkable in a narrative in which miracles of language elsewhere receive considerable attention. The omission underscores the discrepancy in Spanish regard for Africans, presented as voiceless, and Indians, whose languages the missionaries struggled to learn.
The real miracles in Córdova Salinas's view are wrought by saintly words, which are presented as more "real" and substantial than the physical world. In fact, the words of Francis Solano proved capable of sustaining the company of "Spaniards, women, and Negroes" who survived in the stern of the ship for three days without food or water. The saint, from his place on the raised stern of the ship, preached tirelessly. Córdova Salinas tells us that no one felt hunger, or thirst, or fatigue because the preaching of Padre Solano satisfied them "as if they had dined on pheasant." Without even the possibility of physical nourishment, Solano's words became true Words of Life. Says the author, "Who could help but admire the fire of charity which burned in the breast of this Apostle and which even the waters of the entire ocean could not put out!"

Significantly, when this broken half-ship with its survivors finally grounded on a deserted coast and the company began to eat the available roots and fruits, they soon started dying of poisoning. "Real" food proved less wholesome than saintly words. Showing a rare concern with physical necessity, Solano took up handfuls of plants and roots, prayed in the name of the Holy Trinity and, with the help of some other religious, distributed these blessed herbs as safe to eat. As in Christ's miracle of the loaves and fishes, these meager rations miraculously lasted as long as they were needed. Quickly Solano reverted to his primary concern with the spiritual and

---

84 "Y estuvieron el santo Padre Solano, y los demás, tres días en el medio Navio, el agua a la boca a Dios misericordia, y en todos ellos no comieron, ni bevieron, ni durmieron, y el Santo Padre Solano estuvo subido en la popa predicándoles, de suerte, que la sobredicha no tuvo hambre, ni sed, ni sueño; porque con la predicacion del siervo de Dios, y sus consuelos, le parecia que avia comido faysanes..." Ibid., p.32.

85 "Quien no se admira del fuego grande de caridad que ardía en el pecho deste Apostolico varon, que les aguas de todo el mar no bastavan a apagarle:" Ibid.
constructed an altar to Mary, Queen of Angels in thanks for their safe delivery from the storm, all the while consoling, praying, and administering confession. He calmed the people when they quarrelled over the shipwrecked items that washed ashore and he lifted their "general depression."\textsuperscript{56} The author observes that this peace-making ability was a greater miracle than to resuscitate the dead.\textsuperscript{57}

Six weeks later, however, Christmas Eve found the survivors in despair, sure that all hope of rescue was lost. On the night of Christmas Eve, when people were sleeping, Padre Solano, "like an angel of peace," came into their shelter softly singing carols and lullabies as if to the baby Jesus, completely absorbed in God. Everyone joined him in the quiet singing. Filled with great happiness, the group took encouragement from the saint's prophecy that a boat was coming for them soon. When a ship arrived within a few days, everyone understood that the saint had been responsible for this Christmas miracle.\textsuperscript{58}

More Disregard for the Body

The story of the shipwreck is only one of the many accounts of Francis Solano's charity which point to his disregard for physical existence. The blessed Solano "considered that God desired nothing more than the salvation of souls and for

\textsuperscript{56} Ibid., pp. 36-38.  
\textsuperscript{57} "que mudar el coraz'on de un hombre bravo, y apasionado, diye S. Bernardo, lo juzga por mayor milagro, que resucitar los muertos." Ibid., p.38.  
this he gave his blood, his honor, and his life."89 His own disregard of his body for 
the sake of saving souls characterizes not only his own Life, but a whole corpus of 
sixteenth and seventeenth-century literature that was aimed at justifying the brutal 
means of conquest and evangelization employed by Spaniards in the New World.90 
Only the welfare of souls, not the sustenance of bodies, is featured in the saintly 
charity described by Córdova Salinas. For example, while Francis was consistently 
drawn to the poor, "humbly conversing with them and looking for something to give 
them" what he "principally" gave them were words—blessings, advice, and 
admonitions such as: "Better to die of hunger than to offend God."91 Once again, his 
words are substituted as bread for the hungry.

Likewise, when Córdova Salinas says that Francis's special devotion was to 
help the sick he means that the saint's particular grace was to help the sick die "a good 
death."92 The "cures" attributed to Solano, although they include the elimination of 
some usual physical ailments, often involve exorcism of evil spirits—a cure effected by 
powerful words. By his prayers—again, by means of his words—he liberated a friar 
afflicted by horrible visions of demons.93 Likewise, by simply talking to a nun he 
relieved her of "a diabolical temptation" to leave the Religion. The nun claimed that

89 "Considerava el bendito Padre, que no ay cosa que mas quiera Dios que la salvacion de las 
almas, por las cuales dio su sangre, su honra, y su vida;" Córdova Salinas, Vida, Lib.I, p. 131.
90 For the justification for conquest, and for the use of force against the Indians, see James 
Muldoon, The Americas in the Spanish World Order: The Justification for Conquest in the Seventeenth 
Century, (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1994); Lewis Hanke, All Mankind is One: A 
Study of the Disputation Between Bartolomé de Las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in 1550 on the 
Intellectual and Religious Capacity of the American Indians, (DeKalb, IN: Northern Illinois U. Press, 
1974).
92 Ibid., pp. 126-127.
93 Ibid., p. 199.
her vows (her words) were invalid because she had lacked the appropriate intentions. Solano’s words restore her vows, “leaving her content, quiet and restored. She never again tried to leave.”

As for his own body, Solano’s disregard of it is as complete as that of any ascetic in the desert. Like St. Anthony, we are told, Francis Solano’s whole life was a “continuous martyrdom” of penances and “admirable mortifications of his body, his senses, and his strengths.” This disregard for the body, however, is accompanied by the saint’s conscious performance in front of his audience. While Francis himself never betrays any concern about the needs or comforts of his body, both he and his hagiographer both direct others to look at his body even as they listen to his words. In this, too, Francis Solano recalls the Desert Fathers upon whose bodies the struggle between good and evil was inscribed.

Córdova Salinas presents the bodily disciplines and mortifications of Francis Solano as evidence of his sanctity, drawing strong parallels to St. Francis of Assisi and other Franciscan saints. Francis Solano chose not to live in the dormitories with his fellow religious, but instead built for himself a little cell in the corner of the bell tower in imitation “of the poverty of the early saints in the religion.” Moreover, he

---

94 “por averle faltado la intencion al tiempo que hizo los votos solenes,” Ibid., 32, p. 207; “quedó alegre, quieta, y consolada, y nunca trató de salirse: y con esta paz, y tranquilidad vivio muchos anos.” Ibid.

95 “Toda su vida, desde que Dios le llamó a la Religion, fue un continuo martirio de penitencias, y afliciones contra su cuerpo, y admirable mortificacion de sus sentidos, y potencias.” Ibid., 15, p. 67.

96 The Spanish fascination with the hermits and Desert Fathers is the subject of a recent study by Alain Saint-Saëns: La Nostalgie du Désert: L’Idéal érmitique en Castille au Siècle d’Or, (San Francisco: Mellen Research U.P., 1993).

97 “Y aunque avia buena comodidad de celdas en el Convento, por imitar la pobreza de los Santos antiguos de la Religion, hizo para si junto a un rincon de las campanas una pequena celda de cañas, y barro con sus propias manos ayudado de un novicio.” Córdova Salinas. Vida, Lib.I. 3, p. 9.
exhibited a certain joyful whimsy in his choice of mortifications. Noting a ravine near the Convent which was full of spiked brambles, Solano (following the example of St. Francis himself) waited several days for the opportune moment to strip off his habit and throw his naked body into the briar patch. This tumbling around in the thorns, which, of course, produced great lacerations in his flesh, also produced a great "liveliness and fervor" of spirit.  

The tone of this story bears no resemblance to the penitential tone describing the self-castigation of Luis Bertran.

Taken individually, the stories of Solano's mortifications might be interpreted simply as references to well-known examples of sanctity in order to reinforce the reader's assessment of Solano as a saint. However much they may serve to do this, they also form part of a much broader discourse which presents Francis Solano as a reformer of the order, calling his Franciscan brothers to return to an older, more austere, and "genuine" imitation of their founder St. Francis of Assisi and the first Franciscans. There was more than a little reproach in Francis's theatrical but self-deprecating manner. For example, while all the other friars were eating, he would go around the refectory abasing himself, not eating, and kissing everyone's feet.

---

55 Ibid. I, 5, 15 "Junto a la cerca del Convento avia un barranco lleno de carcasas espinosas, y comolos deseos del santo varon, eran emplearse en penitencias agradables a los ojos de Dios; y considerando quan acepta avia sido la que hizo nuestro Padre San Francisco en las carcas de Porciuncula animado con su exemplo, cuando le pareci tiempo oportuno, que no parecia persona alguna, se despojo el habito con presteza, y desnudo en carnes, se arrojo entre las carcas del barranco, y bolcandose entre las espinas de ellas, se lazaro, y lastimo sin piedad, el tiempo que le parecio dexarse estar, con grande animo, y fervor de espiritu. Ibid. 3, p. 15-16.

56 It is interesting that although Franciscan spirituality is traditionally "Christo-centric" this author almost never refers to Solano as imitating Jesus Christ, or as sharing in Christ's suffering, but instead draws the comparisons to St. Francis of Assisi making the Franciscan identity of the saint his foremost attribute.

Obedience to Superiors

While he was still in Spain, the virtuous Francis Solano was asked by some youths, "What is the penance that a religious should do: that will most improve him in the eyes of the Lord?" The saint's reply was "to have patience in one's work, in adversity, and above all [to have patience] when dealing with family, friends, and fellow religious." This remark leads one to assume that Solano, like other saints, often struggled with the vow of obedience which required more than a little patience to honor the demands of "family, friends, and fellow religious." Córdova Salinas cites John Climacus's admonition that "obedience was a burial of one's own will" and says that Solano had buried his own will "in a celestial sepulcher" and, "like a dead thing," lived "only to carry out the will of his prelates," providing a rare example of obedience. The stories Córdova Salinas tells suggest interpretive possibilities beyond those of obedience and humility. For example, while Francis Solano was living with the Franciscans in Potosí, the Guardian of the convent entered the refectory and exhorted the brothers to rejoice and sing in honor of the occasion—the feast of Saint Francis of Assisi. He himself started singing a couplet, encouraging the others to join him, but apparently they did not. Francis Solano burst forth out from under the table (where he sat during meals, as was his custom, kissing the feet of the

---

121 "Preguntandole los Religiosos mancebos, deseosos de imitarle. Qual era la penitencia que un Religioso podia hacer mas perfecta para merecer con nuestro Senor? Respondio: Que tener paciencia en los trabajos, y adversidades; y mayormente quando eran de parientes, amigos, o Religiosos." Ibid., 3, p.11.

122 "En este celestial sepulcro avia sepultado la suya el bendito Padre, y como muerto, solo vivia para executar la voluntad de sus Prelados, tan sin replica, ni discurso, como si fuera una cosa muerta, Iuran todos los Prelados, que fue exemplo raro de obedience." Córdova Salinas, Vida, Lib.I. 13, p. 62.
other brothers) and took up the song, singing joyfully, dancing around with his face aglow like a flame. His fervor and abandon might have, on other occasions, prompted the brothers to laugh at or scorn him. This time however, his example of obedience so touched everyone that they were moved to tears.\textsuperscript{123}

Córdova Salinas interprets the story as exemplifying obedience, but it is important to note that it tells of a performance—not just simple obedience. Francis Solano, in the spirit of St. Francis before him, did not selflessly obey the Guardian’s command and, still less, like “a dead thing” with no will of his own.\textsuperscript{124} Instead he staged a dramatic demonstration which prompted the other brothers to reflect on their own lack of obedience to their superior and on their lack of devotion to St. Francis himself. In this story, one of several about obedience, Córdova Salinas calls attention to issues of reform within the Franciscan order, encouraging a stricter observance of the Franciscan Rule.

\textsuperscript{123} “Siendo huesped en la villa de Potosí, y estando juntos los Religiosos en el Refitorio, día de nuestro Padre San Francisco, los exortó el Guardian, que se regozijassen, y por obligarles a ello, canto una copla en alabanza del Serafico Padre. Viendo el Padre Solano la cortedad de los subditos, llevado del zelo de la Obediencia, salía a toda priesa por debajo de las mesas, y tomandole la copla, comenzó cantar con grande alegría, y dar bueltas juntamente el rostro encendido, como unas brasas de fuego, con tanto espíritu, y fervor, que lo que en otro fuera ocasion de risa, y aun de menosprecio, en el permitio el Senor lo fuese de ejemplo de obediencia, moviendo a todos a tanta devoción, que vencidos de la suavidad della, se derretian en lagrimas. Ibid., Lib.I, 13, p. 61.

\textsuperscript{124} St. Francis of Assisi was famous for staging public demonstrations of his obedience to God. One of the more celebrated incidents was that in which he publically renounced his inheritance and his family’s wealth, removing all of his clothes and giving them to his spluttering, irate father. The local bishop, a spectator whose presence was planned by Francis, quickly proffered his cope to cover Francis. Accepting the offer, and claiming protection from the Church, Francis made his point that obedience to God came before obedience to family. See William R. Cook, “Fraternal and Lay Images of St. Francis in the Thirteenth Century” in Popes, Teachers, and Canon Law in the Middle Ages, ed. Sweeney and Chodorow, (Ithaca, NY: Cornell U.P., 1989) pp. 263-289. This type of public demonstration, which characterized much of the life of St. Francis, is taken up by Francis Solano and used by his hagiographer to strengthen his Franciscan identity.
The choice of song and the situation of enjoining others to join in song also carries a multiple coding. Singing at the meals was one procedural point under debate within the order in the sixteenth century. Francis, accusing his fellow religious of having “long faces,” inappropriate to the Seraphic religion’s joy, is said to have sung and even played the violin despite the stern disapproval of some friars. Furthermore, it was Solano’s singing—and getting the other shipwreck survivors to sing with him—that set the scene for the Christmas Eve miracle. This same link between obedience and song appears in the nature miracles which are characteristic of Franciscan spirituality. In the convent of Trujillo, said witnesses, Solano was seen preaching to the birds and exhorting them to sing and pray with him, which they did.\textsuperscript{125} Córdova Salinas calls the birds’ response to Solano as “obedience,” entitling a chapter “How the Birds of the Air Obeyed the Servant of God.”\textsuperscript{126} It should be noted that the monastic vow of obedience is, specifically, to one’s superiors; thus, when animals and natural forces obey the saint, they were acknowledging him “as a symbol of Adam” in Paradise to be their superior.\textsuperscript{127}

The world of nature was subordinate to the saint as he drove off a plague of locusts and removed several serious infestations of ants.\textsuperscript{128} Birds would perch upon his shoulder, seeking him out as a “tree of life.”\textsuperscript{129} The necessary obedience of instincts, emotions, and sexual drives to the rule of the superior, spiritual

\textsuperscript{125} “se sentava debaxo de los olivares, y sacando un ravelillo, cantava suavemente” Córdova Salinas, Vida, Lib. I, 32, p. 162.
\textsuperscript{126} Chap. XXX of the Vida is entitled: “Que las Aves del cielo obedian al Siervo de Dios.”
\textsuperscript{127} “por un simbolo de Adan.” Ibid., p. 182.
\textsuperscript{128} Ibid., p. 186-187.
\textsuperscript{129} “arbol de vida” Ibid, p. 184.
consciousness is likewise demonstrated in stories about Solano's repeated success in calming raging bulls. Witnesses tell of a fierce bull who, after having gored some bystanders, came up to Solano, took one whiff of his cordon (belt), nodded, and went peacefully on his way. The belt, a symbol of chastity, subdued the bull, a symbol of male sexuality. Another bull once started to charge, but instead knelt, kissed Solano's hands and went away. On yet another occasion, a bull stopped to kiss the hem of his habit.112

Not only animals (and the instincts they often represent) but the very elements of nature obeyed him, Córdova Salinas notes, even as they had done for Moses. In one story Solano came upon a band of Indians who were happy living in a particular place save for a very inconvenient trip to get water. To them Solano said, "Don't worry, there is water nearby." The Indians, knowing the area extremely well, were sure this was erroneous. Solano, however, commanded water to come out of the earth and immediately his words brought forth a gushing spring.113 Not only was nature obedient to God's chosen messenger, but the Indians of the story were symbolically given baptismal water for their everlasting benefit. This miracle might be considered "formulaic" in that legends about miraculous fresh waters are found in

112 Ibid., pp. 190-191.
113 "el nuevo Moises armao de Fe viva, y esperanc, firme en Dios....dixo al pueblo incrédulo: Cauda aqui, y hallareis agua...y es llamada de los habitadores de aquella region, la fuente del santo Solano." Ibid., p. 193. The importance of this miracle, almost identical to a miracle of St. Toribio, is indicated by its specific inclusion among the questions of the interrogatory process which initiated the saint's cause: "Y una de las preguntas del interrogatorio, que de oficio se hizo en Roma, dice: Que con el agua desta milagrosa fuente, obra el Señor muchos milagros, porque se lleva por gran regalo, y como cosa sagrada à diversas partes." Ibid., p. 193-194. Various cures were attributed to the water, says Cordova Salinas and he adds that a Spaniard visiting the place in 1611, many years after Solano had left, reported that the Indians living in that place were more pious than in other places, virtues he attributed to the teaching and good example of Solano. Ibid., p. 195.
the Lives of many holy men since Moses. However, its presence here within a constellation of nature miracles, as part of a discourse wherein nature acts in obedience to the saint, indicates the importance of subjugating the natural, physical realm to the spiritual, and “life-giving” Christian order of things. The abundance of these nature miracles, which appear also in several Lives of other saints in this study suggests that seventeenth century Christian readers, (especially missionaries and colonists in a new world) found miracles in which the natural world was tamed to be reassuring.

Obedience, for Francis, while not the “subversive” virtue it becomes for the Creole saints, is still not a simple response. It is excessive obedience—quicker, more complete, and more dramatically rendered than could be required—and, as such, outshines the obedience of others. It is exemplary and demonstrates to the other friars what perfect obedience should be. Only one story—significantly one which involves Solano’s own physical body—reveals the subversive possibilities of obedience. Sent by his superior to a port town two leagues away, the prior required Solano to wear sandals on the trip—a luxury Francis had never allowed himself even when crossing the mountains and jungles. Unhappy with this command, but bound by his vow of obedience, Solano stuck nails up through the soles of the sandals so that the nails would tear the soles of his feet as he walked.112 This demonstration of self-mortification amazed the brothers who witnessed it. The event is reported in such a way as to emphasize the point that the original Franciscan rule of going barefoot was

112 Ibid., 15, p. 71.
the rule that Solano preferred. It also made the point that Solano retained dominion
over his own body, and that he acted in obedience to a higher authority than to his
prior. Solano is famous among his brothers for preserving the most rigorous
interpretations of the Franciscan rules. This is what the author calls attention to with
this story when he exclaims: "O true son of St. Francis, you comply with the letter of
the Rule and with such marvelous and admirable excess, that you lay them at our feet
—if not to follow you, at least to remember the sight and the hidden impulse you
awaken in our lukewarm hearts."113

The "ownership" of saintly bodies is an important theme in the hagiography
of this time. This notion of saintly disobedience had been made implicitly in the
story of Bertran's persistence in his mortifications despite the concerns of his
brethren. Such (dis)obedience is made more explicit when Solano's superiors are
presented as wrong in their attempt to moderate the saints' chosen mortifications.
While Bertran reacted by hiding his immoderate practices from his community,
Solano publically demonstrated his. In disobeying the spirit of the prior's
requirement, but following the "letter" of it, the saint simultaneously demonstrated
that his vow of obedience was first of all, to the Franciscan Rule. His "obedience"
therefore was an occasion for Córdova Salinas to rebuke Franciscan superiors as less
wise and less conscientious than they should be. As issues of obedience and self-
determination within the political and social body took on greater importance in the

113 "O legítimo, y verdadero hijo de san Francisco! bien a la letra cumplies su Regla, y con el
exceso de portento tan admirable, pones alas a nuestros pies, si no para seguirte ...a los menos a no
perderte de vista, ni faltar a los secretos impulsos, que dispiertas en nuestros tibios corazones." Ibid.
colonial world, hagiographers of colonial saints increasingly focused upon control of the body. The theme, however, is an old one in Franciscan hagiography and it comes to the New World replete in the Life of Francis Solano.

Miracles of Language

Most of Solano’s miracles of language center around his ability to affect his audiences profoundly. Like Bertran, he specialized in converting “barbarians” in astonishing numbers and turning sinners to God. In his preaching, as in everything else, Francis Solano followed the advice of the Seraphic Francis of Assisi letting his words be persuasive but unpretentious. Solano kept his sermons short and to the point so as not to lose the attention of his listeners. Undoubtedly such favorable remarks about the Franciscan ideals of homiletics are intended by Córdova Salinas as a jibe aimed at other preachers who unduly emphasize rhetoric. The power of Solano’s words reached not only out to the audience, but inwards, affecting his own physical body as well. While preaching on gospel texts, Solano would sometimes lapse into an ecstasy which lasted so long, reports Córdova Salinas, that he would have to be carried down from the pulpit and taken home.

Córdova Salinas cites numerous witnesses who testified that Solano walked through the streets of Lima and Trujillo preaching with a crucifix in his hands, like a

114 “Doy fin a este capítulo, con advertir, que el bendito Padre Solano en sus platúicas, y sermones guardaba lo que nuestra Padre San Francisco amonestá a sus Predicadores, que anuncien al pueblo los vicios, y virtudes, pena, y gloria con brevedad de sermon; porque aunque los sermones sean muy elegantes, y dichos con mucho espíritu, en siendo mas que de hora, se cansan los oyentes, y dan en rostro con que fueron largos, siendo de ordinario mejor el fin que el principio: demanera, que los menos bueno, es bonísímo, siendo poco; y los bonísímo añadido a esto, lo destruye todo.” Ibid., p. 134.
“true Apostle,” filled with the Holy Spirit, and (thereby) converting large numbers of people. In this role as preacher, Solano belonged to the wider community.

Córdova Salinas emphasizes the effect these sermons had on the listeners. Solano was so impressive a preacher that the Franciscans and neighboring laity of the province of Tucumán requested he be sent back there from Lima because of the tremendous number of conversions his preaching had produced. When Solano went to preach in the mountains and deserts, the Indians “forgot their customary ferocity and received him with affection,” taking time off to listen to him preach. It was said that Solano learned several Indian languages—and the reader is assured that these were quite difficult to master—well enough to preach effectively to the Indians in their own tongues. No doubt this made Solano extremely popular and well-received.

In the *Coronica* of 1651, Córdova Salinas says Solano converted as many as nine thousand Indians as he travelled the countryside. But Solano’s words are only part of his charisma. The apostle not only preached the words, he performed them. Here is Córdova Salinas’ description of Francis Solano as he went from village to village: “The padre, never eating or drinking, his flesh bound beneath his habit with

---

116 One example of many possible ones: “Y este testigo le vio andar por las placas de la ciudad [Lima], y de la de Truxillo, predicando con un Crucifixo en las manos, como varon Apostolico, y con un espíritu mas divino que humano, convirtiendo con su predicacion gran numero de personas.” Ibid., p. 139.
117 Ibid., p. 139-140.
118 Although the friars promoted Quechua and Aymara as the “general languages” of the Indians in South America, there were many native languages among these diverse people. Mark A. Barkholder and Lyman L. Johnson, *Colonial Latin America*, (New York: Oxford U.P., 1990), p.85.
119 “y otros se rendian al yugo suave del Evangelico, que les predicava en sus mismas lenguas maternas, que con ser varias, y distintas, y muy difíciles de pronunciar, las aprendio, supo y entendio, con tanta elegancia, que todos juzgavan, que por infusión, y gracia del Espiritu Santo, milagrosamente las entendia, y hablava. Y asi fue inmensa la multitud de Indios infieles, que convirtio, y administró el Santo Bautismo.” Córdova Salinas, *Coronica*, p. 187. See also *Vida*, Lib.Í. 9, p. 46.
hairshirt and chains, walking the desert and the villages of Tucuman alone, barefoot, with a thin face, emaciated body, burned by the sun and inclement weather, clamouring like a celestial trumpet..." He was surely quite a sight to the Indians and strikingly different from the Spaniards some of them might have seen elsewhere. Says the author, "The spirit with which he preached was so abundant, and vehement, that it stirred the air." Solano was often seen in the streets and plazas of Lima with his crucifix in hand, his arms spread wide, blaring forth, "reducing everyone to penance and love of God." Córdova Salinas writes that the "force of his example," as well as his words, caused many Indians to "open their eyes," repent, and get baptized.

It is hard for modern readers to guess just what the Indians thought of this apparition, but their eyes may have been opened, not only to the errors of their ways, but in astonishment at his appearance. The Franciscan friars were noted for their apocalyptic tone and millenarian expectation that the evangelization of the natives and the re-creation of an apostolic church would be closely followed by Christ's second coming. The performance of Solano, in this setting among the Indians, however, does not seem to have produced any remarkable or unusual responses in terms of conversions. The description by Córdova Salinas, and the analogies to John

---

123 "Era el espíritu con que predicaba tan caudaloso, y vehemente, que lo arrebataba por el aire, y lo vían yr por calles, y plazas, con un Cruzífixo en las manes, abiertos los bracíos, dando vozes, como trompeta Evangelica, reduziendo a los hombres a la penitencia, y al amor de Dios." Córdova Salinas, *Corónica*, p. 187.
124 "obligando con la fuerza de su exemplo, y palabras, a que inumerables Indios...abriessen los ojos...se llegasten al siervo de Cristo, y contritos de sus errores." Córdova Salinas, *Vida*, Lib. I, 15, p. 66-67.
the Baptist, are aimed at a Spanish audience. Neither the saint nor his hagiographer considered how the mendicant preacher might have been “read” by the Indians.

Prophecy

That Córdova Salinas draws analogies between Solano and John the Baptist, both wandering wilderness figures, not only reflects the seventeenth-century Spanish “nostalgia” for the Desert Fathers\(^\text{124}\) but also emphasizes the prophetic dimension of this saint. Prophecy, however, is a risky business even for saints. The most famous story about Solano in Lima, concerned a prophecy, and was occasioned by one of his sermons on sinfulness and divine punishment. The reason this story is so famous, however, is because of the response he received from the citizens of Lima. It is their story as well as his. It is also a story of “failed” prophecy which required explanation and reinterpretation on the part of Solano’s biographers.

In December of 1604, after serving for five years as Guardian of la Recolecion de Nuestra Senora de los Angeles de la Observancia,\(^\text{125}\) Solano walked out late one afternoon and said to the porter at the gate: “Pray for me, I’m going to render a notable service to the Divine Majesty.” He proceeded to the main plaza of Lima, called together the citizens and began to preach. His choice of time and place was quite deliberate: the central plaza was the heart of the Spanish city and the late afternoon was the hour when fashionable men and women took a promenade dressed

---

\(^\text{124}\) See Alain Saint-Saëns: *La Nostalgie du Désert*, cited above, note 96.

\(^\text{125}\) Recolecion was a house of retreat and meditation, smaller and more strict in its observance of the Franciscan Rule. Franciscans from other convents often came there on retreat while others, who shared Solano’s love of austerity chose to live there.
in their finest clothes. Solano specifically, therefore, chose a Spanish, affluent audience for this performance. Córdova Salinas here depicts Solano's visual appearance as "a veritable retablo of penance" whose aspect was a sermon in itself. Words and body provided two means of communication: the visual aspects of the saint's physical body and its performance formed a significant but non-verbal part of the sermon.

Solano began his sermon, we are told, by lamenting that the city of Lima was full of wicked souls and sinners, and warning that, if God's anger was not placated, He would send down destruction upon the city. With a loud voice (again Córdova Salinas likens it to a trumpet) that awakened those who "were sleeping soundly," Solano called the entire city to penance, imitating the angel of the Last Judgement. He was so "ardent" says Córdova Salinas, that the words came out of his mouth "like fire" and the audience saw fulfilled Christ's promise to his preachers: "It is not you who speak but the spirit of your Father who speaks in you." The expression, "live

---

127 "salio una tarde todo inflamado en Dios, y se partio para la ciudad; y al salir por la portería, dijo al portero: Encomiéndeme a Dios, que voy a hacer un señ"alado servicio a la Magestad divina. Llegado a la plaza mayor de la ciudad, y convocado el pueblo, que con atencion notava su aspecto, que parecia un retable de penitencia, que con solo verle la predicava..." Córdova Salinas *Vida*, Lib.I, 26, p. 147.
128 This "speaking" with the body will become even more prominent in the Creole saints of Lima.
129 "...comence su sermon, ponderando quan llena estava la ciudad del alma de vicios, y pecados, y que avia llegado a un estado, que si la ira de Dios no se aplacava, se avia de destruir con aquellas tres plagas que refiere San Iuan en su Canonica: *Omne quaed est in mundo est concupiscencia carnis, y concupiscencia oculorum, y superbia estae.* (Italics in original.) Córdova Salinas *Vida*, Lib.I, 26, p. 147.
130 "...y con voz sonora, mas que de trompeta arrastrava al auditorio, y despertava a los que estavan dormidos en el profundo sueno de los vicios, y passando adelante con el sermon, exortando a la penitencia; salian de su boca las palabras ardientes como el vivo fuego y vieron alli cumplido lo que dixo Christo N. S. de sus Predicadores: No sois vosotros los que hablais, sino el espiritu de vuestro Padre, que habla en vosotros." Ibid., p. 147-148.
fire” (vivo fuego) has an additional military connotation; Córdova Salinas creates an image of Solano’s words being “fired” like bullets into the crowd. As I noted earlier, saintly words are given tangible substance in this Life.

The reaction of the crowd to this sermon, and the subsequent events in Lima, were undoubtedly given many interpretations by the saint’s contemporaries. One assumes that it was the presence of several competing accounts, even a half-century later, that is behind Córdova Salinas’s lengthy and emphatic apology on behalf of Solano. It was, the author tells us, because of the merits and hard work of this saintly man that the Lord allowed his words to be misinterpreted. Such misinterpretation evoked the fear of God and inspired people to repentence, tears of contrition, and the desire to amend their lives.¹³¹ As soon as the crowd dispersed, the news of the sermon spread throughout the city with a rumor added to it that Padre Solano had predicted a great earthquake and flood would destroy the city that very night. Córdova Salinas repeatedly suggests that any confusion was due to God’s will that the

¹³¹ “puis por los merecimientos, y trabajos de la predicacion deste varon Apostolico, permitió el Señor, que se equivocase el auditorio, trocando la inteligencia de las palabras, para sacar temor de Dios, penitencia universal, emienda de sus vidas, lagrimas de verdadera contricion; porque luego al punto se esparció un rumor por toda la ciudad, que el sanó los corazones, y los pasmava; porque atónitos los hombres, corrian por las calles despavoridos, y turbada la pronunciacián, dezian los unos a los otros, que el santo P. Solano avía predicado, que aquella noche se avía de hundir la ciudad; aunque no falta quien diga, que trocó Dios las palabras de su boca a los oidos del pueblo. Llenose la ciudad de lagrimas, y todo genero degentes, hombres, mujeres, viejos, y niños de todos estados, clamavan a Dios hiriéndose los pechos, y pidiendo misericordia; corrian a las Iglesias, que casi todas estuvieron abiertas toda la noche, y en todas ellas se descubrió el santiissimo Sacramento: y aunque ay gran numero de Confessores en la ciudad, eran todos los penitentes, que a vozes pidian confession, que a pesas era posible poder acudir a su cosuelo. Vuo confessiones de execrables pecadores, que avia muchos años que no se confessavan; lloravan amargamente sus culpas, y muchos llevados de la fuerza del dolor, y contricion de aver ofendido a Dios, quando por la multitud de los penitentes no podian llegar tan presto a los pies del Sacerdote....y pedian misericordia.” Ibid., p. 148-148a. [n.b. There are four consecutive pages mis-numbered immediately after p.148 in this chapter. I will distinguish them as 148, 148a, 148b, etc.. Page 149 resumes normal pagination.]
people should hear a message that would get their attention. Perhaps, too, the author concedes, the rumor and the panic were partly due to their guilty consciences.\textsuperscript{132} It was just as well in any event, says Córdova Salinas, because the effects of Solano's sermon freed many people from the "Devil's claws" and effected a conversion no less remarkable than that of Ninevah.\textsuperscript{133} The response of the citizenry of Lima was indeed tremendous. The lines at the confessionals were so long that sleeping clergy were awakened to assist and the churches remained open all night. One prominent clergyman later testified that at the Dominican convent, "many religious beat their breasts and cried aloud, taking the severest disciplines and that they conducted a procession of the Holy Sacrament from the Novice house through the streets to the Church.\textsuperscript{134}

Meanwhile, alarmed by the public unrest, the Viceroy, Don Gaspar de Zuñiga, Conde de Monterey, convened a number of city officials at the office of Archbishop Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo in order to discuss the crisis. They sent immediately for the Padre Comissario General of the Franciscans, who promptly sent for the Vicar to call on Solano who, after the sermon, had quietly returned to La

\textsuperscript{132} "Caso es este, que muchas veces me cause admiracion, y dudo, que á penas se halle en historias otro semejante; porque es propio efecto del pecado la confusion, y en muchos suele ser tan grande, que por no passar la manifestando su conciencia al Confessor, tienen por menos inconveniente baxar las llamases eternas del invierno." Ibid. p. 148a.

\textsuperscript{133} "Quien podra dezir los grandes servicios que el santo Padre Solano hizo a la Magestad de Dios con este sermon? Los pecadores que saco de las uñas de Luzifer? "Fue conversion semjante a la de Ninive" Ibid., p.148b.

\textsuperscript{134} Córdova Salinas cites a testimony given by the Bishop elect of Paraguay, then in Lima: "que muchos Religiosos de su convento, con gemidos, y clamores herian sus pechos; unos se acostavan con asperas disciplinas, y otros con cadenas de hierro, con tanto llanto, y dolor, que quebrantavan los corazones de los que los o'ian, y que junto la Comunidad, traxeron del Noviciado a la Iglesia en procession el santissimo Sacramento, cantando una devota letania." Ibid. p.148b-c. It is amusing and predictable that a Franciscan author would include a commentary on the sinfulness of the neighboring Dominicans.
Recolección. To the cell of the Padre Comisario, now full of "grave religious and important officials," the Vicar brought Francis Solano and obliged him to repeat the sermon which he had preached earlier in the afternoon. Unruffled, the saintly Solano humbly but fervently did as he was asked. He did such a good rendition of the sermon, says the author, that many of those present "began to tear their hair in fear and foreboding." They were so impressed that they drew up a signed document instructing all the prelates at all the churches to proclaim the [accurate] message of Padre Solano in order to quiet the city. Furthermore, says Córdova Salinas, even the Viceroy himself was convinced that this was the work of God who, clearly, had used this occasion to chastize human hearts.

The marvelous effects of Solano's sermon lasted for several days. Padre Solano, who had been "the mouthpiece of God," was raised in the estimation of everyone and was widely considered a saint "not only for his preaching, but for his admirable virtues." Córdova Salinas insists that this event did not constitute a "failed prophecy" (as one guesses some people had called it) but as a successful "call to penance." The explanation for why the city of Lima was not destroyed, says the

---

135 Ibid., p.148c
136 "No se turbe Padre, Entonces el Apostolico varon, con humildad, y fervoroso espiritu respondio: No se puede turbar el que en solo Dios tiene puesta su esperança...u luego refirió el sermon, y las palabras de S. Iuan, con tan singular espiritu, que a muchos de los presentes se les espelucaron los cabellos de la cabeza de temor, y miedo." Ibid. p.148c.
137 "para que quietassen la ciudad, y publicassen en los Pulpitos la declaracion que avia hecho el santo Padre Solano. Y como no bastasse esta diligencia, y otras muchas que se hizieron, dixo el senor Virrey con un espiritu del cielo; no porfiemos, que esta es obra de Dios, ymacion de su divino espiritu, que ha tomado este medio para ablandar los corazones de los pecadores, y reduzirlos a su gracia." Ibid., p.148d.
138 "Otros muchos, y maravillosos efectos se vieron aquella noche, y los dias siguientes..." Ibid. p. 149.
139 "por el espiritu con que predicava, sino tambien porque fue admirable en las virtudes." Ibid.
author, rests on the fact that the inhabitants heeded Solano’s warning and many serious sinners repented.  

Earlier in that same year, 1604, Francisco Solano had also prophesied the ruin of the town of Truxillo.  

“Like Christ crying over the desolation of Jerusalem,” Francis lamented the sinfulness of the city’s inhabitants and added that when the “Temple” fell, the pulpit from which he was preaching would be spared as a sign and a warning. This indeed happened, in 1619, nine years after the death of Solano, when a great earthquake destroyed most of the city and buried a great number of its inhabitants. Although the church was completely destroyed, the pulpit (the very one from which Solano had preached that day) was left standing, miraculously unharmed. Many people remembered the prophecy of the saint and were convinced thereby of his sanctity. This and “many other cases mentioned in the

---

142 In the Life of St. Rose, this event is portrayed as nearly an embarrassment for poor Solano and Rose alone is said to have realized the significance of his words. [See discussion in Ch. 3 below.]. Interestingly enough, I found no mention of the event in the Lives of St. Toribio. The Life of Solano written in Latin by Tiburcio Navarro recounts the story with the implication that while the saint had, indeed, prophesied destruction, it was a “rumor” that created the impression that this was going to happen right away. “Hinc ergo rumor universam urbem de imminenti eius eversione percurrens, omnes tremore et pavore mortis percussit.” Triumphus caritatis sive de vita, virtutibus et Miraculis Venerabilis Servi Dei P. Fr. Francisci Solani, (Rome: Typix Michaelis Herculis, 1671.), p. 42.

143 Córdova Salinas, Coronica, p.188.

144 ...quando cayese aquel Templo (como de facto cayo) que no lastimaria el pulpite en que estva predicando. Lo cual se cumplio todo a catorze de Febrero de 1619 con un temblor, y terremoto tan espantoso, que no dexo edificio de casa o de Iglesia, que desde sus fundamentos no se viniesse al suelo, dexando debaxo de sus ruynas sepultados gran multitud de hombres, y mujeres, de toda edad, y el pulpite con averse cayo la Iglesia sobre el, quedo entero y sano maravilosamente.” Ibid.

145 Modern readers may share the sentiment expressed by one scholar, that predicting an earthquake in a country plagued by frequent tremors hardly qualifies as a prophecy. Nevertheless, in keeping with Córdova Salinas’ emphasis on the effects of Solano’s preaching, the impact of his prophecy upon the public required careful explanation by the saint’s hagiographer.
official processes” confirm, for Córdova Salinas, that Francisco Solano was “one of the great prophets of the New Testament.”

Death and Austerity Embraced

The relationship between saints and death has always been marked with ambiguities. Their “mortifications” enliven them, and they seem to live without food most of the time. Saints save people from death, sometimes even reviving them, despite the fact that they themselves long for martyrdom. Their living bodies manifest celestial graces—glowing faces, magical voices, and levitating bodies. Relics taken from their dead bodies manifest the most down-to-earth miracles—healing the sick, safely delivering babies, and protecting crops. Saints, whose lives demonstrate the reconciliation of multiple dualities, also erase the lines between life and death.

Córdova Salinas remarks in his *Corónica*: “Of all the miracles that are recounted in these chapters, one of the greatest miracles of this Apostle was to have stayed alive in the midst of a thousand deaths, because he survived many dangerous illnesses, shipwrecks, etc. which befell him.” The physical strain had taken its toll, however, and in his later years, Solano apparently suffered from chronic ailments.

---

144 “Otros muchos casos están en los procesos de lo que se ha actuado por comisión del santísimo P. Urbano VIII en la información plenaria, que prueban bien, que el bendito P. Fr. Francisco Solano es uno de los grandes profetas del testimonio nuevo.” Córdova Salinas, *Corónica*, p. 193.

145 Miracles associated with childbirth form the greatest percentage of miracles attributed to the intercession of both Luis Bertran and Francis Solano. To the modern reader it at first seems ironic for two male saints who exhibited contempt and disregard for physical bodies to be invoked for assistance at something so carnal as childbirth. Nevertheless, childbirth like death was a passage between the worlds and, as such, was appropriately the domain of saints regardless of their views about bodies, sex, or women.

For about two months before he died, Solano was afflicted with great pains and a wasting illness which he bore patiently and with fortitude. He recovered slightly on the Feast of Corpus Christi, took the viaticum, and announced he would die on the feast of Saint Bonaventure, a Franciscan saint for whom, the author says, he had a special devotion.\textsuperscript{147} Towards the last, Solano gazed at a crucifix and cried softly, gently slipping into a deep contemplacion or ecstasy, purportedly blessed with celestial visions of the Holy Trinity.\textsuperscript{148} On the feast of St. Bonaventure, July 14, 1610, the saint fulfilled his own prophecy and uttering the words: Glorificetur Deus, he died. God granted him a “good death,” one without fear, confirming his similarity to St. Francis.\textsuperscript{149} According to witnesses, the fever, bleeding, and foul saliva vanished at the point of death and the stench of sickness was replaced by a pleasant perfume.\textsuperscript{150} His hands, which had been thin and dry, tanned and gnarled “like tree roots” were miraculously restored and at the moment of death become fully fleshed, beautifully white and perfect in appearance.\textsuperscript{151} It is somehow not surprising that a saint who was

\textsuperscript{147} Córdova Salinas makes frequent reference to St. Bonaventure and, while Solano may well have had a special affection for this distinguished saint and theologian, Bonaventure’s prominence in this narrative may well be another indication of contemporary debates in which Cordova Salinas uses Solano as his own mouthpiece. In 1630, Gerónimo de Contreras published in Lima a work entitled \textit{Memorial por la religión de San Francisco, en defensa de las doctrinas del Seráfico Doctor San Buenaventura, del sutilísimo doctor Escoto, y de otras doctores de la misma religión. Sobre juramento que hizo la Universidad de Salamanca, de leer y enseñar tan solamente la doctrina de San Agustín, y Santo Tomás, excluyendo las demás que fuesen contrarias...} If the University of Salamanca dropped or diminished the study of Bonaventure in the curriculum, in the same year that Cordova Salinas was writing the life of Francis Solano, it is hardly surprising to find a loyal Franciscan author asserting Bonaventure’s importance and lasting influence.


\textsuperscript{149} “Este regalo, esta cama de flores, no fue solo para el Serafico Padre, en ella descansó su verdadero Diciplulo el Apostolico Padre Fray Francisco Solano.” Ibid. p.229

\textsuperscript{150} Ibid.

\textsuperscript{151} “[sus manos] que de su naturaleza eran asperas, sin carne, flacas, y secas, que parecian raíces de arboles, fueron cobrando milagrosamente carne, sustancia, y sangre; y recibiendo otro color diferente mas alvo que la nieve; pusieronse hermosissimas. no hinchadas, .....pueden tener de perfeccion. en grado superior.” Ibid. p.232.
described as "like a dead thing" in life was subsequently described "as if alive" in death. And, appropriate to Francis Solano's use of his body as "illustration," his dead body at last became the emblem of his eternal life.

**Franciscan Saint**

Córdova Salinas extols Francisco Solano as "the glory of the holy Province of Lima, an example of the virtues in Spain." He calls him also the "shining star of the Church" and "sun of the West whose rays extend to America with the lights of his profound humility, virtues and miracles."\(^{152}\) Solano was claimed by both the European community from which he had come and by the missionary community with whom he had lived and worked. The continuing identification of the Franciscan friars in the New World with their European backgrounds and Spanish origins, is emphasized by this portrayal of Solano as a representative of several communities and as the glory of Spanish virtue. The hagiographer, while extolling the saint's work in the New World, takes pains to draw connections to specific people and places in Spain. The section about his life in Spain is relatively small in relation to the overall account but it is far from perfunctory (as is the case in Lives of some saints) and the Spanish section of the Life gives great credit for the formation of the young Solano to his hometown and to the Franciscan community in Spain—two groups one would expect to support his cause.

\(^{152}\) "O dichoso P. y hermano nuestro! gloria de la santa Provincia de Lima, exemplo de virtudes en Espan"a, dechado singular de la predicacion Apostolica en las Indias; estrella refulgente de la Iglesia, sol de todo el Occidente, adonde se estendieron los rayos, y las luces de tu profunda humildad, de tu excelente virtud, prodigios, y maravillas." Ibid. p.231.
The *Vida* of Francis Solano is clearly aimed at a Franciscan audience. Córdova Salinas's own views of Solano are made explicit: he is the perfect follower of Saint Francis, one whose life indirectly reproaches other Franciscans who have lost sight of their "roots." As the author goes through the virtues which Solano exhibits, he adds frequent authorial asides which make clear his own opinions about what is correct practice for Franciscans. A great deal of this discourse is formulaic. The frequent analogies between Francis Solano and St. Francis of Assisi as well as references to other Franciscan luminaries (such as Saint Bonaventure) one would expect to find in the life of any Franciscan saint. These traditional tropes are not "simply" borrowed by Córdova Salinas for his life of Francis Solano, however.

When Solano imitates the nature miracles of St. Francis, he does so in the context of obedience to God and of Adam's dominion over the "paradise" of the New World.153

This context of obedience and dominion is not the only possible one for these types of miracles; as we will see in a subsequent chapter, St. Rose's similar imitation of Franciscan nature miracles are presented by her biographers as evidence of her purity.

As Guardian of *La Recoleta* in Lima, Francis Solano is reported to have refused to allow the convent to be decorated with carved ceilings or with carved woodwork around the doors and windows because, he claimed, "this was contrary to the beauty of holy poverty."154 Likewise, when a devout layperson offered the

---

153 "Pero como era honra de tan gran Maestro, y Patriarca, tener Dicipulos en todas sus virtudes, y excelencias, quiso Dios darselos en todos tiempos, y agora en estos ultimos al Apostolico varon Fray Francisco Solano, por una imagen de sus virtudes, y prodigios, y por un simbolo de Adan, que en el Parayso de su Religion Serafica, resplandeciendo en toda candidez, y puridad de vida...y paz de alma, las aves del cielo reconocian por su centro, los brutos animales de la tierra se le humillavan, y todos loe obedecian, somo si fuera su dueño universal." Córdova Salinas, *Vida*, Lib. 1, 3C, p. 182

convent a contribution for two statues—one of Christ, the other of Mary—Francis
Solano is said to have advised the donor that the 500 pesos would be much better
spent on orphans or the poor than lavished on mendicant friars for whom this luxury
would be quite excessive.\textsuperscript{155} Borrowed elements from the life of St. Francis are given
new significance in the context of Solano’s life and given relevance to contemporary
centers of the Order at the time Córdova Salinas is writing. There is no doubt that
Córdova Salinas ties Solano’s imitation of St. Francis of Assisi’s physical austerities to
an indirect discourse about reform of convent practice and stricter observance of the
Rule.

\textsuperscript{155} Ibid. p. 63.
CHAPTER TWO: SAINTS IN A NEW WORLD

In the preceding chapter, I introduced two missionary saints whose Lives linked them strongly to the Old World. Loarte's Bertran was, in truth, a European saint who spent just a few years in South America. Córdova Salinas' Francis Solano, however, was a European who came to the New World to stay and, as such, reflects the ambivalent identity of colonial society. Part itinerant missionary to the Indians, part social critic in the cosmopolitan city of Lima, part reforming abbot, Solano's life might have been constructed by his hagiographers in any number of different ways. The narratives presented by Córdova Salinas portray Solano as a second St. Francis of Assisi, thereby betraying the concern on the part of colonial Spaniards to acquire status and recognition according to established European standards for their saints and for themselves. The two saints presented in this second chapter, Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo and Juan Massias, while still more European than Creole, were "hybrid" saints whose Lives reflected both their European origins and their experiences in the New World.1 Toribio, in particular, remained chained by hagiographic portrayals to Old World definitions of sanctity. Like Solano, the

---

1 M. M. Bakhtin's concept of "hybridization" in literature is useful here. The "hybrid" belongs simultaneously to two or more cultural systems without reducing them to a single voice or perspective. See M. M. Bakhtin, The Dialogue Imagination: Four Essays, ed. Michael Holquist. (Austin, TX: U. of Texas Press, 1981); See further elaboration of the concept, especially in colonial cultures, in Homi K. Bhabha, The Location of Culture. (London: Routledge, 1994).
hagiographical portrayal of Toribio reflects the colonial concern for status as defined by European standards.

Even though the Lives of Toribio and Juan Macias are still very European in their emphasis on words and in their references to traditional European saints, we nevertheless see in them indications of changing ideas of alterity and language which prefigure the Creole saints, Rose and Martin. The first two saints, Bertran and Solano, confronted alterity in the form of the cultural Other and responded to cultural differences by opposing them. These next two saints integrated or accommodated alterity by living divided lives. Toribio was at home both in Spanish Lima and in the Indian villages, but nevertheless was always the outsider in many regards. Juan Massias, who had one foot in the world of humans and one foot in the world of angels, remained forever on the margins of communal life.

TORIBIO ALFONSO DE MOGROVEJO (1538-1606)

In the figure of Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo, the second archbishop of Lima,\(^2\) the episcopal ideal of the Catholic Reformation is combined by hagiographers with a missionary style sympathetic to the Indians.\(^1\) Toribio is, by analogy, a twin of

\(^2\) Alternative spellings of his name are legion. They include: Thoribio, Turribio, or Turibius and Mogrobioso, Mogrobexo, or Mogrobejo. He was the third archbishop to be appointed to the post but only the second to take office. Sources vary in this numerical designation.

two famous historical figures: St. Carlos Borromeo and Bartolome de las Casas. This strategy allowed hagiographers to construct St. Toribio as a model post-Tridentine bishop who, like the recently canonized Borromeo, should be quickly acknowledged as a saint. Simultaneously, the presentation of Toribio’s missionary style as that of a gentle, saintly shepherd, *El Buen Pastor*, offered a refutation of the “Black Legend” and presented Spanish evangelization in a favorable light. Like Las Casas, Toribio held Indians to be reasonable, receptive to the Christian message, and only in need of peaceful, even respectful evangelization. Toribio, however, marks what Sabine MacCormack has called the end of “the heroic age of Peru’s apostles.” His era marks the shift away from “the enterprise of preaching the gospel to all nations” and toward “that of extirpating non-Christian religion.”

---

4 Carlos Borromeo, (1538-1584) the famous Tridentine bishop of Milan, had been canonized in 1610 and his cult diffused quickly throughout Spain. For an excellent work on Borromeo and his “construction” as a saint, see Giuseppe Alberigo, “Carlos Borromeo between two models of bishop,” in *San Carlo Borromeo: Catholic Reform and Ecclesiastical Politics in the Second Half of the Sixteenth Century*, ed. John M. Haldley and John B. Tomaro. (Cranbury, NJ: Associated U.P., 1988.)

5 The term “black legend” refers to a body of literature as well as to an attitude critical of Spain’s alleged cruelty in the conquest of the New World and its presumed decadence, political corruption, hypocrisy, laziness, bigotry, and pride as a nation. Ironically, a Spaniard, Father Bartolomé de las Casas, created the image. In 1522, Las Casas documented the harshness of Spain’s treatment of the native populations in a polemic entitled “Very Brief Recital of the Destruction of the Indies.” His motive was humanitarian; he hoped to reform Spanish policies toward the Indians. Driven by less noble impulses, however, Spain’s enemies quickly saw in Las Casas useful ammunition against the Spanish empire. James S. Olson, ed., *Historical Dictionary of the Spanish Empire, 1402-1975*. (Westport, CN: Greenwood, 1992). For more on the “black legend” see Miguel Molina Martinez, *La legenda negra*, (Madrid, NEREA, 1991).

6 This attitude towards the Indians already suggests the strategy of “doubling.” For Las Casas, the Indians of America showed evidence of religious concepts which prepared them for the Christian message. This view presents the Indian not as the Other but as the Double: fundamentally human and evolving toward theological truth, Indians and Spaniards were similar in kind even if differentiated in progress. Sabine MacCormack has suggested that a similar attitude motivated Garcilaso’s interpretation of Inca religion in the Royal Commentaries, published in 1659. MacCormack, p. 388.

7 MacCormack observes: whereas “the first missionaries to the Andes had looked for inspiration and example to the apostles and martyrs of the early church, men unburdened by institutional and political obligations. Extermination, however, was impracticable without support from the secular state, so that the model of the post-Constantinian church, in which bishops and secular rulers had worked hand in hand, became more relevant in Peru.” Ibid.
Caught between demands and expectations of Spanish colonials for a church official who would support Spanish priorities and his own pastoral concerns for the Indians, Toribio, the second archbishop of Lima, had a very difficult task before him. In the Lives of Toribio written late in the seventeenth century, however, hagiographers portray the missionary world of Toribio as one in which the situation of Bertran is completely reversed. Indians responded so well to Toribio that their differences dissolved: he could be “one of them” even as they willingly converted to Christianity, joining his “flock.” In these narratives it is the Spaniards, who are portrayed as greedy and callous “others,” who cannot recognize the saint in their midst even as they oppress and misjudge the Indians. These Spaniards, make the insiders—Toribio and “his” Indians—outsiders, but in so doing, mark themselves as the true outsiders to Christian virtue.

The main sources I will use for this analysis are the 1653 Vida by Antonio León Pinelo, considered by most scholars to be the definitive source, and the 1679 Istoria by Antonio Lorea, written for Toribio’s beatification. There are a great many similarities between the two texts but some significant differences as well. The earlier work by Antonio León Pinelo, a Spaniard who had spent quite some time in Lima, generally follows the form of the official Relacion and gives frequent citations to the

---


9 “MacCormack characterizes León Pinelo as a “lawyer, antiquarian and bibliophile” who greatly admired the city and culture of Lima... MacCormack, *Religions in the Andes*, p.386.
folios of the Informaciones from which the testimony is taken. There is a great deal of emphasis in this work to Toribio’s European character, particularly, his similarities to the famous Carlos Borromeo. In fact, León Pinelo draws the connection between Toribio and the famous Italian bishop so strongly that he actually inserts into his own work several pages from a Life of Borromeo, to emphasize its applicability to Toribio. Because León Pinelo had access to materials in Rome from the Congregation of Rites and to the Informaciones from diocesan tribunals other than just those in Lima, he is considered by most scholars to be the definitive source on Toribio.

In contrast, Lorea’s Life written twenty-six years later gives far less emphasis to the European character of the archbishop. Published on the occasion of Toribio’s beatification, it includes additional material collected for the beatification, “things previous authors omitted from ignorance,” we are told. Lorea continues León Pinelo’s emphasis on Toribio’s exemplary status as a post-Tridentine, reform-minded

---

12 The informaciones (part of the “Informative Process” instituted by the Congregation of Rites) are the testimonies collected from members of the “saint’s” local community in support of the candidate’s cause for canonization. These are taken as soon as possible after the cause is initiated in order to establish the extent of popular support for the candidate. Witnesses are called to answer a formal list of questions some of which certify their identity and qualifications as a witness, and some questions establish how and in what capacity they knew, or knew of, the saint and his or her reputation. The testimonies are given in a courtroom setting and the oral responses are hand-written by an officially appointed clerk. These informaciones are taken in each of the different towns in which the saint lived or worked, and they are usually repeated over the course of several years in order to establish the persistence of the saint’s reputation and popularity. The relation is the official brief prepared in Rome which summarizes the findings of the Informative Process concerning the life and reputation of the candidate.

11 Other seventeenth-century sources exist and I shall use some of these for supporting evidence: give full citations. Francisco Montalvo, El Sol del Nuevo Mundo, (Rome: Angel Bernavo, 1683); Tiburcio Navarro (Tiburcium Navarrum), Triumphus caritatis sive de vita, virtutibus et Miraculis Venerabilis Servi Dei P. Fr. Francisci Solani, (Rome, Typis Michaelis Herculis, 1671). This latter is, obviously, aimed at a clerical readership. There is not a seventeenth-century Latin life for Juan Massias or Martin de Perres, for example, as the Lives of these saints clearly expected a more general reading public.
bishop, and does so by drawing parallels between Toribio and Borromeo as León Pinelo did. But in Lorea’s life, Toribio is less tied by direct analogy to Borromeo, and receives a more individualized, and Creole character of his own. Lorea gives more emphasis to Toribio’s piety and personal devotions than did León Pinelo. In addition, Lorea’s work has considerably more of interest to readers in Lima: namely, an account of Toribio’s confirmation of Rosa de Santa Maria—which I will take up in more detail in the next chapter on Rose—and a “Creole” perspective on the events surrounding the miracle of Our Lady of Copacabana, as we shall see later in this chapter.¹²

The reason these accounts of León Pinelo and Lorea can be read side-by-side for this study is because the two authors consistently use the same sources—narratives taken from testimonies given to the local tribunals in the 1630s.¹³ Several new themes predominate in both narratives: Toribio’s use of speech as subordinate to gesture, emphasizing the priority of actions over words; and the radical reversals of Indian and Spanish perspectives in which insiders become outsiders, and vice versa. That such development in the hagiographic discourse about words, bodies, and alterity should emerge so clearly in both texts suggests strongly that these issues were of genuine concern to seventeenth-century Spanish colonial hagiographers.

¹² In this regard, Lorea’s work is similar to the brief but laudatory passages about Toribio in the Coronica of Córdova Salinas. Leon Pinelo quotes material from Córdova Salinas’s Coronica of 1651 and Lorea has clearly relied on the work of Leon Pinelo.
¹³ The testimonies given in Lima were summarized and printed in 1662 by Pedro de Villagomez, Sumario, y Memorial Avisado de las Prohahan, que por Depositions de Testigos, E Instrumentos se an hecho por el ilustrissimo Señor Toribio Alfonso de Mogroco. (Lima: n.p., 1662).
Arrival In Peru

Unexpectedly appointed as Archbishop of Peru in 1580 by the king of Spain, Toribio knew nothing of the New World and, ordained only weeks before he set sail, he knew little enough of clerical life. Upon arrival in 1581 at the boundary of Peru, he journeyed by mule through the northern part of his diocese, arriving in the capital city of Lima three months later. Lorea and León Pinelo do not say much about this early trip through the countryside, both authors mentioning only a single episode from it, that of Toribio's miraculous salvation from a river full of crocodiles, "who opened their mouths to eat him." Lorea likens this event to that of Daniel in the Lion's Den, a miracle clearly meant to convey God's election and protection of the new archbishop.

Because Toribio later received a great deal of criticism from the Viceroy and other Spanish officials for his absences from Lima, and in view of the vocal Spanish resentment of Toribio's preferential treatment of the Indians, his hagiographers may have wished to make this first diocesan visit, conducted before Toribio took up residence in Lima, to appear significant without dwelling on the details. Toribio was, apparently, profoundly affected by what he saw as he traveled and preached among the native Indians on this first trip. Elaborate ceremonies staged at the cathedral in Lima and the prestige of his new position within the Spanish community did not diminish his resolve to go out into to the deserts and mountains to minister to the

---

14 The quicker, less scenic route (preferred by most dignitaries) was by ship down the western coast of South America to the port of Callao, a few miles from Lima.
15 Leon Pinelo, p. 45; also Lorea, 3, p.25. Lorea adds that the alligators are frequently seen on devotional images of Toribio in churches in Spain.
Indians while serving his Spanish church in Lima. The conflicting interests of his two “flocks,” however, were to cause serious problems for El Buen Pastor.

The Missionary

A story from Lorea gives an example of Toribio’s missionary style and introduces the themes of insiders vs. outsiders and the priority of actions over words. Archbishop Toribio received word of a group of Indian families in a remote valley where no priest would dare go on account of the perilous trip. Learning that these Indians lived “like beasts” without baptism, according to Lorea, Toribio immediately set his heart on going there, refusing to be dissuaded by members of his household. Starting out on the journey, Toribio fell on some rocks and was knocked unconscious for a time. Frightened, his servants entreated him again to abandon the project, but as soon as he was able he resumed the trip, telling them that the fall itself as well as their fears for him were all attempts by the devil to turn him away from this mission. This interpretation makes the insiders suddenly outsiders: instead of being his supporters, his Spanish companions speak for the demonic. Lorea tells the

---

16 “Dixeronele en una ocasion, que algunas familias de Indios vivian como bestias en un valle, sin aver recibido el Bautismo, y donde ningun Sacerdote se atrevia á entrar por los peligros grandes que en el camino. Y su amante coraçãon, como siempre deseava estas ocasiones, aora que la tuvo quiso sin dilacion lograrla. Y al punto se puso en viaje. Sus criados le rogaron desistiese de ello, pues era exponerse evidentemente con su vida al riesgo. No vuo medio para detenerle.” Lorea, 15, p. 126.

17 Toribio brought with him to the New World, a large number of family members, servants, and even slaves. When he travelled into the mountains, he took with him a small retinue of servants and priests who, understandably, did not always share Toribio’s zeal for these expeditions.

18 “Empeçando a caminar cayó de una roca, y quedó en el suelo por mucho tiempo casi muerto. Allí le asistieron los criados juzgando les avía faltado su Santo Arçobispo, y Dios que le llevava le bolvió á sus sentidos. Aora bolvió la familia a rogarle con nuevas suplicas desistiese del viaje... Y como si las persuasions de sus Capellanes fueran alás para bolar, así mas fervoros prosegúía su camino. Dixoles no temiesen, que así su apreension de ellos, como la caída, eran traças del demonio para impedir el remedio de aquellas Almas, que se asegurasen que en el viaje no tendrian riesgo ninguno. Tal seguridad causaron sus palabras en los corazónes de todos, que olvidados de los temores que avian imaginado, le seguián gustosísimos.” Ibid. pp. 126-127.
reader that Toribio speaks to his companions and “his words created such a sense of reassurance” that they forgot their “imagined fears” and accompanied him. Nature and the natural landscape offered no real barriers to this saint. Toribio apparently enjoyed his journeys and they certainly are not portrayed as constituting the type of martyrdom that travelling in the wilderness did in the Lives of Bertran and Solano. Toribio was clear: not the physical world but human fear was the instrument of the devil.

When Toribio and his party arrived in this remote valley, they found a group of Indians “so rude and barbarous in their civil life” that they remained entirely outside the Catholic faith."^19 It would be impossible, says the narrator, to describe the happiness of Toribio when he first saw them. He spoke with them in their own language and received them warmly, bestowing gifts. The word Lorea uses to describe Toribio’s greeting to the Indians, *agasajavalo*, implies welcoming reception. Toribio is perceived by his Spanish observers as *welcoming* or *receiving* the Indians [into the Catholic “fold”] despite the obvious fact that it is Toribio and the Spaniards who have come into the Indians’ homes. Suddenly the outsiders and insiders change places.

Toribio taught the Indians, instructing them in the Catholic faith and is so pleased to have the opportunity to do so, says Lorea, that he took it “as a gift to his

---

^19 “Alló à aquellos Indios tan rudos, y tan barbaros en lo político, como apartados de lo Católico. No es decible el alegria que su espíritu tuvo en verlos. Ablaños en su lengua, agasajavalo, y regalava, enseñavalo, y los instruía, teniendo por regalo de su Alma este, como el trabajo que padecía por ellos durmiendo en el suelo, sin tener cama en que acostarse, y comiendo un poco de maíz, y alguna frutilla. Entretuvose muchos días en este ejercicio, hasta que los reduxo a aquellas ovejasperdidas al rebaño de Cristo, y aviendolos Bautizado a todos, y dexandoles Sacerdotes, entonces bolvió gustoso a su casa.” Ibid. p. 127.
soul.” Lorea admiringly recounts that Toribio thought nothing of the hardships of sleeping on the floor without a bed and eating [only] a little maize and some fruit. This sharing of food with the Indians, as we shall see shortly, was considered especially significant by both Spaniards and Indians. Toribio spent many days in the valley, staying until he had recovered two lost “sheep” (who had not converted readily) and “brought them back in the fold.” He baptized everyone and, leaving two priests there with them, returned “happily” to his own house. In this story, written at about the same time as Loarte’s Historia of Luis Bertran, the world of the missionary has changed completely.

Language

Rather than being characterized as forceful and compelling (like the language of Solano) or as incendiary and provocative (like the language of Bertran), Toribio’s words are persuasive and reassuring. Toribio, who preached on Sunday to the Indians on the steps of the cathedral, was famous among his supporters for the “gift of tongues” which allowed him to be understood by the Indians although it is not clear from the differing accounts if the “gift” affected the preacher’s “tongue” or the audience’s ears.22 León Pinelo says simply that he preached on Sundays and feast days to the Indians and to the Spaniards, to each in their own language.21 Yet Córdova Salinas says that when Toribio spoke in Spanish he was understood by the Indians

22 In the 1662 Sumario of the testimonies given on behalf of Toribio’s beatification, Pedro Villagomez lists the don de lenguas as one of the most prominent virtues mentioned by witnesses. See p.35ff.
21 Citing the relacion submitted to Pope Clement VIII. León Pinelo says: “i predicando los Domingos, i Fiestas a los Indios, i Españoles, à cada uno en su lengua.” p. 245.
“who had never heard the language before.”22 In all the accounts, however, Toribio’s deliberate adoption of the native language represents metaphorically his “conversion” to the New World, becoming an “insider” with the Indians even as he moves “outside” European language and norms.

Both Loarte and León Pinelo specifically give readers the content and even quotations from Toribio’s conversations with fellow Spaniards. Toribio speaks words (palabras) to Spaniards and both authors tells us, on occasion, “what” he “said.” In sharp contrast, when Toribio addressed the Indians, we are told, that he “spoke” to them “in their own language” but the expression never includes the word palabras in describing these acts of speech and no content of his speech is given. Speaking words in Spanish is given more significance and power than speech to Indians and in this way discourse about language continues to be one way in which the hagiographers portray the Indian “world” as subordinate and inferior to their Spanish one. (Presumably, of course, the Spaniards who testified as witnesses to these events could never be sure just what Toribio had said when he spoke in Quechua, the native language which he studied and eventually mastered.)23

As the recent work of Walter Mignolo has demonstrated, the Spaniards believed that language alone distinguishes human beings.24 Further, the language of
evangelization was the subject of great debate among Spaniards at this point in the colonial project. From the sixteenth century on, the Spanish crown had disseminated laws promoting the teaching of Castilian Spanish to the Indians. This directive, however, was counterproductive in the estimation of the missionaries, whose first priority was the conversion of the Indians to Christianity. The missionary friars “were convinced that their goals would be better achieved if they learned and wrote grammars of Amerindian languages instead of teaching Castilian to the natives.”

Toribio, in the tradition of other missionaries, speaks Quechua to the Indians and Castilian to the Spaniards; he is linguistically at home in both worlds. The saint, assumed to bridge heaven and earth, is portrayed here as someone able to move between two vastly different human worlds as well. Spanish words do figure predominantly in Toribio’s ecclesiastical career. He conducted numerous councils and synods during his tenure as archbishop, in which he not only dealt with issues relating to language, like requirements that all missionaries carry the new catechism in Quechua, but out of which came reams of documentation and legislation. Like Bertran, Toribio encountered hostility from dissemination of these words. His reforms of ecclesiastical and administrative custom laid him open to persecution and slander from powerful bishops, administrators, and even the Viceroy himself. His righteous words provoke the Spaniards just as Bertran’s had provoked the Indians, reversing the earlier positions of insider and outsider.

---

24 Ibid., pp. 53-54.
The secondary role of language with respect to actions is preserved in hagiographic discussion of Toribio’s charity. For Toribio, “words” are no longer the currency that charity demands. Unlike St. Francis Solano, he does not offer words of advice or platitudes of Christian faith to people in need of food or medicine. During an epidemic, he saw that the hospitals in Lima were full and yet the city had many more sick people needing care. He wrote to a cousin begging for the use of his hacienda, which he obtained. When Toribio supplied this provisional hospital with his own money—a standard hagiographical trope associated with St. Carlo Borromeo—his good works “spoke” for him, says León Pinelo, giving the action additional significance.26 In the *Corónica*, Córdova Salinas writes of Toribio: “his mouth revealed what he had in his soul and his words were a faithful echo of his heart.”27 Language now has switched places with bodies: unlike Bertran who “read” spiritual significance in bodies, Toribio lets action “speak” the spiritual significance of his words.

**Food**

Because Toribio is bilingual, language ceased to be the primary marker for insiders and outsiders in his Life. In the narratives of León Pinelo and Lorea, words are always secondary to gestures in the communication between Toribio and the Indians. Considering the importance of language and words in the hagiography of

---

26 “es cierto, que sus palabras, en esta parte, eran obras.” Leon Pinelo, *Vida*, p. 203. Toribio’s charity here is portrayed by Leon Pinelo as identical to that of Carlos Borromeo who had used his own wealth to help the citizens of Milan during a plague.

27 “En la boca mostrava lo que tenia en el alma; i sus palabras eran un fidelissimo eco de su corazón.” Córdova Salinas quoted in Leon Pinelo, p.72.
the saints in the previous chapter, and considering as well the prominent role language played in the unification of the Spanish Empire, this demotion of language to a secondary status is remarkable in itself. Toribio's Spanish hagiographers report his traveling through the landscape, his sleeping on the floor, and, particularly, his eating native foods—as "hardships" which the saint bravely took upon himself. These gestures had great significance in Andean culture and proved pivotal in establishing rapport with the Indians, but they were scandalous in the eyes of his fellow Europeans. In a 1590 letter to the king of Spain, Viceroy Don García de Mendoza complained about Toribio: "He and his servants generally go among the natives, eating their food and I don't know if they do worse things."\(^28\)

Also, by participating in the traditional Andean customs of gift-giving and banqueting, Toribio demonstrated great understanding. His actions were part of his diplomacy and gestures toward establishing pastoral relationships with the Indians. Sharing a ritual meal, in particular, was an essential ingredient in Andean ceremonies confirming leadership. As scholar Mary McGlone has pointed out, "Important occasions [among Andean peoples] were marked by ceremonial feasts in which all took part according to their rank...these feasts served as ceremonies to renew and strengthen the mutual bonds between the people and their leaders."\(^29\)

---

\(^29\) Ibid., p. 74.
Eating Indian food, however, was considered almost bestial by civilized Spaniards. Abel Alves has observed that, to Spaniards, the differences in food customs between Europe and the people of the New World accentuated a profound difference in status. The Spanish authors of the Lives of Toribio, aware how their Spanish readers would react to the rumors that Toribio ate exotic Indian foods like maize, quinoa, crawfish, peanuts, and "strange kinds of" fruit, mention Toribio's meals with the Indians in the context of self-mortification—as if he were fasting or mortifying his sense of taste. León Pinelo says of one trip up into the mountains:

"[Toribio] was with [the Indians] all day and all night, without a bed, and with nothing to eat, except for a few crawfish with maize" (italics mine). Toribio's hagiographers, aware of the archbishop's detractors, hasten to assure readers that the saintly pastor was not enjoying himself on these diocesan trips away from Lima.

Toribio proved himself an insider to the Indians by walking through their landscape without fear, by eating their foods, and by observing their customs. Toribio bridged the chasm between himself and the Indians by becoming a Spanish "Indian" at the same time that he pursued the colonial goal of teaching the Indians

---

32 So strongly was food associated with culture that the ideological differences of Las Casas and Oviedo concerning the status and nature of the Indians were mirrored precisely in their reaction to the American peanut: the former saw the peanut as more delicious than anything found in Europe; the latter saw it as unworthy of Europeans, more suitable for slaves. See Hanke, All Mankind is One, p. 39.

31 "Spaniards remarked that maize was fed to mules as well as to Indians...Culture determined the Spanish New World hierarchy of ethnic ranks, or castas, and food is a preeminent aspect of culture. From the Spanish perspective, for the most part consumers of Amerindian foods remained crude and part of savage nature." Abel A. Alves. "Of Peanuts and Bread: Images of the Raw and the Refined in the Sixteenth-Century Conquest of New Spain." in Coded Encounters: Writing, Gender, and Ethnicity in Colonial Latin America. (Amherst, MA: University of Massachusetts Press, 1994), p. 69.

11 "...i estuvo con ellos todo el día, i la noche sin cama, ni que comer, sino unos camarones con maiz." Leon Pinelo, 16. p. 255.
Spanish culture and habits. This double life, this doubled inclusion, however, could not be maintained for long in the face of such radical otherness as existed between the Peruvian Indians and the Spanish colonists. For one thing, the “Indian” in Toribio’s world remains a Spanish construction. The “Noble Savage” that welcomed Toribio was no more genuine than the “Fierce Savage” that tried to kill Bertran.

**Bodies and Physical Appearances**

Discussion of penitential practice is much less prominent in the Lives of Toribio than in the Lives of other saints in his period. Descriptions of Toribio’s austerity and physical disciplines, while still severe by modern standards, are almost moderate in terms of other seventeenth-century hagiographies. He is said to have mortified his body with flagellations, to have slept little, and to have eaten next to nothing. In addition to these traditional forms of self-denial, Spanish authors report one which, obviously, seemed remarkable to Spaniards for a man of Toribio’s wealth and position: he had no personal servants. By this the hagiographers mean that Toribio had no “body servants” to help him get dressed, for example. His fasts, which León Pinelo likens to those of the ancient anchorites, were very strict. Readers are assured that even when he did eat he took his food unseasoned, and the fish he requested from the market in Lima was “so unappetizing and full of bones that even

---


12 Córdova Salinas, *Crónica*, p. 166.
the slaves don't like it." Such stories are less about physical mortification than about virtue. Their point is that Toribio as an Archbishop did not take advantage of his social privilege. His austere lifestyle reflected a profound humility.

John Stroup points out that it is easy for modern scholars to overlook the social differences between clergy and laity in the Early Modern period. Markers which pointed to the wealth received from Church rents, such as fine clothes and rich foods, only accentuated this radical separation and subjected the clergy to lay criticism. Toribio’s hagiographers give prominence to his austerities and chastity in order to disassociate the saint from the vices and failures so frequently attributed to Catholic bishops on both sides of the Atlantic. To the same purpose, it is reported that Toribio spent almost all of his income on the poor, giving alms and food to the needy despite the fact that many Spaniards criticized him for allowing the rectory to fall into disrepair and for failing to maintain ornaments and vestments in the church.

Toribio knew that appearances were misleading, that they provided no indication whatsoever of inherent spiritual value. This theme, developed throughout the narrative in the stories of Toribio’s encounters with innocent, hospitable Indians

---

16 "...y el [pescado] que siempre pedía era el que en Lima llaman Machete, tan malo, i desabrido, que aun los esclavos no le quieren, por ser todo espinas, sin pulpa, ni gusto." León Pino. p. 236-7. It is possible, of course, that this fish was one that Indians liked (thus they sell it in the market) and that Toribio was familiar with from his meals with the Indians. It is no real surprise that Peruvian fish are as foreign to African slaves as they are to peninsular Spaniards. This is another case of the author’s presenting eating native foods as “fasting.” The stories about Toribio’s food are duplicated, almost verbatim, in Lorea, pp.178-179.


18 These abuses of clerical office had been a major factor in King Philip II’s support for the reforms of the Council of Trent.

and greedy, corrupt Spaniards, is introduced in an early chapter of León Pinelo. In a story in which race and status are clearly discounted as social markers, he tells how Toribio, as a youth still in school, decided to make a pilgrimage to the shrine of Santiago. Because he went “as a humble pilgrim” and not “out of curiosity nor to prove himself,” he went barefoot, in simple garb, and wearing an “esclavina” or shackle on his foot. On the way to Santiago, he stopped in a church in Galicia to pray. At the door of the church he passed an old Negro woman who, thinking he was a pauper, gave him a coin out of charity. Toribio, who in reality was quite well-off, hastily thanked the old woman but handed back the coin and assured her he didn’t need it. The old woman, however, was sad, thinking that she had offered him too little and for this reason he had rejected her alms. She told him that she had offered him what she could and that, if he needed more, he should go to her master who was inside the church. The piety of this old Negro woman, we are told, remained forever in Toribio’s memory. León Pinelo says that years later Toribio admitted that he commended this woman to God on the day he celebrated his first Mass and again at his first Mass as a bishop, and that he continued to remember her thereafter in his prayers. This story, with its prominent placement and poignant

---

34 “Entrando en una Iglesia de Galicia, a hazer oracion, iban en trage tan modesto, i penitente, i pobre al paracer, que una Negra, que estava a la puerta, sacó una moneda ...i se la dió de limosna. El santo Varón la recibió agradecido; i se la bolvió, dizienndola, Diosos lo pague, señora, que aquí llevamos para pasar nuestra romeria. La Negra se desconsoló pareciéndola, que por ser poco no lo recibían; y le dixo: que en la Iglesia estaba el Conde su señor, que les daria mas; que ella dava lo que podía...Esta piedad, de aquella humilde mujer, quedó tan in la memoria de D. Toribio, que jamas se olvido de ella; y confesó, muchos años despues, que quando dixo la primera Misa rezada, y la primera de Pontifical, se acordó de encomendar a Dios esta Negra; y que siempre le dio parte en sus sacrificios, mostrando su agradecimiento, y su caridad, pues en el puesto mas alto que tuvo, no perdió la memoria de un beneficio tan leve, i de un sugeto tan humilde.” León Pinelo, pp. 32-33.
postscript, gives emphasis to Toribio's discernment of virtue in those (Blacks and Indians) who are devalued by society. External appearances, wealth and social status are not indicators of spiritual value or Christian virtue.

This is another story about appearances which León Pinelo presents as evidence of Toribio's saintly power of discernment. I contest that interpretation, however, and present it as a story in which the Spanish author is so blinded by appearances that he fails to see that Toribio is an "insider" to another cultural group. In one town a huge confirmation celebration was held at which a middle-aged woman was among the more than two hundred candidates presented to Archbishop Toribio for confirmation. Toribio is reported to have looked at the woman and declared that she had already been confirmed, some twelve or more years ago in a different town. Toribio sent for the baptismal records and, sure enough, there was her name with those of all her kindred of whom all were living and verified the case. León Pinelo, betraying his "they all look alike" attitude, claims that only a supernatural discernment could have allowed the saint to detect someone previously confirmed, never considering the obvious possibility that Toribio recognized this woman. The pastor knew his own sheep.

**Insiders and Outsiders**

In the Lives of the missionary saints, Luis Bertran and Francis Solano, outsiders and insiders were easily identified. All native Indians—even most converts—were outsiders. Spaniards who supported and encouraged the saints, and those who

---

*ibid., p. 323.*
heard and understood their messages (verbal and non-verbal), were insiders. A few Spaniards who were unrepentant sinners, and a few religious who were envious or unsympathetic were also outsiders. The requirements were forthright and the lines clearly drawn. However, in the Lives of St. Toribio, the distinctions between insiders and outsiders become very problematic.

The story of Toribio and his missionary travels which introduced this chapter is indicative of these changes. In that narrative and numerous others like it, the Indians are seldom outsiders, and those that are usually choose to become "insiders" at least insofar as they embrace Christianity. Toribio, who seemed initially to the Indians to be an outsider, quickly proved himself an insider. The Spaniards, on the other hand, are usually outsiders in these narratives. Not only must Toribio battle wicked bishops and cruel viceroys, but even his own household prove to be outsiders by frequently failing to understand him. Just as language and race are shown to be false markers for Christian virtue, so too social and political position prove to be unreliable indicators of "inside" status.

Remarkably, Toribio himself went up into the mountains to evangelize isolated groups of Indians. We are told that when Toribio encountered a group of Indians living in a remote area, he would typically spend several days instructing them in the faith and then he would leave two priests there to continue the ministry. By the end of the sixteenth century in Peru, a great enterprise was underway to resettle or "reduce" the Indians from remote areas into settlements where they could be more easily evangelized by the missionary and, additionally, taught European
customs. These settlements, called *reductions* were the major project of the Viceroy Francisco Álvarez de Toledo and they were the subject of great debates between the defenders of the Indians who thought the reductions were terrible and those who believed they were essential to the project of civilizing the Indians. Unlike most of his fellow missionaries, however, Toribio felt no need to constrain his flock. There is never any mention in Toribio's hagiography of his having them "reduced" to the Indian settlements. Instead, Toribio is said to have "reduced them to Christianity," a play on words which could not be accidental.\(^{43}\)

Toribio's diocesan visits into the countryside to evangelize the Indians—and his extended absences from Lima—provoked widespread criticism.\(^{44}\) The cathedral of Lima was under construction and many were troubled by the archbishop's lack of personal attention to it.\(^{45}\) Spanish members of Lima society were scandalized by what appeared to be Toribio's preference for Indians over his "own" people, pointedly

---

\(^{41}\) The Spanish verb, *reducir*, means to gather together. The dispersion of the natives over the countryside made governance and labor recruitment difficult and impeded the process of conversion and religious instruction. In order to remedy this problem, small, outlying Indian settlements were combined with larger villages or, several small groups were united into one new village. Burkholder and Johnson report that in one region of Peru, over two hundred villages were consolidated into thirty nine towns, many of which were laid out in the characteristic European grid pattern. Burkeholder and Johnson, p. 102.

\(^{42}\) Francisco de Toledo (1515-1582), the fifth viceroy of Peru, took office in 1569. He is considered by some to have been one of the best viceroys in terms of political organization and economic stability. He has been condemned by others for establishing the *mita* labor system for the mines and for forcing Indians into the *reducciones*. He was widely denounced for having executed the last Inca, Tupac Amaru, and the Inca royal family in 1572 to subdue the Quechua-speaking Indians. See Olson, p. 185ff.

\(^{43}\) McGlone, "The King's Surprise," pp.77ff.

\(^{44}\) Toribio's first pastoral visit had him away most of six years, 1584-1590. In the years between 1593 and 1605 he also travelled extensively and was away from Lima for months at a time. See Ruben Vargas Ugarte, *Vida de Santo Toribio* (Lima: 1989), p.45-46; 56-61.

\(^{45}\) Vargas Ugarte has pointed out that it is unlikely that the archbishop's presence there would have helped matters much as what was most needed was more money—not more supervision. Ibid., p.59.
reminding him that missionary work was for the friars. His public arguments with Spanish administrators over the use of community funds had even led him to publicly excommunicate a corregidor.⁴⁶ The Viceroy García Hurtado de Mendoza was so angry with Toribio’s interference in financial matters that he wrote to the king of Spain asking him to replace the archbishop. The king did not replace Toribio, but the struggles between the archbishop and the viceroy did not end.⁴⁷ It was in light of this ongoing feud that Lorea begins his version of the story of the Virgin of Copacabana.

The Virgin of Copacabana

The city of Lima was in turmoil “from the unjust pretensions of the Viceroy,” Lorea relates, and in order to bring some good out of this unrest the Virgin “placed herself in the midst of the sons of Adam, sparkling with miracles so that they might turn their eyes toward her and forget the worries that vexed them.”⁴⁸ The barrio of San Lazaro, the oldest and poorest neighborhood of Lima, across the river Rimac from central Lima, was home to many Indians who made their livings fishing in the

⁴⁶ The corregidor was the Spanish colonial equivalent of a Lieutenant Governor. For a brief sketch of the ways in which colonial officials enriched themselves through investments of public funds in private enterprises and making loans, see Burkholder and Johnson, pp. 163-164.
⁴⁷ As one scholar has observed: “The obligatory rivals of colonial Spanish America were the governor and the bishop (or viceroy and archbishop)....based on the fact that bishops were highly placed members of a hierarchy as much within the crown’s appointive domain as was the secular government but quite separate from it....Inexperienced practitioners of Spanish American history often ascribe the conflict of this kind to the irascibility of the individuals but it was so standard that governors thought nothing of being excommunicated and excoriated from the pulpit.” Lockhart and Otte, p. 253.
⁴⁸ “Turbada estaba la Ciudad de Lima, con las injustas pretensiones del Virrey Marques de Can”ete con el Santo Prelado; a este paso lo estaba con el Estado Eclesiastico el secular, y para poner bonanca en tanto desasosiego quiso aquella Estrella de la mar y consuelo lo iios de Adan interponerle, centelleando con milagros, con que puestos en ella los ojos los ombres, olvidasen las inquietudes que los fatigavan.” Lorea, p. 77.
river. In this barrio the Indians had made a shrine for a statue of the Virgin of Copacabana, copied after the original in the city of La Paz.

At some distance from Lima was an established reduction, run by the Jesuits, called El Cercado. The viceroy, with the support of the Jesuits, wanted all of the Indians who lived in San Lázaro to be moved to this reduction. While Toribio was away on one of his controversial pastoral visits, the viceroy ordered all of the Indians resettled to El Cercado. The shrine of Our Lady of Copacabana in San Lazaro was torn down and the statue of Our Lady was relocated to El Cercado in order to facilitate the removal of the Indians to the reduction. As soon as Toribio returned to Lima and discovered that the Indians had been relocated, he was outraged. He pointed out that most of the Indians were fishermen and were used to living by the river. He addition, he argued, the Indians should be allowed to return to the barrio and to rebuild their shrine to Our Lady of Copacabana.

Lorea tells us that Toribio was so devoted to Mary that he was offended by the makeshift shrine hastily built at El Cercado. It was little more than a shack, hardly a fitting place for Our Lady, and it left the statue exposed to the elements.

Lorea says that St. Toribio decided that the statue should be moved to the cathedral.

---

47 The reduction, ostensibly for the purpose of evangelizing and civilizing the Indians to Spanish ways of life, also provided labor and income for the Jesuits. An unspoken economic issue is at stake here.

48 The removal took place in 1590. See McGlone, “The King’s Surprise,” pp. 79-82.


50 “La pobreza de los Indios de Lima no dava lugar a mostrar su devoción en el culto, y adorno de esta Señora, y la tenían en una Ermita, poco mas que una chac.a, con poca decencia.” Lorea, p. 77.
for safekeeping. Montalvo, writing in 1683 pointed out that at this time the Viceroy and the Jesuits were in competition with one another. The Jesuits wanted the statue in their church and opposed the viceroy’s order to place the statue in the cathedral. Before the image of Our Lady of Copacabana could be transported, all sources agree, a miracle occurred. The statue of Mary and the baby Jesus began to sweat copiously and continued to do so for over four hours. The cry went up that it was a miracle and the news spread rapidly. There were further miracles attributed to the miraculous sweat which people began to collect in containers. Toribio ordered an investigation of the events, and after having proved them miracles according to the rules of the church, finally succeeded in moving the statue to the cathedral. There he erected a beautiful chapel and everyday the saintly archbishop celebrated mass at Mary’s altar.

Toribio’s hagiographers minimize the hostilities between the viceroy and the archbishop over the location of the statue, perhaps in order to associate their

---

53 Un día amaneció destruido el techo de la Ermita, y derribado por tierra. Supo luego el Santo Prelado, y considerando que aquello no podía aver sido por accidente, sino por desprecio de aquel santo lugar, traspassado el corazón de dolor, y como tierno amante de la Reyna de los Cielos, y tierra, puesto de rodillas la suplicó, y a su Santíssimo Ijo tomasen a su quenta el desagravio de aquel sacrilegio, aziendo que se descubriese el delinquente.....y dió orden a su Provisor dispusiesse una procesion con la mayor solemnidad que fuese posible para traerla desde la Ermita a la Iglesia Catedral, donde quería colocarla con mas decencia.” Ibid. pp.77-78.

54 Montalvo, El Sol de Nuevo Mundo, p. 323.

55 En el interin que se disponía la procesion para llevarla a la Catedral, de repente empezó la Imagen de la Madre de Misericordia, y de su Ijo, a sudar tan copiosamente; que por mas de cuatro horas no ceso el sudor. Empeçó a correr la voz del milagro, y difundirse por todas partes, y en un instante fue tal el concurso, que luego à ser inmenso.” Lorea, p.78.

56 McGlone interprets this as an attempt to justify moving the Indians back to Lima and out of the reduction, on the basis that at home in St. Lazarus they would still be close to Our Lady at the cathedral. This plan did not work, but Toribio did manage to arrange for special feasts to be celebrated by the Indians with him and their statue instead of at El Cercado. See “The Kings Surprise,” p.82. Toribio died before the Indians were returned to the barrio and the statue eventually given her own chapel there in 1633. By the time Lorea is writing, Lima had instituted an annual procession in memory of the event. See Lorea, p. 82.
candidate for sainthood with the miracle of the statue and not with the unpleasant politics. Lorea, in particular, emphasizes Toribio's respect for Mary. Toribio's opposition to the reduction is clear from this story but never explicitly stated. These Lives were written in the late seventeenth century when reductions had strong support among the Spanish colonists and they, not the Indians, were the group promoting Toribio's cause.

Standing at the intersection of two cultures, Toribio belonged to neither side. The Spaniards of Lima were annoyed with him for his apparent preference for the welfare of the Indians over that of his Spanish flock. Those in powerful ecclesiastical and political positions wanted no part of his interference in their political or financial affairs. The Indians who might have appreciated him (even if only in comparison to his countrymen) had no use for a European saint. Had they wanted to acclaim him, they would not have been heard. Indians were not considered capable witnesses under Spanish laws. It was not until another generation had passed, and the Indians successfully "reduced" that Toribio was rediscovered as a valuable icon for the Spanish presence in Peru.

In the case of Toribio, alterity between Indians and Spaniards is doubled, with insiders and outsiders on both sides. Toribio's hagiographers juxtapose the two cultural worlds of Spaniard and Indian, and portray Toribio as the saintly figure in which the two are reconciled. This strategy, however, produced doubled alterities within Spanish colonial society which was now portrayed as divided internally. Not only does this make it difficult to tell who is who, it necessarily constructs
uncomfortable equations in which some Indians are more valued than some Spaniards and clear hierarchies and oppositions are dismantled. Even the Indians who do receive baptism do not become insiders and some Indians even remain up in the hills. Although the lines of Spanish society are never redrawn to include Indians, and they are considered "people without reason" (gente sin razon). In Toribio’s stories, however, the lines of Christian virtue clearly include some Indians—and exclude quite a few Spaniards. It is the Spaniards, not the Indians, who try the saint’s patience, occasion the perfection of his virtues, and serve as his demons. While the Indians remain at least partly "other" they are never demonized in the way that some of Toribio’s fellow clergymen are.  

Toribio was canonized alongside his fellow Spaniard, Francis Solano. Their processes, begun at roughly the same time, reveal the European values and strong European identities of their supporters. As candidates for sainthood they were constructed according to European models by colonists struggling to maintain their Spanish identities. Much of what was unique to life in the New World was downplayed in their hagiography in order to strengthen ties to Old World saints. This desire for European respect is characteristic of the early Creole culture. Similarities rather than differences or innovations made these figures more familiar

57 Williams, p.118.
54 McGlone has pointed out that Toribio's letters to the king insisted that the Spaniards were to blame for many of the “errors” which persisted among the Indians, maximizing the evil of Spanish abuse and minimizing the “idolatries” of the Indians. McGlone, "The King's Surprise," pp. 76-77.
to European and Creole readers and helped smooth over problems in Peru that had estranged portions of the community during the saints' lifetimes.

This theme of insiders vs. outsiders evolved to even greater prominence in the Lives of the Creole saints, Rose of Lima and Martin de Porres. Determining who was inside, who is outside—problematized in the stories of Toribio—becomes even harder as the discomfort of alterity within the social body eclipses the earlier preoccupation with external, cultural otherness.

Juan Massias, a Dominican lay-brother who was acclaimed as a saint in the seventeenth century but canonized only in the twentieth, is the saint I have chosen as a transition figure for the end of this section on European saints. Appropriately, this gives Juan a place in this study which mirrors his role in life: a saint at the boundary between the Europeans and the Creoles. Born in Spain, Martin relocated to the New World as an adult. His life in Melendez's Tesoros Verdaderos, reveals characteristics of hagiography on both sides of the Atlantic. Melendez portrays Juan, along with Sts. Martin and Rose, as one of the many stars of the Dominican order in Peru. Unlike these other two saints, however, Juan has remained relatively obscure in the Americas. His hagiographic theme of life lived at the boundary between city and wilderness, a saint on the margins of human society, connects this Life to those of the Creole saints and to the Creole struggle with social alterities. Juan's life,

---

59 Juan's Spanish identity is confirmed by the fact that, in 1949, the miracle that led to his canonization took place in Extremadura, Spain where Juan Massias was born rather than in Lima. See Felipe Huapiar Farfán, O.P., Oh Fray Juan Macías! Los Pobres, Los Emigrantes, Los Campesinos No Tienen Comida!, (Lima: n.p., 1976), pp. 25-32.

60 Just as the Franciscans had a chronicler in Cordova Salinas, the Dominicans had the chronicler Melendez. Melendez, is an important source for the history of religious life in colonial Peru.
marginalized within the world of the convent itself by his job and by his tertiary status,\(^6\) points to the inequities of class within colonial society. In the Life of this saint, “others” include demonic and divine others. The multiplicity of “others” here serves to remind us that internal and social alterity was as important in colonial culture as external, cultural otherness had been for the missionaries.

**Juan Massías (1585-1645)**

Juan Massías,\(^6^2\) born in 1585, was orphaned before he was five years old\(^6^3\) and from that time he worked as a shepherd, or herdsman, in order to earn food. Most of his days were spent outside in the pastures with the animals. It is at this tender age that Juan was introduced to the celestial world and given a special patron saint to care for him: St. John the Evangelist.\(^6^4\) This remarkable event is described by Juan himself in a death-bed testimony given to a confessor, and it is Juan’s words that Melendez

---

\(^6^1\) “Tertiaries,” or members of the “third order” of religious vocation, are also called lay brothers. Juan, like other lay brothers, were given the menial jobs to do in the convent and took their meals and their devotions together but segregated from the “regular” religious brothers.

\(^6^2\) Melendez spells his name as Massias; he is listed in the Roman Calendar, however, as Macias. It is likely that this Life, like those of Martin and Rose in this same work, was written by another author and republished without acknowledgment by Melendez.

\(^6^3\) As in the Lives of Bertran and Solano, readers are assured that Juan’s parents were “old” Christians (“fueron Christianos viejos y buenos,”) that is to say, not converted Jews. This introduction reflecting the Spanish obsession with “blood” lines and Christian orthodoxy. His parents were such good people, we are told, that later God revealed to Fr. Juan that his father spent only a few days in Purgatory and his mother did not go at all but went straight to glory. Melendez, III, 1, p. 452.

\(^6^4\) The English form of “Juan” is “John.” St. John would have been the patron saint of Juan from the time of his baptism. I will, for clarity’s sake, call the human ‘Juan’ and the celestial being ‘John’ in the following discussion. Legend has it that St. John, the youngest of the disciples, and called the “beloved,” was the only disciple present at the crucifixion (with the Marys), and the only apostle that was not martyred. In iconography he sometimes portrayed with a lamb—a symbol of innocence. It was believed that Christ commended his mother Mary to John’s care. Tradition credited John the Evangelist with the fourth gospel, three epistles, and the book of Revelation. See John Delaney, *Dictionary of Saints*, 1982.
says he is quoting in this account: "he came upon me one day, a boy, who appeared to be about my age, and he greeted me saying 'Juan, you're just in time'...and he went on to say: 'I am St. John the Evangelist, from Heaven, and God has sent me to keep you company because he has seen your loneliness: do not doubt this.' I replied, 'who is St. John the Evangelist?' and he answered: 'The beloved Disciple of our Lord, and I come to accompany you for your own benefit, because you will have need of me. I must take you to far distant lands, where you are going to raise up temples..." As in Genesis, when God sees man's loneliness man is given a mate. In this case however, it is not a woman who is Juan's "mate" but a patron saint sharing his own name who is to keep Juan company in his pastoral Eden.

St. John represents Juan's double who is both his twin and an "other." His presence therefore suggests two sides of Juan/John as well as two parallel worlds. The significance of this "double" increases in the story when both the heavenly world and the earthly world are united in parallel fashion as Juan's narrative continues:

"Within a few days, my friend St. John the Evangelist returned....He said to me, 'Juan, I want to take you to my own land,' and I don't know how it happened, or how to tell it, whether I went with him in body or only in spirit...[but]I saw a very

---

65 "...llegó a mi un día, un Niño, que me pareció sería de mi edad, y me saludó, diciendo: Juan estes en hora buena,... y prosiguió su plática diciendo: [damage] soy San Juan Evangelista, que vengo del Cielo, y me embía Dios, par[damage] te acompane, porque miró tu [sole]dad: no lo dudes. Y yo le [damage] Pues quien es San Juan Evangelista? y respondió: El querido Discipulo del Señor, y vengo acompañarte de buena gana, porque te tiene escogido para si: tengote de llevar a unas tierras muy remotas, y lejanas, adonde te an de lebantar templos..." Meléndez, III, p.454-5.

66 Genesis 2:18.

"Doubling, a literary strategy which tries to multiply "selves" until alterity is incorporated, is identified by Paul Coates as particularly attractive to colonial writers who feel themselves divided. Says Coates, "Stories that deal explicitly with the Double seem in the main to be written by authors who are suspended between languages and cultures." Paul Coates, *The Double and The Other: Identity as Ideology in Post-Romantic Fiction.* (London: Macmillan, 1988), p. 2.
beautiful city...and I saw God..., and in such majesty that I wished to be able to stay there forever. My friend St. John, however, returned and told me: 'That which you saw was my country and when you die I must take you there with me so that you may live forever.' Up to here (says the hagiographer Melendez,) are the words of Fray Juan, from the aforementioned declaration."65 This heavenly land, where St. John will ultimately take Juan is the double image of the "distant land" of the New World to which St. John will also accompany Juan. As we shall see in the next sections, The City (first Jerez de la Frontera in Spain and then Lima in Peru) becomes the doorway from one level of existence to the next.

Speech and Silence

It is immediately obvious that Juan's story differs in several ways from the other narratives we have examined. Not only is this the only Life in which the saint's own words are inserted into a larger hagiographical account, but at the same time this account offers almost no discourse about language, speech or words. Such neglect of the topic may be due, at least in part, to the fact that Juan observed the monastic rule of silence as much as possible during his entire life as at the Convent of the Magdalene. As a counterpart to Juan's silence, however, is St. John, the Evangelist of the Word. And just as the Gospel of John commences with "In the beginning was the
Word," the "authentic" words of Juan Massias are those which tell us his beginnings, his childhood in Spain, and how he came to live at the convent of the Magdalene.

In the subsequent chapters of Juan's Life, the hagiographer recounts stories told about Juan by those who knew or met him. Juan almost never speaks "in" these narratives. The early part of his life, and descriptions of his sending out by God, and descriptions of his celestial visions and temptations, all these things, however, are known by Juan's own testimony alone. The manner in which Juan gives this testimony of his visions recalls the Gospel: "There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. The same came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all men through him might believe."  

With rare exceptions, the only "speakers" in the narration of Melendez are demons and St. John himself. These "conversations" are sometimes "quoted" in the first person as narrated by Juan in his testimony and set off in italics within Melendez' narrative. When the author reports general speech, however, it is never Juan who is speaking. Demons abuse Fr. Juan verbally as well as physically, although we are not usually told the specific words. St. John's speech is sometimes general (he advises, promises, etc.) and sometimes articulated as direct quotations in lengthy speeches. Human speech in the narrative usually signals a test of the saint's virtue. Once the prior, while discussing the disbursements of alms to the poor, suggested that Juan use a little of the money for himself. Since Juan's only other

---

64 John 1:8-7.
65 "...mas doce años me persiguieron casi todas la noches, tratándome muy mal de palabra, y de obra, mas vos siempre quedava libre con decir, IESUS SALVADOR, MARIA, IOSEPHE sean con migo." Melendez, III, 5, p. 466.
exclamations within the narrative are words spoken in conversation with the spiritual world, it is noteworthy that the author here quotes Juan’s reply: “For myself? Jesus Padre! For me, I want nothing more than God.” The possibility that humans can serve as the devil’s minions is even clearer in the following story.

In his early twenties, Juan made a trip to the city of Jerez de la Frontera, near Seville. As soon as he arrived in the city, says Melendez, Juan encountered some “lost women” who “surrounded the unwary youth... and, each hoping to snare him for herself, beckoned him, and said enticing words to him, using their wiles upon him, first one then the other, hoping to be the one chosen.” Juan was quite taken with this attention at first. Note that the “fallen women” speak persuasive, and enticing, words (donayres). The author assures us that the devil was “masquerading himself as these wicked women, and awakening in the interior of Juan’s soul many stirrings with the intent of blinding him and sacrificing his purity to this lewd vice.”

Fortunately St. John, who accompanied Juan everywhere, came to the rescue and, “making himself visible at his side, grabbed his clothes, and got him out to the street,

---

71 “Platicava cierto dia el siervo de Dios Fray Juan, con el...Prior del Convento de la Magdalena ...sobre la distribucion de las copiosas limosnas, que le hazian muchas personas ricas de la Ciudad, porque tuviesse, que dar a los pobres; y diciéndole el Prior, que bien podia repartirlas a su arbitrio, que le dava licencia, para ello, como no tomase cosa para si: Respondió el siervo de Dios: Para mí? yo no quiero mas, que a Dios.” Ibid, 7, p.471

72 “encontró con un corro de mueres cortesanas, que assí llamán a las perdidas, como si fuese lo mismo cortesiana, que desembojésen, y como el moço incueto, y pensando, que entrava a lo que otros, cada qual hazia de las suyas, por cogérla para si, porsíava la una, decíale donayres la otra, y cada una se esforzava por los medios, que ellas saven, à ser la [damaged].” Ibid., 2, p.457.

73 “lo cierto es...el enemigo comun de revestirse en aquellas malas hembras, arrogando en lo interior de su alma muchas sentellas, con que intenderia ciego, y aun porsíado rendir al torpe vicio su pureza.” Ibid.
instructing him in the way in which he should go and warning him that the next time he should be more cautious and careful.\footnote{...no se tardó mucho el amigo San Juan Evangelista, que poniéndose visiblemente a su lado, le cogió dela ropilla, y le sacó hasta la calle, enseñándole el camino por donde avía de ir, y advirtiéndole, que otra vez, anduviese con cautela, y más cuidado.”} Ibis.

As Juan moved from one situation (the country) to another (the city) the veil between the physical and spiritual worlds was torn. It is not real flesh and blood women that tempted Juan here but the devil disguised as these sirens. Furthermore, Juan’s rescue came from the celestial world. In this narrative the devil takes a tangible form and so does St. John—who is not only visible, but able to physically intervene in the situation, for example, grabbing Juan’s clothes. If the demonic can take human form, then the angelic—or saintly—can move in this world as well.

The urban world into which Juan moved is portrayed as the site where good and evil battle openly for human souls. Juan had been safe enough in the country, but as soon as he stepped into the city he was in mortal jeopardy. In contrast to the missionaries’ topography, human “civilized” spaces—not pastoral, or desolate places—are where the cosmic battle takes place.\footnote{Recall that in the story of Bertran, the priest who was almost killed by demons in a deserted cloister. For all the missionaries we have talked about, the wilderness was the place where they (symbolizing the forces of good) battled against the devil for the souls of the Indians. The devil tried to prevent Toribio’s journeys into the wilderness through physical mishaps (a bad fall, a river of crocodiles, etc.).} In this Life, the wild places are where divine help is encountered.

**Life at The Portal**

Using quotations from the testimony of Juan to his confessor, Melendez tells how Juan decided on a course of action: “After having heard mass [at the church], I
followed St. John wherever he would lead me. He led me a great distance, [away from the city of Jerez de la Frontera] as he had on other occasions, to see God and things I can not express or speak of..." 76 Once again, the movement through physical space is correlated with an encounter with the spiritual. Twice such visions happened in the church itself, to the point that Juan says "I was afraid to go in there [into the church] because the people stared at me, particularly the Dominican brothers of that convent who asked me if I was a friar. But it was not God’s will that I should become one in that place. Instead I determined to go to Seville with a merchant, one who had come from the Indies and agreed to take me into his service." 77 Shortly thereafter, says Melendez, the merchant took Juan with him to Panama, but having discovered that Juan was unable to write or figure, dismissed him. 78

Eventually, through a series of mishaps, Juan finally made the journey from Cartagena to Lima overland on foot. Once again, the journey itself is the focus of the narrative. The author points out the hardships of the four month trip, over incredibly difficult terrain: full of dangers, Caribe Indians, and so forth. 79 Unlike the narrative strategies of the previous authors, however, who used stories of this type as examples of physical mortifications sustained by the missionaries, this author presents

76 "...me llevó San Juan adonde el quiso, y subí alla muy lejos: llevóme, como otra vez, a ver a, donde vide tales cosas, que no se pueden decir, ni declarar." Melendez, III, 2, p.458. These words are almost identical to those that Juan used to describe the journey with St. John to his first vision of heaven.
77 "dos vezes me sucedio esto en aquella Yglesia de Predicadores de Xeres de la Frontera, y la tenia terror, y miedo de ir a ella, por la gente, que me mirava, en particular los Frayles de Santo Domingo de aquel convento, y me pedian, que fuera Frayle, y no estava de Dios, que you all lo fuera. Deter [damaged text] venirse de Xerez a Sevilla con un Mercader, que venia a las Indias, y conserteme con el, para venir [damage] le serviendo a ellas, y assi me recivio en su compania." Melendez, III, 2, p.458.
78 This was 1619 and they first went to Cartagena and then to Panama. Ibid., p.459.
79 Caribe Indians were considered cannibals.
the trip in only a few sentences, using it to emphasize that while he was in the
wilderness, Juan was accompanied and protected by his friend, St. John.\textsuperscript{52} Through it
all, Melendez observes, Juan is obedient to what he perceives as God's direction of his
life.

Arriving in Lima, Juan came to the barrio of San Lazaro, the poorest part of
the city, and, according to Juan's own testimony, there he awaited God's direction.
This turned out to be, as Juan told his confessor, that he go to work for Pedro
Menacho, the meat broker.\textsuperscript{51} For over two years he worked handling the animals at
the slaughterhouse.\textsuperscript{52} His friend and companion, St. John, assisted him and directed
his steps. This interval spent at the slaughterhouse seems especially significant in the
Life of a saint on the line dividing two worlds. His life as a shepherd, caring for
animals, was a protected, innocent life. His journey to the city of Lima—and the
dangers of a big city are well-established in this narrative—was a move even deeper
into the sinful world of human civilization and a test of his faith. His sojourn in the
neighborhood of San Lazaro (the same barrio which St. Toribio tried to protect for
the Indians,) so poor and squalid, was another test. The Spanish expression to put
oneself (or someone) "al matadero" means to put oneself in imminent danger of death.
The slaughterhouse in Lima, the portal of death, was also symbolically a gateway to
life because the poorest of the city gathered there daily for handouts of offal and

\textsuperscript{52} Melendez, III, 3, p. 462.

\textsuperscript{51} "En esta casa de Posadas de San Lazaro, dice el siervo de Dios Fray Juan, esperé que se
hiziese la voluntad de Dios; que fue servido (prosigue) me consertasse con Pedro Ximenez Menacho,
el obligado de la carne en Lima." Ibid. p. 461.

\textsuperscript{52} Melendez refers to two stage comedies in which Juan Massias is portrayed as a servant at a
hostel or inn. The indignant Melendez says that comedies which include humorous sketches of saints
tell embarassing lies and that playwrights should know better than to falsify history. Ibid.
trimmings that could not be sold. That Juan performed this charitable task at the slaughterhouse is suggested by the fact that this task is the one he later selected for himself at the monastery.

Two years at the slaughterhouse was enough for Juan. One day he unexpectedly went to his boss and said: "God wants me to go and serve at the Dominican house of the Magdalenes." Juan then asked to have his back wages sent to the poor and to the gate keeper of the convent. He was accepted by the Dominicans as apprentice to the elderly gate keeper and lived with him at the gate house—another boundary position between the insiders and outsiders. Melendez indicates that this abrupt change came at God's prompting, and with the consent of St. John. Melendez praises Juan for his prompt obedience to God. Up to this point, says Melendez of Juan, "we have seen in this Servant of God the blessed disposition to do God's bidding [as] conveyed by the beloved disciple St. John the Apostle and carried out with promptness and meekness, unresistingly...leaving his homeland, travelling a thousand miles on foot, coming to Peru and taking the habit of a lay brother with the Order of Preachers [Dominicans]."

---


54 "...fuime á mi Amo un día, y dixle: Hermano Ximenez, la voluntad del Señor, es, que you vaya á servirle a la casa de la penitente Magdalena de los Predicadores." This was a convent for men. The convention we are familiar with between convents (nuns) and monasteries (monks) does not exist in the Spanish world. "Convents" simply refer to religious houses and may belong to either men's or women's orders.

55 "Hasta aqui se han visto solo divinas disposiciones ejecutadas por el Dicipulo querido del Señor San Juan Apostol, y Evanglista, en el siervo de Dios, y su grande promptitud en dexarse llevar de ellas con toda suavidad, sin resistencia de las inspiraciones, hasta dexar la Patria, embarcarse, caminar mil leguas por tierra, ponerse en el Perú, pedir, y recibir el habito de legeo, y professar este estado en la orden de Predicadores." Ibid., 6, p. 468.
Juan became a *frayle lego*, or lay-brother, at the Convento de Santa María Magdalena de Lima.\(^{56}\) From an orphan, to an outcast drifter, to a person working in the slaughterhouse, he at last took a step up in the world when he joined the Dominicans. And yet, even within this small community he continued a marginalized existence as a gate keeper living out in the gate house—not in the dormitories with the other brothers. Juan is marginalized even within the monastery by his poverty and illiteracy, and probably, by his previous employment. The lay brothers of the Lima monasteries were domestic servants to the other brothers.\(^{57}\) Melendez includes here a brief apology for the position of these brothers, noting that, their “active” life of serving was a very secure one, free of scruples, and providing a path to spiritual perfection.\(^{58}\) Admitting, of course, that the “most excellent” life is that of preaching, Melendez describes the lay-brothers as serving the important function of giving the Choir brothers time for their studies.\(^{59}\)

What marks this discourse as one attempting to legitimize this social stratification is Melendez’ implication that *because* Juan was relegated to the menial

\(^{56}\) The year was 1622 and Juan would have been 37 years old. Ibid., 4, p. 462.

\(^{57}\) While a few of the richest members of religious orders (especially in women’s convents, and especially in the Augustinian houses) might have brought their own servants with them, this would not have been the case at the “Penitent Magdalene” which was a house of strict observance of the rule. That means that the lay brothers here did all the menial work: washing, shovelling, sweeping, etc.

\(^{58}\) Implicit here is the contrast between the *via activa* and the *via contemplativa* of monastic life, the two traditional poles of monastic life.

\(^{59}\) “Es un linage de hombres, que volviendo las espaldas al mundo, se convierten á Dios, dedicándose al trabajo corporal de la Religion, de que quieren descuadar á los Religiosos del Coro, para que mas libremente puedan acudir á él, y al estudio de los libros...” Ibid., p. 462. These “religious of the Choir” were so-called because they sat in the Choir of the church and sang the Divine Office; lay brothers sat together and apart. For example, Melendez reports that after serving lunch at la Magdalena Juan usually went to the other Dominican convent, el Rosario, to pray with the other *legos y dazdos* in the chapel of Our Lady of the rosary. This is where he may have met his friend Martín de Porres.
tasks he had an even better opportunity to become a saint. If it seems unfair to suggest this discourse is a political one when, in fact, the principle of “the last shall be first” and the “meek shall inherit the earth” is such a pervasive one in Christian literature, I remind the reader of Melendez’s preceding statements concerning the “superior” vocation of the preaching friars. Lay brothers were considered important, if lowly, members in the divine order. Nevertheless, the very fact that this apology must be given, and the fact that the language of marginalization is used and compensated for (by celestial favors) suggests that this alterity of class caused some discomfort or criticism and needed to be addressed.

Melendez describes the gate keeper’s day as one mostly concerned with menial tasks around the kitchen and serving meals at the refectory. There was time for prayer but Juan did his praying alone in the gate house instead of in the church or oratory with the friars. As gate keeper, Juan rang the 4 am bells, opened the outer convent doors in the mornings and afternoons, and generally observed the comings and goings of daily life at the convent. Both morning and evening he gave food to the poor who gathered at the door and many of whom ate there at the gate house. He is a perfect community brother, never being rude or malicious in word or deed. He was perfect in poverty, content with two tunics and the barest furniture in his cell. He did keep a few devotional pictures and the Image of Our Lady of Belén in his room. Says Melendez, “This [place] alone was rather nice and he had made a

---

* In the seventeenth century, as in the twentieth, convents and churches close for lunch, reopening at three or four in the afternoon. The opening of the outer doors or gates marked times after meals when uneaten food would be given out to beggars.

** Ibid., p. 467.**
decent altar for her."92 Juan was not concerned with the things of the world, according to the hagiographer, because those who are truly spiritual are not concerned with trifles but only with God.

It must be noted again that Juan's lifestyle did not represent the conditions of all the Dominicans in Lima, or even all of them at La Magdalena. In comparison to Córdova Salinas' description of Francis Solano's austerities, Melendez offers no indication that Juan was an example to the other friars, or that he chose specific austerities when comforts were offered. Juan's place in the social order of the convent is assigned to him by his superiors. Nevertheless, it is probably true that Juan's life in the convent was superior to that which he might have eventually led in the barrio of St. Lazarus. Class differences, and social alterity, are repeatedly portrayed throughout this narrative. One example of Melendez's descriptions of Juan's life recalls the story of Toribio and his preference in fish: what seems like a great mortification to the hagiographer may, in fact, have not even seemed like a hardship to the subject. Melendez says that Juan, who usually slept a couple of hours a night on a rough bed covered with hide, would occasionally sleep outside under the stars.93 Sleeping outside on the ground is interpreted by Melendez as an astounding act of self-mortification. It does not occur to him that sleeping outside might have

---

92 Ibid., p. 470. Our Lady of Belén (Bethlehem) was the patron of Belén, Portugal and was considered the special protector of ships and sailors.

93 "Otras veces (quizas por escusar el abrigo dela Yglesia, y dela celda, y hazer menos dulce el sueño, aunque tomando con tanto trabajo, y por tan poco tiempo) se salia al Claustro à dormir, y sobre aquellos ladrillos frios con el sereno dela noche, à Cielo descubierto, y à toda la inclemencia del ayre, se acostava el buen Fray Juan, como pudiera sobre blanca pluma." Ibid. S. p. 477.
been a pleasant change for a former shepherd once used to “lie down in green
pastures.”

**Physical Body and Physical Space**

The use of a single human body as metaphor for the social body is well
known in almost all religious cultures. Mary Douglas asserts that we should be
“prepared to see in the body a symbol of society and to see the powers and dangers
credited to social structures reproduced in small on the human body.” A number of
passages in Melendez’s life of Juan deal with issues of physical purity. Not only does
Melendez include predictable assurances of chastity and modesty, but he also relates
other stories which emphasize symbols of doors and boundaries—the spaces in which
Juan metaphorically lives.

The reader is told that Juan seldom left the convent except in grave necessity
and, when his presence was required elsewhere, he always kept his eyes to the ground
in order not to permit, even inadvertently, a sinful sight or thought. It is, the author
reminds us, the eyes which are the doorway to the soul and through which impurity
may enter. Whenever Juan had been away from the convent, he repaid his body by
an especially severe discipline. Just being “out of place” by leaving the monastery
was, for Juan, a form of impurity which discipline was forced to erase.

---

84 Psalms, 23:2.
85 Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger*, p. 115
86 “Salía muy pocas veces, fuera de casa, y ellas con grave necesidad, ó mandato del Prelado,
los oíos siempre en el suelo, sin permitir desmanes á la vista, que es el portillo, por donde entran al
alma las impresiones contra la pureza.” Melendez, III, p. 473.
87 Ibid., pp. 473-474.
Juan's strong sense of purity of place helps explain a story which Melendez tells within a discourse of obedience to superiors—where it does not seem to fit very well. In general, Melendez gives only broad and unremarkable examples of Juan's obedience, which of course, was perfect in a manner befitting a saint: it was prompt, without question or argument. The one interesting anecdote in this section on the virtue of obedience concerns Juan's attitude toward meat. It was against the rule at the convent to have any meat in the friars' diet. Juan, as the gate keeper in charge of examining things brought into the convent, allowed no exceptions. His strict observance evidently seemed like flagrant insubordination to one self-important priest who became quite angry about it. Melendez says Juan guarded this restriction carefully and made no exception for anyone or any rank. In this matter, "he closed his eyes to obedience" and "opened his eyes" only to the rule.\(^9\)

Juan was so strict, Melendez tells us, that when one of the friars became ill and the doctors prescribed a meat broth, the patient had to be transferred to the infirmary at the Convent of the Rosary across town where the prohibition of meat was not in effect. Just as looking at the world around him in Lima was no longer acceptable, despite the fact that he had lived in the world for half his life, so too meat was a thing of the past. Slaughter and dead bodies were not insignificant to this saint. The monastery was holy ground and the living bodies of the friars existed within what was, to Juan, a sacred space. Purity issues were more important than issues of

---

\(^9\) "sin accepcion de personas, ni dignidades, no le harian dispensar, en que passasse cosa sin registro todos los respetos del mundo: cerrava los ojos a la obediencia, y abrialos a la ejecucion del mandato, de manera, que con solo su cuidado no avia que temer, que entrasse carne." Ibid. p.472.
obedience. Still, it is well to note that in this story—as in stories of every other saint in this study—figures of worldly and ecclesiastical authority do not know better than saints which rules can be relaxed, which must be zealously observed.96

The doubling of body as signifier for holy space and community also takes place in the stories of Juan’s struggle with the demonic. The night after Juan’s profession as a Dominican brother—a milestone of great significance and importance to him—he had a long conversation with St. John (according to Massias’s testimony quoted by Melendez) in which St. John assured him that this place and the taking of the habit were, indeed, what was pleasing to God. Juan related that he asked St. John not to abandon him, and St. John promised to remain his companion.122 This was a pivotal moment, says Melendez, for then God “who had nurtured him with the milk of celestial favors as a child” gave him “the hard bread of tribulation” in order to make him “an adult in his virtues” by allowing the demons to come and torment him as soon as St. John had left the room.121 The demonic attack was manifested initially

---

96 Remember that Francis Solano refused to wear sandals or decorate the buildings but reprimanded his brothers for being too serious, for having “long faces” and not exhibiting Franciscan joy.

122 “...y al Señor San Juan, le pedí, no me desamparase, y él me prometió.” Melendez, III, p. 463.

121 “...però Dios, que ya quería, como a provecho, y adulto en las virtudes, darle a morder del pan duro de la tribulacion, si hasta entonces, le avía regalado con la leche de los favores del Cielo, como a Nin’o; permití al demonio, después de despedido San Juan, que sacasse la cara a perseguirle visiblemente: trabajo que le duró por muchos años (como diremos en su lugar) y esta noche, por espantarle, o persuadirle, a que no era verdad, lo que acababa de decirle San Juan; estando ya recogido, en la celda, que le señaló el Maestro de Novicios; sigiendo un gran terremoto, le representó a la vista, entre el estrepito del temblor, que se desunían las paredes de la celda, y que desencajados los adobes, se venían al suelo con el techo, y todo daba y dio sensiblemente, como si sucediera en la realidad, sobre el cuerpo de Fray Juan, que por una parte oprimido del peso de la tierra, y casi ahogado del polvo; que sacudían los materiales, con el falso movimiento, y por otra confiado en el divino favor, llamó a Dios, y a su amigo San Juan Evangelista, y al punto se vio libre de aquel susto, la celda entera, sin lesión alguna, y conocio el engaño del demonio.” Ibid., p. 464.
by an earthquake which tore apart the walls of Juan's cell, and made bricks fall from the roof onto Juan's body. Juan reported that during this fright he was given the sensation that these events were "duplicated on his body" and "that the weight of the earth was upon him, nearly choking him with dust." When Juan called aloud to God, and to St. John, the tremors immediately ceased. Miraculously, "the cell was intact, the walls without a single crack, and [Juan] knew that this had been a deceit of the devil."

In Peru, equation of earthquakes with divine anger is an ancient and common association in both Andean and Christian traditions. Encounters with demons in Christian hagiography take many forms as well, but what I wish to emphasize here is that the signs of demonic attack—imitating a natural disaster common to Peru—are registered both in the room and on his body simultaneously. Recalling the Desert Fathers and the temptations of St. Anthony, seventeenth-century hagiographers present the body as the site at which the battle between good and evil takes place. What I wish to emphasize in this progression from the European saints to the colonial ones is the mounting intensity of the battle, and the increasing emphasis on the saint's body as a symbol of the community itself. The struggle with alterity is no longer confined to an external struggle with a cultural Other, but has become a series of divisions and doublings in an attempt to achieve integration and wholeness. With the life of Juan we can begin to see the extent of the shift in ideas about the saint's body from the attitudes revealed in the life of Bertran. While the demonic attack here
is still a private one, it prefigures the more explicit association of the saint’s body with the social body that is an essential part of the hagiography of Rose.

Juan’s demonic attacks are associated with all life changes that lead toward increasing separation, marginalization, and independence. When the older gate keeper was called to serve at the Rosario convent, Juan became the sole portero of the monastery, living alone in the gate house—on the boundary where demons attack. He was consoled by his friend St. John, but late every night (when John apparently left him) the demons came to torment him—a trial he endured every night for twelve years! He fought them with the words: “Jesus, Mary, Joseph, be with me!”

Invocation of Divine protection is the weapon of choice when dealing with demons—or with the fear of being permanently outcast.

---

122 “Consolome mucho mi buen amigo San Juan, mas la noche siguiente, como alas once dela noche, estando en nuestra celda recando, llegaron muchos demonios á escuras, y me aperrearon, y arrastraron, mas me armé contra ellos, diciendo: JESUS SALVADOR. MARIA, IOSEPH sean con migo, con lo qual me libre dellos, y me dexaron por entonces, mas doce años me persigieron casi todas la noches, tratandome muy mal de palabra, y de obra,” Ibid., 5, p. 466.
PART II: CREOLE SAINTS IN LIMA

CHAPTER THREE: THE FLOWERING OF CREOLE LIMA

The seventeenth century saw the emergence of a Creole society within Peru as towns and cities expanded and the colonial economy became independent from the economy of the Spanish peninsula. Creole (criollo) is the term used to describe people of European ancestry who were born in the New World. Those Spaniards from the Iberian Peninsula were called peninsulars (peninsulares). While the Creoles were an elite group who considered themselves vastly superior to Amerindians, Africans, and those of mixed blood, the peninsulars looked down upon Creoles as provincial, and uneducated.¹ As one recent historian remarked, “Antagonism between Creoles and peninsulars was far worse among the less affluent in each group than among the more successful.”² Upper-class Creoles, while resenting the arrogance of the peninsulars, nonetheless generally imitated them.

As more wealth remained in the colony instead of being exported to Spain, cities like Lima were able to develop “an aristocratic culture of considerable luxury.”³ This economic independence marked “a fundamental shift of balance within the

¹ See Olson, p. 214-215.
² Burkholder and Johnson, Colonial Latin America, p. 189
³ Williams, Penguin History of Latin America, p.154.
Hispanic world.” During the sixteenth century, Lima had been the New World headquarters for merchant firms based in Seville, but in the seventeenth century, Lima began to compete with Seville merchants. South American capitalists made direct contacts with foreign suppliers and frequently employed their capital outside of Spain. Says historian John Lynch, this “represented the determination of the Peruvian merchants to dictate the terms of trade, [and] to break the grip of Spanish monopolists on the most valuable market in America.” At this time, he concludes, “the creoles came into their own.”

The increasing number of Creole clerics—both regular and secular—in the seventeenth century, as well as the Church’s economic position as a major landholder, bound the Church to South American soil in a way that the earlier focus on missionary activity had not. Creole preachers in Lima often cited their native St. Rose as evidence that God’s special favor was upon the city. Elsewhere in the colonies, manifestations of the Virgin, such as the Virgin of Copacabana in Peru and the Virgin of Guadalupe in New Spain, served to spark Creole patriotism. These local devotions became expressions “of an indigenous religious sensibility alleged to be purer than that of Spain itself.”

---

* John Lynch, *The Hispanic World in Crisis and Change, 1598-1700*. (Oxford: Oxford U.P., 1992) p. 16. Lynch says this reorientation in the Hispanic world has gone largely unnoticed in European historiography who have tended to focus on depression and depopulation within the peninsula and shifts in European powers.
* Lynch, p. 293.
* Ibid., p.347.
* Burkholder and Johnson, p.90-91
* This miraculous Virgin was associated with La Paz (in what later became Bolivia) but it was a special favorite of Indians and Creoles even in Lima, as the story in the Life of Toribio attests.
* Williams, p. 154. For recent scholarship on the Virgin of Guadalupe as the focus of Creole identity in New Spain, see Stafford Poole, *Our Lady of Guadalupe: The Origins and Sources of a Mexican National Symbol, 1531-1797*. (Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press, 1995).
Rich Creole families often purchased or built apartments in convents for their unmarried daughters and gave large dowries to the houses as well. Only these well-born women “could vote and serve in offices in the convent and sing the canonical hours in the choir.”¹² Nuns from modest Spanish and mixed-race (mestizo) families served as housekeepers and in less prestigious posts. At the bottom of the hierarchy were poor, mixed-race women who were servants to the nuns but nonetheless allowed to wear nun’s habits¹¹—the same low position that Juan Macias held in the Dominican house described in the previous chapter and that was available to a mulatto like Martin de Porras. As I pointed out in the earlier analysis of Juan Marcias’s Life, the convents of the various religious orders generally mirrored the society outside their walls.¹²

By the middle of the seventeenth century, men and women of mixed ancestry—castas or mestizos—were the largest population sector in most urban centers.¹³ Spain worried “that these new racial groups were threatening the stability of colonial society.”¹⁴ While the castas adopted the Spanish language, the Christian faith, and European skills, “this process was commonly greeted with derision and discrimination” by Creoles¹⁵ Spaniards, James Lockhart observes, were “masters of fine social distinctions.”¹⁶ Colonists developed an elaborate nomenclature to describe the various shades of skin color and physical types that resulted from the genetic

¹² Burkholder and Johnson, p. 92.
¹¹ Ibid., p. 93.
¹² Ibid., p. 93.
¹³ Ibid., 194.
¹⁴ Ibid., 196.
¹⁵ Ibid., p. 197
¹⁶ James Lockhart, Spanish Peru, p. 38.
mixture and re-mixture of the three racial groups. Except for the upper echelons of society, which were reserved for Spanish Creoles, social mobility allowed those of mixed ancestry who demonstrated European speech, dress, manners and wealth to achieve some measure of social status.\textsuperscript{17}

Changing Hagiography

In the preceding chapters, I have emphasized the discourses concerning bodies and words in the Lives of saints in an effort to show how these hagiographical texts participate in the larger cultural project of how Spaniards in the New World confronted and resolved problems with alterity, or "otherness"—racial, religious, linguistic, and social. As the later Creole culture developed, the focus shifted to problems of internal social division and Creole identity. This preoccupation with constructing a Creole culture, rather than affirming an imported Spanish culture, is evident in historical accounts of Peru in the seventeenth century.\textsuperscript{18} In this section I will demonstrate how the Lives of the Creole saints (those saints born in Peru) reflect contemporary concerns with social diversity and colonial status. In the hagiography of the next three saints—Rose, Martin and Nicolas—discourse about the power of language diminishes and becomes critical of spoken words. Simultaneously, discourse about the body expands to dominate the Lives of these saints.

---

\textsuperscript{17} Burkholder and Johnson, p. 194.

In the religious and cultural world of the seventeenth-century, "serious" words were controlled by men. Hagiographers consistently focused on the power of words and the cultural importance of language in the Lives of the Spanish-identified male saints presented in the first two chapters. In contrast, the Lives of the Creole saints are characterized by a discourse of bodies that describes the body as a corrective to words, as a communication more authentic and less subject to misinterpretation or dismissal. This is most conspicuous in the Lives of those Creole saints who were doubly removed from power—being not only Creole but also female (Rose of Lima) or Black (Martín de Porres). Most Blacks in the Spanish colonial world of the seventeenth century were slaves, and, as such, their bodies were objects of possession. Unlike women, whose words were dismissed as frivolous, and unlike Indians, whose language was considered uncultured and inferior, blacks were considered mute.¹⁹ Rose and Martín’s human bodies become saintly narratives which portray how saints defy the physical limitations of normal bodies and thereby challenge negative cultural assumptions about gender and race.

**Rosa de Santa María**

Isabel Flores Oliva was born in Lima in 1586 to Spanish parents. By the time she was eleven she was living as a hermit in her family’s backyard. This unusual lifestyle, combined with severe fasts and self-mortification, caused both her family and her confessors great consternation. She adopted the name Rosa de Santa Maria

¹⁹ Recall the story of the Negro slaves chained together in the shipwreck in Córdova Salinas’ Life of Francis Solano, above in Ch. 1.
but she was never a nun. Instead she chose to wear the habit of a Dominican tertiary
and remain with her family in imitation of her patron saint, Catherine of Sienna.
Passing examination by the Inquisition and Dominican authorities to establish the
veracity and orthodoxy of her mystical visions, Rose was widely acclaimed as a saint
even before her death in 1617.

The first Life of Rose, was written in 1619 by her confessor, Pedro de Loayza
O.P.22 This brief account focuses almost exclusively on her last years. A Life in Latin
was published in 1664 by Leonard Hansen21 This Life, written for a clerical
audience, was edited and translated into Spanish by Fr. Antonio de Lorea and
published in 1671, for Rose’s canonization.22 Another Life, also published in 1671,
was written by Antonio Gonzales Acuña, the procurator for Rose’s canonization.23
A contemporary of Rose, Fray Andres Ferrer de Valdecebro published a Life in
1669.24 The Lives by Gonzales Acuña and Ferrer de Valdecebro reflect a distinctly
Creole outlook in their emphasis on Rose’s unique qualities, and their reiterations of

22 Pedro de Loayza, O.P., Vida de Santa Rosa de Lima, edited by P. Joaquín Barriales, O. P.
21 Leonardo Hanson, Vita mirabilis et moris pretiosa venerabilis sororis Rosa de S. Maria Limensis ex Tertio ordine s.p. Dominici. (Rome: Tinassi, 1664). Hansen was purportedly a contemporary of
Rose in Lima at the time of her death. His work was subsequently translated into French, Italian, and
German. His work is fairly brief in comparison to those by Creole authors.
22 Antonio de Lorea, Santa Rosa, religiosa de la tercera orden de S. Domingo. Par Leonard
Hansen traducido de Latin por Antonio de Lorea. (Madrid: Francisco Nieto, 1671). Lorea claims
that his translation also reorders the material from Hansen (“traducido y dispuesto con mejor orden”).
23 Vargas Ugarte cites this as the most comprehensive and “reliable” of the lives. Ruben
Vargas Ugarte, La Flor de Lima: Santa Rosa, (Lima: Ed. Paulinos, 1994). Gonzales Acuña was also the
Definidor General de la Provincia del Peru and Catedratico de Prima de Moral de la Universidad de
Lima. Antonio Gonzales Acuña, Rosa, mistica vida y muerte de Santa Rosa de S. Maria Virgen...
(Rome: Nicholas Ansel Tinias, 1671).
24 Andres Ferrer de Valdecebro, Historia de La vida de la Ba. Ma. Rosa de Santa Maria...(Madrid:
Maria Rey Viuda de Diego Dias de la Carrera. 1669).
her associations with specific people and places in Lima. This local emphasis makes these two lives the most interesting for my project.\textsuperscript{25}

**Rose and St. Francis Solano**

In 1604, when St. Francis Solano preached his famous sermon in the main square of Lima, Rose was only eighteen. The saints, it is said, recognize one another and, at least by one account, St. Rose was among the few who understood the true meaning of Solano’s sermon. Rose’s hagiographer Gonzales Acuña tells this version of the story with which we are already familiar: Francis Solano, preaching on the destruction of wicked cities, reminded his audience of the story of Ninevah and...thereby spun a tale of the fate which could happen to Lima. “So ardent was the zeal with which he painted this picture, that those present believed his words... and imagined the conclusion.”\textsuperscript{26} In the ensuing chaos, Gonzales Acuña says, only Rose “with a higher intelligence saw things as they really were—not as people described them.”

Gonzales Acuña makes clear that Rose realized that the erroneous rumor about Lima’s destruction would serve to “discredit” Solano and, “despite the

\textsuperscript{25} These are characteristics of hagiography that is intended for a local audience according to Aviad Kleinberg, *Prophets in their own country*. (Chicago: 1992).

\textsuperscript{26} “Predico en la plaza principal de Lima el ven. Padre Apostolde aquel nuevo mundo Fr. Francisco Solano, discurrio sobre la destrucion de las ciudades nefandas, puso en consideracion el peligro de Nínive, refirio la devastacion de los muros de Moab y la confusion de ella en la obscuridad de una noche, hixo ilacion de lo que ala ciudad de Lima podia suceder, con tar ardiente zelo se lo represento, que dando la parte del pueblo que estaba presente el credito a sus palabras, que con sus obras se tenia merecido. altero el resto, dando con la noticia por asentado que aquella noche se hundiria la Ciudad, que se abriria la tierra, y a todos los tragaria, que asii lo avia dicho Fray Francisco Solano. Gonzales Acuña, p.79-82.
innocence of this saintly man...would undo all his work for the benefit of souls."\(^{27}\)

Rose went to church and spent the night flagellating her body and performing other mortifications declaring that she would willingly pay for the capriciousness of the crowd. She asked her heavenly Spouse to exchange her blood and her tears for the innocence of the preacher [Solano] and, if his fault had occasioned this event, to chastise her and forgive the rest. The water and blood (likened by Gonzales Acuña to that which flowed from Christ’s side) which Rose thus offered to God “opened the eyes of the blinded city,...and the next day [when] the error was recognized, it was understood to have been God’s desire to make them better [Christians] by this event. [In addition] many sought out the saintly Padre Fr. Francisco as a spiritual director and teacher.”\(^{28}\)

In this story, several important features of the hagiography of this saint are introduced. First of all, Rose offers the castigation of her physical body as a penance for the sins of other. This gesture is judged to have been accepted by God for the good of the whole city. Second, while it is another’s saintly words that are misinterpreted, it is her bodily performance that is said to have “opened the eyes” of

\(^{27}\) La Rosa que con superior inteligencia miraba las cosas como son, no como se dicen, conociendo que aquella falsedad serviría de descredito al predicador, y a la inocencia de un varon Santo, viendo que si perdiése el credito, se perdería con el de su doctrina el fruto de la salud de las almas” Gonzales Acuña, p. 82.

\(^{28}\) gasto la noche en castigar su cuerpo con azotes, y otras mortificaciones, diciéndose á si, que era bien pagase ella la ligereza del vulgo. Pidio a su Esposo con sangre y con lagrimas bolviése por la inocencia de su predicador por serlo, y que si la inquietud la ocasionaban sus pecados executase en ella los castigos perdonando a los demas. El agua y sangre ofrecida á Dios abrió los ojos al pueblo ciego, como la del costado de Christo al que sin vista llegó ala luz...; conocióse el dia siguiente el error, sosegose el pueblo entendiendo avia querido Dios por este medio se mejorase. Procuraron lo muchos teniendo por director y Maestro al santo Padre Fr. Francisco. Ibid., 79-81.
the citizens of Lima. Here Rose uses her body as a corrective to words—a sharp contrast to Francis Solano's body which complements and "illustrates" his words.

**Discordant Words**

In the Lives of Rose, words are repeatedly blamed as the source of contention among people. As we have just seen in the story of Solano's sermon, Rose not only understood "things as they are" (a reality not reflected in words) but also realized the harm that words can do. Her childhood was marred, agree all her biographers, by a family dispute over her name. She had been christened "Isabel" in honor of her maternal grandmother; nevertheless, her mother decided to re-name her "Rose" when she was about three months old. Her mother claimed to have seen the child miraculously transfigured into a beautiful rose and this vision was so powerful, and the baby so beautiful, that only the name "Rose" would do. This attempt to change the name infuriated the grandmother who continued to call the child Isabel—and so began a contention that lasted for many years. "She was harshly treated by her mother, if she responded to her grandmother's use of 'Isabel,' and mistreated by the grandmother if she responded to her mother's use of 'Rose'." 29 Some versions of this story recount that it was the decision of the bishop, St. Toribio de Mogrovejo, to settle the matter by confirming her as "Rose" at her confirmation. Lorea's Life of

---

29 "Llamavase Ysabel por conservar la nieta según costumbre human la memoria de su Abuela materna, esta con rigor quiera que se llamase Ysabel, pues asi se llamava; movida de superior influencia (a lo que debemos entender) la Madre estava firme en que se llamase Rosa, causo la controversia disgustos domesticos, que se puso en punto de competencia, maltrataba la con asperaza la Madre, si a la Abuela respondia por el nombre de Ysabel, y maltratabala la Abuela, si respondia a la Madre por el de Rosa." Gonzales Acuña. p.14-15. The same story is told by Ferrer de Valdecebro, l.2. p.6-7.
Toribio describes the story in words almost the same as Gonzales Acuña, above, adding “it was a torment for the girl.”

Gonzales Acuña says that Toribio chose the name Rose because, as a saint himself, he could perceive the “spiritual fragrance of the young saint.”

Even after her confirmation, the sources agree, Rose remained unsure of the appropriateness of this name until she was reassured by the Virgin that Jesus liked the name “Rose” and gave her permission to add the surname “de Santa Maria” in the place of her family’s.

Gonzales Acuña tells his readers that Rose did not speak often. “She passed her life in silence, never flaunting, or boasting. Her words were the pulse of her soul, and one could know by them the cadences of her virtue and her steadfastness.”

This description at first seems puzzling since “passing her whole life in silence” is an odd assertion to make on a page which not only goes on to describe her words but includes several “quotes” attributed to Rose herself. What the hagiographer is pointing out, however, is that Rose does not talk “like a woman,” meaning that she

---

12 “...y con alto, aunque inefable rayo de interior ilustracion, [la Virgen del Rosario] la consolò, y hablò, dandole à entender, que era gusto del Niño, que en sus Virginales braços tenia, que se llamasse Rosa, y que añadiesse al nombre de Rosa el sobrenombre de Santa Maria para siempre.” Ferrer de Valdecebro, I, 2, p. 7-8; “Por interna iluminacion le asegurò que era voluntad de su hijo se llamase Rosa, que siendolo el de los campos, quiso honrarla con su nombre, que por sobre nombre le mandaba tuviesse el de Santa Maria, señalándola en esto por propia de su familia....Volvio a su casa pidiendo a todos la llamases Rosa de Santa Maria, diciendo con humildes razones, que assi juzgava que seria servido Dios.” Gonzales Acuña, p. 18-19.

13 “Pasaba toda su vida en silencio, iamas se le oyó termino de ostentacion, de fauste, ni iactancia, son las palabras el pulso de un alma, y conocose por ellas las intercadencias de la virtud, o su firmeza.” Gonzales Acuña, p. 52.
does not brag or show off, she does not gossip or flirt. She is not, like most women, undisciplined in her speech but—in contrast to the expected feminine pattern—Rose is “firm” or steadfast in her self-control. She speaks only of spiritual things and the only words she trusts are prayers.

Rose speaks frequently to Mary and Jesus, with whom she enjoys intimate conversations. Although Rose can hear celestial words, her Mother (and often her confessors) cannot—or will not—hear God’s messages and so cannot understand Rose or the miraculous events that transpire around her. In the following story, Ferrer de Valdecebro describes the pain which Rose suffers because obedience to her mother is at cross-purposes with obedience to God. The author makes an aside to the reader: “Of course her mother did not understand [God’s] language, for she wanted the opposite of what God desired, and because she cared more for the world, and less for God.” Rose’s mother, anxious that Rose should marry well, repeatedly urged her daughter to make herself look pretty and dress attractively. One night Rose’s mother gave her some gloves to wear while she slept. These gloves were supposed to make one’s hands fairer and more beautiful. She adamantly required Rose to use them, and so, reluctantly, Rose put them on. In the night, however, the gloves began to burn like fire, leaving Rose’s hands parched and red. In the morning, [Rose] handed over the gloves to her mother, telling her everything that had happened and showing her burned hands. She implored her mother most piteously, to not require her to go through this ordeal a second time. Her mother [went along with] this, sadly

---

4 In the story of Juan Macias, in the previous chapter, it was “flattering, enticing” speech which the “fallen women” used to seduce the innocent Juan.
acknowledging the unexpected effect that the gloves had produced.”\textsuperscript{35} Ferrer de Valdecebro goes on to say that this “prodigious event did not calm her [mother’s] soul,” that is, it did not make her mother abandon her campaign to make Rose care about her appearance. The reason, the hagiographer explains, was that “she did not understand the silent language with which God was speaking in defense of his Spouse Rose, and that he desired her only for himself, not for the world.”

In the seventeenth-century Lives of Rose, God’s language is the only “spoken” language which is trustworthy. Not only are human words unreliable, but even words preached by a saint can be misinterpreted and cause harm. Whereas in the Life of St. Toribio, language itself was no guarantee of insider status; now, in the Life of Rose, words themselves are dangerous. The sermon of Francis Solano, as interpreted by Ferrer de Valdecebro, was misunderstood because human words—even the most righteous ones—are distorted by human fears and failings.\textsuperscript{36} Rose, instead of speaking, demonstrates on her own body, the true message. Her body can be read there by others even when they cannot hear God’s words even as Mary’s body conceived The Word and made it manifest. In a socially imposed exclusion of women from public discourse, her body becomes the site where true meanings are displayed.

\textsuperscript{35} “Por la mañana entregó a su madre los guantes, refiriéndole todo lo que le avía sucedido, y enseñándole las manos abrasadas; rogóle con mucho rendimiento, que no le mandase, ni obligase a suplico semejante segunda vez. Hizolo así la madre, viendo, y no sin lastima, que diferentes efectos hizieron los guantes a lo que ella pretencia, pero no sossegó su animo con caso tan estupendo, y prodigioso, y era, que no entendía el lenguage mudo con que Dios hablava en defensa de su Esposa Rosa, y que la quería solo para si, no para el mundo. Como no entendía su madre este lenguage, quería lo contrario de lo que Dios quería, porque la quería mas mara el mundo, y menos para Dios.” Ferrer de Valdecebro, I, 5, p. 25.

\textsuperscript{36} The version told in Solano’s Life by Córdova Salinas allowed these misunderstandings to be God’s doing, a singular exception in a life of preaching where the spoken word is paramount. In that version, the sermon still made God’s (real) message manifest in the community through the preacher’s words, despite the initial confusion. See Chapter One, above.
Painful Words

“One afternoon, some women friends came to visit Rose’s mother and to see a little garden that she had, and to pass the time there, looking at and admiring its variety of flowers in which it was adorned, and the neat, clean way in which it was cultivated. They were cutting flowers and weaving a crown or garland from them; they came upon Rose and said to her that they would be pleased to put the garland upon her. for it was to crown her beauty that they had woven it. Surprised by this flattering talk, Rose refused with modest humility. The ladies insisted, [but Rose] excused herself with discreet apologies.” At this moment, Rose’s mother came along and “commanded Rose to put on the garland. Rose obeyed immediately without answering back. Her prompt capitulation to her mother, and her consent to the vain adornment of the garland, she easily overcame with her ingenuity: Her hand quickly seized a thorn, sharp and large, and, concealing it with dexterity, nailed into it [the crown] as she put it on her head. [She] pushed it down with such force on the side [with] the thorn that it pierced her delicate senses, with inhuman pain. In this way, that which was esteemed an adornment to others, was to Rose the gravest torment.”

37 “Avian venido a visitar a su madre unas amigas suyas una tarde; entraron a ver un huertecillo que tenía, y a divertirse un rato por él, mirando, y admirando, así la variedad de flores de que estaba vestido, como el asseo, y limpieza con que lo cultivavan. Fueron cortando algunas flores, y tejiendo una corona, ó guirnalda de todas ellas; acabaronla, llegaronse a la Rosa, y dixeronle, que les hiziera gusto de ponerse, pues para coronar su hermosura la avian texido. Estrañó, como poco cursada este leguaje, con que replicó, y reusó el ponerse, con modestia humilde; porfiavanle, escusavase con muy discretas razones” Ferrer de Valdecebro I, 5, p.18.

38 “Llegó su madre, mandóle que se la pusiera, y obedeció sin replica alguna luego al punto. En esta lucha del recato y la obediencia en rendir el juicio al precepto de su madre, y la voluntad al vano adorno de la guirnalda, venció la viuezas de su ingenio, fácilmente. Cogióla en la mano, y con estremada destreza, y secreto, clavo en ella un alfiler muy grueso, y grande, pusosela en la cabeza, y apretó con tanta fuerza el lado adonde avia caído el alfiler, que le traspasó sus delicadas sienes, coniensible, è inhumano dolor, de manera, que lo que preció vistoso adorno a las demás, le fue a la Rosa de gravissimo tormento.” Ibid.
Just as Francis Solano “obeyed” the command to wear sandals but turned their comfort into greater pain, so Rose took what should have been a pretty adornment and makes it an affliction. Ferrar de Valdecebro continues: “The mother’s friends talked a great deal about Rose’s beauty after she put on the garland, which truly the flowers had not only adorned but made more beautiful. On a girl like the virgin Rose, who was an unaffected beauty, and not at all proud, [the crown of flowers] added charm and grace. The women looked at her and praised her, extolling her beauty; but none of this could begin to make her vain, because she had driven the thorn into that space [which vanity might have filled.]” Notice that, once again, words are a source of danger here. The women’s talk of Rose’s beauty that threatens to “put ideas into Rose’s head.”

Feminine Beauty and the Blessed Virgin Mary

In order to appreciate how important the emphasis on femininity is in the story of Rose, one must recall the traditional Christian dualism in which females, associated with fertility, birth, and physical nurturing, represented not only the carnal body but also material existence. Males, associated with rationality, spirituality, and the figure of Christ, represented the “higher” spiritual realities. In a

---

39 “Mucho dixeron de su hermosura las amigas de su madre, después que se puso la guirnalda, que verdaderamente las flores no solo atiñan, pero hermosean; y en una niña como la virgen Rosa, que era hermosa sin afectación, sino le pudo acreditar la hermosura, le añadió algo de mas ayre, y de mas gracia. Miravanla, alabavanla, encarecían su belleza; pero nada desto podia entrar a desvanecerla, porque avia tapado el alfiler todo el hueco que pedía la vanidad.” Ibid, p. 19

40 Nothing is inherently wrong with the crown or wearing of it as the author presents it.

41 Rose’s use of the thorn to “fill the space where the ‘words of vanity’ might have entered is an excellent example of the “world” un-made by pain that Elaine Scarry speaks of. In this case, of course, Rose wants her pain to un-make her connection to the social world, the world of language, so that the conversation around her will not tempt her to vanity.
recent work Grace Jantzen has observed: “For a man to develop in spirituality, he
must become even more manly, with the manliness of Christ, transcending the
demands of the flesh and living by the spirit. But for a woman to develop in
spirituality, she must put off womanliness, work against the grain of her gender rather
than with it.” Furthermore, Jantzen notes that “to whatever extent [a woman] was
able to succeed in this male-defined spiritual enterprise, to that extent she also cut
herself off from the community of women, becoming...other than women.” This
polarization was so deeply imbedded in the Christian tradition, says Janzen, that
women who were acclaimed as saints and acknowledged to be “spiritual” in their
nature were spoken of in hagiography as “honorary males.”

Alison Weber, identifying the same hagiographical strategy at work in the
Lives of Teresa of Avila, points out that Teresa was called by her hagiographers “a
virile woman” and “a manly soul.” Furthermore, other saintly women of the New
World, whose lives are included in the chronicles of Córdova Salinas and Melendez
are never praised for their beauty. Nowhere does one find these chroniclers
speaking of the physical beauty of the several pious nuns and tertiaries whose pious
lives were considered notable. So many examples of the contrary draw attention to
the very unusual and distinctively feminine construction of St. Rose in her

p. 53, italics in original. Jantzen’s work focuses upon the theological texts upon which gender
differences are based but she uses examples from Early Christian, Medieval and some Early Modern
Lives of saints. She does not include Rose among her examples.
43 Jantzen, p. 53, italics in original.
44 Ibid., p. 51
46 See, for example, Cordova Salinas, *Coronica*, 23. a Lile o: Doña Isabel de Porras, p. 511-519.
hagiography. Not only is she never “manly” but she is presented as quintessentially feminine. She is, however, sharply contrasted with other women who are portrayed as frivolous, shallow and vain.

Many female saints of this period, like Teresa of Jesus and Catalina de’ Ricci, and even Rose’s patron, St. Catherine of Sienna, must have seemed to have “forgotten their place” and acted “like men” by becoming involved in reforms and politics and daring to write theology. Rose, (despite hagiographers’ references to Teresa and frequent parallels to St. Catherine) is portrayed as the opposite of these famous European women saints. Unlike them, she refuses to leave her home (more symbolically a woman’s place even than a convent) and continues to sew and garden and help her family (women’s work), and disdains education (something useful only in a “man’s” world).

Perfect in beauty, perfect in piety, self-discipline, and obedience, Rose was described as second only to the Blessed Virgin herself, the model of perfected womanhood. Traditional names for the Virgin Mary which seventeenth-century Catholics might have known included “Rose planted in Jericho”; “Fragrant Rose” and “Rose among thorns.”

47 It is not surprising, therefore, that it was to Mary that Rose had looked for confirmation of her name—the Virgin’s authority replacing the contention between mother and grandmother. The Blessed Virgin, represented by the statue of Our Lady of the Rosary in the church of Santo Domingo in Lima,

---

47 A 1624 A-B-C of the Names of the Virgin lists these among the many names of Mary: “Rosa ocorilera”; “Rosa plantada en Hierico,” (from Eccl.24); “Rosa agradable, quien nace de entre espinas y ella no tiene espinas.” P. Fray Antonio Navarro. *Abecedario Virginal del Excelencias del Santísimo Nombre de María...* (Madrid, 1624) p. 69; 183.
became a second mother to Rose. Ferrer de Valdecebro, whose work gives special emphasis to the anger and abusive treatment Rose received from her mother, intersperses descriptions of Rose's of problems at home, particularly stories of her mother's opposition to physical mortifications, with stories of the affirmations and miraculous favors Rose receives from her interactions with Mary. No longer a woman “like other women,” Rose turns to the Blessed Virgin as her “true” or spiritual mother.46

Rose's self-inflicted tortures allowed her to “un-make”⁴⁷ the social world of which her mother was a part; it is not surprising therefore, to discover that it was the severity of her mortifications that became the major source of contention between mother and daughter. “One day Rose was so busy helping her mother that she was late leaving for Mass and the church bells were ringing. She grabbed her shawl, hurried to the Convent of the Rosary, and was already in church before she remembered that she had left a hairshirt out where anyone who entered her room would see it immediately. There was nothing to do but pray to the Miraculous Image of the Rosary. She raised her spirit, her heart and her eyes to the Heavenly Lady, and told her with great emotion that she needed her help and favors in this emergency. She explained that if her household found the hairshirt they would know of her penances and thus it was necessary to hide the shirt in a secret place where no one

---

⁴⁶ See Ferrer de Valdecebro, p. 31-34 in particular.
⁴⁷ This term is used by Scarry to describe the effects of pain and its resistance to language.
would find it. After Mass, Rose returned to the house and found the hairshirt not
where she had left it but where she had asked the Mother of God to hide it.\textsuperscript{32}

Body Talk and Mortification

Just as Rose's words are not frivolous like other women's words, so her body
is not weak like other women's bodies. In order to keep Rose as feminine as possible
and yet, at the same time, to dissociate her from what was considered the sinful and
sensual nature of human females, hagiographers presented Rose's mortifications as so
prodigious and so extraordinary, that she is unchained from all association with
physicality. Her disciplines and penances, therefore, receive an emphasis in these
Lives that far exceeds anything that we have encountered in the preceding Lives of
male saints.\textsuperscript{31} In describing the severity and creative variety of cruel punishments
Rose inflicted upon herself, hagiographers put Rose in a man's role: brave, strong,
and indifferent to pain. However, by giving such detailed descriptions of torments
and their effects upon her body, Rose's hagiographers also put her in a most
submissive feminine position, displaying her body as an object for (male) admiration.

\textsuperscript{32} "Tenía mucho que hacer un día en su casa, y quería antes de entrar en ello oir Missa, a
tiempo que oyó que tocaron en el Convento del Rosario: pusose con toda prisa el manto, fuese al
Convento, y estando ya en medio de la Missa, se acordó que avia dexado un silicio a caso, donde todos
quantos entrassen en su quarto avian de verle precisamente. Con gojose de manera, que no hallando
mas remedio que el que tenia delante, que era la Imagen Milagrosa del Rosario: levantando el espíritu,
el corazón, y los oíos a esta Celestial Señora, le dixo con mucho sentimiento, que le favoreciesse en
tanto aprieto, y congoja, librándola del peligro en que sel hallava, el que se conociesen por el silicio
sus penitencias, que avian de verle todoslos de su casa, que se sirviese de apartarlo de lo que avian de
ver, escondiéndole en parte tan secreta, y oculta, que nadie le viesse. Acabo su razonamiento [spelling
in original] con la Missa, bolióse a su cosa [casa], y halló el silicio, no donde lo avia dexado, sino
donde avia pedido a la gran Madre de Dios se le escondiese." Ferrer de Valdecebro, p. 53-54.

\textsuperscript{31} Margaret Miles has pointed out that female saints' bodies are considered "objects for the
male gaze." See Miles, Carnal Knowing, p. 61 on the voyeuristic accounts of female martyrs.
Here is a typical description of Rose’s disciplines taken from Ferrer de Valdecebro: “For her arms she made bonds from cords which she wove together and fettered herself in them [such that] the mortifications did not bind until the knots had penetrated to her bones which they did each time she raised and lowered herself by the most sensitive part of the arms.” No small quotation can adequately convey the effect of pages and pages of such descriptions—the one given above is taken from a thirty-page section devoted entirely to recounting such activities. Moreover, Ferrer de Valdecebro repeatedly uses phrases such as “the disciplines with which the Virgin Rosa dominated her delicate body,” and “these delights she bestowed upon her thin body.”

One of Rose’s more famous penitential practices involved a bed of stones whose sharp jag and corners protruded in such a way as to cause great pain. Her earliest biographer, Pedro Loaysa, describes the bed (as well as her other mortifications) at length, detailing how her body “trembled like a leaf” before she lay down upon it. Loaysa, like Ferrer de Valdecebro and Gonzales Acuña, has multiple chapters devoted to these descriptions. All of the hagiographers describe her body as “delicate,” and “tender” throughout chapter after chapter of flagellations, rough hairshirts, and abrasions of various kinds.

---

52 “Para los braços hizo unas ligaduras de cordeles, que travadas, como redes unas con otras, los aprisionava de manera, que la mortificacion nole embaraçasse el aprovecharse dellos, aunque le extrassen hasta penetrar los huesos los nudos, que lo hazían todas las vezes que los baxava, ô levantava con gravissimo dolor de los lagartos, que es en los braços la parte mas sensible.” Ferrer de Valdecebro, I. 19, p. 84.
53 Ferrer de Valdecebro, I. 16, p. 68.
54 Loaysa, Vida de Santa Rosa de Lima, p. 15.
This hagiographic emphasis on pain and physical torture provides the solution to preserving Rose’s femininity while asserting her spirituality and special status. The narratives present a double purpose for the self-inflicted pain. The first purpose of pain—and the traditional ascetic one—is to subdue desires. In the story of the flower garden, the pain Rose inflicted with the thorn occupied the very place where vanity would have insinuated itself. The second purpose of pain, however, is its use to separate one’s self from others—that is, to maintain the separation of “worlds.” Rose had no desire to take part in human society by using human language. Rose used her words only to talk to Heaven. Her pain was so unshareable, so indescribable, that it “resisted language” and enforced her isolation.\textsuperscript{56} What constitutes the most fearsome aspect of pain for most people, its isolating quality, constitutes its positive value for Rose. Rose deliberately used pain to resist inclusion by the other women.\textsuperscript{57}

The “body language” of pain communicates what spoken language cannot. Stories of public penance, such as the one of Rose flagellating herself in the church after Solano’s sermon, offer physical performance as a way of pointing to God that is more effective than sermons. The display of intense pain portrays the body as something other than itself. By making the intense feelings of pain appear as marks on the body, the unseen pain becomes objectified, present to view, and thus proved. There can be “empty words,” but scars are never “empty.”\textsuperscript{58} The mutilated or

\textsuperscript{56} The “resistance to language” is seen as “essential” to pain in Scarry, p. 4-5.

\textsuperscript{57} Elaine Scarry observes that pain “achieves its aversiveness in part by bringing about, even within the radius of several feet, this absolute split between one’s sense of one’s own reality and the reality of other persons.” p. 4.

\textsuperscript{58} This use of pain is understood clearly employed in the Early Modern period as evidenced by the “flagellant” religious brotherhoods in public processions. Francis Solano’s performances also use the stark presence of the ascetic body to point to the divine reality behind the penance.
distressed body becomes evidence, not for its own existence, but for the real and palpable existence of the spiritual realm to which the saint’s pain is pointing.  

While all the afflictions of Rose’s body are made visible to readers through descriptions and explanations in the text, paradoxically, in most of the stories concerning Rose’s body, Rose was trying to hide not only her practices themselves, but the tell-tale physical evidence of her self-inflicted tortures. All of her hagiographers report that her mortifications and fasting did not ruin her beauty nor give her a sad countenance. This gift from God was requested by Rose specifically so that others would not know of her physical torments and try to prevent them. “Her natural beauty was God’s gift because the saint had asked to be given a face which would not reveal the extent of her mortifications. God gave her a face that reflected her interior, full of joy and color. This was so true that the more she mortified herself and fasted, the prettier, happier, and rosier she appeared.”

The isolating and world-breaking pain, which Rose employed and which alone made her happy, was naturally quite alarming to her family and confessors. Rose hid her physical abuse because her mother got furious when confronted with Rose’s choice of social isolation. Rose also concealed her penitential practices from her confessors, who became alarmed at Rose’s independence and tried to moderate

---

59 Elaine Scarry calls this “analogical verification,” “at particular moments when there is within a society a crisis of belief....the sheer material factualness of the human body will be borrowed to lend that cultural construct the aura of ‘realness’ and ‘certainty’.” p. 14.

62 “La naturaleza la bró linda, la gracia de Dios la perfió, por averle pedido la Santa le diése un rostro, que no diése peñas de lo mucho que se mortificaba, sin aquellas hazañerias, fruncimientos...Diole Dios un rostro mucho que padecia el interior. Diole Dios un rostro alegreño, y de colores lleno; tanto, que mientras mas se mortificaba, padecía, y aymaba, mas linda, alegre, y rosada se mostrava.” From a published sermon: Fr. Juan de Ithurriaga, *Sermon en la publicacion de la Beatificacion de la Bienaventurada Rosa...* (Madrid: Domingo García Morrás), p. 9v.
her practices. The importance of issues of obedience in Rose's portrayal as a Creole saint will be explored further in the last section of this chapter.

A Woman's Place

Hagiographers repeatedly emphasize that Rose's true home was in the garden. Says Lorea: "She had at her house a spacious garden with lots of trees and there she made an 'oratory' [this was eventually to become, her hermit's cell] and that place was her peace and her solace. In that oratory she could be found at all hours—no need to look for her elsewhere." Gonzales Acuña says that she escaped from her family whenever she could get a few minutes to herself. Not only is the garden described as Rose's true home, but the garden metaphor is used by Gonzales Acuña to describe Rose's spiritual beauty: "her soul was the garden in which God delighted."

One of the names of the Virgin Mary is "Bower of God." She is a "pleasant grove planted for enjoyment, always green and refreshing." Even as the varieties of

---

61 They believed her obedience to their strictures was important; they could easily understand her not wanting to be worldly or domesticated, but what disturbed them was that she did not want to participate in a "religious" life (i.e. supervised and cloistered) either.
62 By describing the incisions and markings left on Rose's flesh by her penitential practices, the hagiographers privilege the discourse of bodies—whose "inscriptions" can now be read to us by hagiographers—over the discourse of words and language. The hagiographers use the stories of Rose's penitential practices, as the they did with similar stories in Bertran and Solano, to raise the issue of saintly obedience.
63 "Avia en su casa un jardín bien capaz con muchos árboles....hizo un altar, y puesta una Cruz de carton, la adornó con algunas estampas....allí era su assistencia, allí su descanso, allí su consuelo. En aquel oratorio la hallavan a todas horas: no avia que buscarla en otra parte." Lorea, p. 23
64 "A las veces con los ministerios domesticos le faltava la Criada, y por no perder la ocasion en que sus Padres estuviesen ocupados o divertidos se salía sola al jardín, poniasa en oracion, bien que la obscuridad, y ruido de los arboles, y viento la amedrentasen, hacia sus diligencias para quietar el animo turbado." Gonzales Acuña, p. 36.
65 "el alma era el jardín en que Dios deliciosamente se recrea..." Gonzales-Acuna, p. 39.
trees in Paradise were said to have been matched by the varieties of virtues in Mary, Rose, as Mary’s twin, shares her feminine association with the gentler side of nature. Like Mary, Rose is also a New Eve. Rose’s garden, as befits a paradise, bloomed miraculously all year long.⁶⁷

Rose desired to live apart from her family in a cell or hermitage like that St. Catherine or Rose of Viterbo supposedly had. She asked her mother for permission to do build a small cell in the back yard but her mother refused saying “what you want is not a cell but a sepulcher; I do not wish to see you buried alive...if you would do the will of God, submit yourself to mine and leave off these ‘novelties’ which are abhorrent and offend God.”⁶⁸

To lament her mother’s refusal to allow her to live in a hermitage in the backyard, Rose took a coral rosary she had made to the Dominican church to give to Our Lady of the Rosary.⁶⁹ Because the Virgin’s statue was placed up high, above the altar, Rose could not reach up to give the rosary to the Virgin. So, with the aid of a sexton and a ladder, Rose climbed up to the statue and placed the rosary around Mary’s neck. This gift was miraculously acknowledged when, three days later, Rose saw that Mary had placed Rose’s rosary into the hands of the Baby Jesus. Confident that this meant a favorable outcome, Rose told her confessor, who then approached

---

⁶⁷ Loresa, p. 47v.
⁶⁸ "...se lo negó diciendo, lo que quieres hacer no es celda, sino sepultura; no quiero veros sepultada en vida...si tratas de hacer la voluntad de Dios, resignaos á la mía, y dexaos de novelades, que en ellas os aborreces á vos misma, y ofendeis á Dios." Gonzales-Acuña, p. 223.
⁶⁹ "Coral preciosa" is yet another name of the Virgin. Navarro, Abecedaria, p 223. Both the color and the stone are said to be good for the heart.
her mother. Rose’s mother consented [to the plan for a hermitage] without objections, and gave Rose the permission she desired.\textsuperscript{72}

In a favorite spot in her family’s garden, Rose and her brother constructed a small adobe cell.\textsuperscript{71} Already unlike other women in her words and her body, she is also portrayed as different from other women in that she cannot be domesticated; she does not belong in a home—nor in an earthly marriage. In seventeenth-century Lima, a woman’s place was to be safely enclosed either in a home or in a convent. The domestic role of wife and mother, and the spiritual role of nun were the two acceptable options; neither a wife “in her place” at home nor a nun “in her place” at a convent, Rose lived instead on the margins of family life and at the edge of social approval, in a self-imposed exile in an urban back yard.\textsuperscript{72}

In the Spanish colonies, life was considered sufficiently dangerous to warrant sending most young ladies of Spanish families to the convents for “safe keeping” until they were either ready to be married or committed to the religious life. Serious

\textsuperscript{71} “hallabase con un rosario de corales, fue à la iglesia, habló al sacristan para que al cuello de la Imagen de Nuestra Señora lo pusiese el día de su purificación Santíssima, hícose instantes procurando alanar los inconvenientes, que no era peseño poner escalas, por la altura en que está colocada...Mostraba la Santa en las demostraciones la aflicción del corazón, y movido el sacristan la censo. pusole en el cuello [el] Rosario, y entro a Rosa en firme confianza de lograr su deseo...bolvio à su casa...y al tercero día entrando a la capilla de Nuestra Señora, vio que del cuello desta Señora avia pasado el Rosario à la mano de su precioso hijo...Conoció la Rosa, que avia tenido buen despacho...Refirió el suceso al Maestro Fray Juan de Lorenzana su confessor, este lo propuso a la Madre, quien sin contradiccion alguna,[le daria la licencia que deseeal]. Gonzales Acuña, pp. 225-227.

\textsuperscript{72} There exists today at Rose’s shrine in Lima a replica of the cell: roughly 3’x4’ inside and 5’ high, with one small window and a door so low that it could only be entered on hands and knees. The help of a favorite brother recalls the life of St. Teresa of Avila.

\textsuperscript{72} Nina Auerbach, although speaking specifically of the nineteenth century, describes a polarization of the feminine which occurs repeatedly throughout all of Western culture; “According to governing imaginative convention, women exist only as spiritual extremes: there is no human norm of womanhood, for she has no home on earth, but only among divine and demonic essences.” Nina Auerbach, \textit{Woman and the Demon: The Life of a Victorian Myth}, (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1982), p. 64. To refuse to join the “angels” in a religious order was to put oneself within reach of “demons” in the streets.
efforts were made to control the lives of religious women through strict supervision and cloistering. For a young woman to decide to live as a beata\textsuperscript{73} in a mud hut outside in a garden in the middle of Lima was scandalous. That the Lives of recognized saints were repeatedly cited by Rose and by her hagiographers to justify her beata's cell, and that Rose's fights with her parents and confessors are given in detail and, finally, that hagiographers describe how the Virgin of the Rosary helped Rose attain her hermitage, all indicate that her hagiographers were at pains to defuse the potential scandal of Rose's unorthodox lifestyle.

It is true, as I have mentioned in a previous chapter, that Spanish Catholicism had exhibited a "nostalgia" for the desert and the early Christian ascetics; nevertheless, retreat from the world was something that the seventeenth-century Spaniard (much like a twentieth century American) envisioned doing for a week or two, perhaps for Lent, or even for a short while for reflection and self-examination, but not in place of a life within society.\textsuperscript{74}

\textsuperscript{73} beatas, women living in pious retirement from the world either individually or in groups, existed in Peru in the 1540's and 1550's before convents were founded. They wore the habit of an order with which they were (often formally) connected. The Dominican beatas were the first to organize themselves; in 1548 a house in Lima was donated for their use. Once convents were constructed, however, first that of St. Clare and the that of the Incarnation, beatas all but disappeared. See James Lockhart, Spanish Peru, p. 184. While beatas had existed for centuries in Western Europe, their acceptability declined markedly during the Catholic Reformation.

\textsuperscript{74} Rose was investigated by the Inquisitors in Lima and withstood their scrutiny. Particular emphasis on this examination and the eventual positive evaluation given by Dr. Juan del Castillo, is given extensive treatment in the Lives by Lorea, 1671 and Ferrer de Valdecebro, 1669. Hansen (Lorea's source) and Ferrer de Valdecebro may well have been present for parts of this examination.
Rose's Religious Affiliations

While Rose did not join a convent, she spent several hours a day at area churches, attending masses and consulting her several confessors. She was, as well, very eclectic in her private devotions; her spiritual life was influenced by the traditions of at least three different religious orders. Her devotion to Mary reflects the Dominican influence. She was said to have practiced the stations of the Cross—a spiritual exercise especially promoted by the Jesuits—carrying a heavy wooden cross around the back yard. Her nature miracles, songs, and meditations in the garden are very Franciscan.

Rose's first habit was a Franciscan one. It is most likely, says the scholar José Flores Araoz, that she had made her own Franciscan-styled habit to wear in her hermitage. Despite Gonzales Acuña's citation of St. Teresa, linking Rose's nature

---

75 Rose is said to have had eleven confessors over the course of her lifetime (some concurrently): six Franciscans, and five Jesuits. These were, evidently, in addition to her several Dominican confessors including P. Loayza, her first biographer, and Maestro Fray Juan de Lorencana.

76 This is mentioned by all of her biographers as one of her early penitential practices. Lorea, p. 32. A framed piece of this rough-hewn cross is still displayed at Rose's shrine in Lima. For confirmation of this eclecticism in Rose's spiritual practices, see Ramón Mujica Pinilla, "El ancla de Santa Rosa de Lima: mística y política en torno a la Patrona de América," in José Flores Araoz, Ramón Mujica Pinilla, et. al., Santa Rosa de Lima y su tiempo, (Lima:Banco de Crédito, 1995), p. 64ff.

77 "Contemplaba en los arboles, que naciendo en la tierra procuraban desuistarse del nacimiento por caminar a su fin creciendo, levantándose descollándose por tomar al cielo. En la variedad, y ermosura de las flores, y suavidad de sus frutos contemplaba la saviduría del Creador." Gonzales Acuña, p. 41-42.

78 It was discovered at her death that she wore, beneath her habit of a Dominican tertiary, a Franciscan (or Clarissan) habit whose tan or brown wimple is visible in a number of portraits. This little known fact has been omitted in the Dominican Lives of St. Rose for obvious reasons. In modern statues and pictures of St. Rose, in fact, it is more frequent to find her dressed in a full (black-veiled) Dominican habit than in the white veil of a tertiary—strengthening her recognizable identity as a Dominican. See José Flores Araoz, "Iconografía de Santa Rosa de Lima," in José Flores Araoz, Ramón Mujica Pinilla, et. al., Santa Rosa de Lima y su tiempo. (Lima:Banco de Crédito, 1995), p. 231ff.

79 Ibid.
spirituality with the famous Carmelite, Rose performs a number of nature miracles of a type strongly associated with the Lives of Franciscan saints. In a story almost identical to that told in the life of Francis Solano, Rose commands the trees to praise God. It is because of Rose’s (feminine) participation in nature, and her status as a twin to both Mary and Eve, that she controls the natural world. Although the author uses the word “comman,” the tone is less imperative and more cooperative than in the stories of Francis Solano’s “commands” which nature must obey.

The nature miracles in Lorea are associated with Rose’s move into her hermitage. In this way the author makes her choice of abode a “natural” one. Lorea describes Rose’s miraculous command of the mosquitoes in terms of a special harmony with nature—a “gift” she received from God. “There were in the garden [and in her dark cell] many mosquitoes because of the water which came through it and because of the shade of the banana trees...and the mosquitoes gathered around the open door and window but remained outside the cell, leaving Rose inside to her prayers.” Rose explains to her amazed friends that she had, at first, found it difficult to pray under the assault of the mosquitoes and so she arranged a truce (una buena

---

82 Gonzales-Acuña quotes Teresa as he explains Rose’s attachment to the garden: “aprovechavame a mi (decía la S. Madre Teresa) ver campos, agua, flores, en estas cosas, hallava y o memoria del Criador, digo que me despertaban, y recogian y servian de libro. Entre todas hallo Rosa, que los cielos son los que mas claramente manifiestan la gloria, y onnipotencia de Dios.” misspelling in original Gonzales Acuña, p. 42.
81 See the example in the Life of Solano mentioned in chapter One, above.
82 “Como superior puso leyes, mando a los arboles y plantas del jardin, que alabasen a Dios...en voz alta decia alabad a vuestro criador,” ital.in original .Gonzales Acuña, p. 228.
81 “Assi favorecia Dios a su Esposa” Ibid.
paz) with the insects, agreeing to allow only three bites a day (in the name of the Holy Trinity) in return for not swatting at the mosquitoes.84

Saintly Disobedience

Rose is said to have been happy with her physical tortures but her encounters with her obstinate mother inevitably bring tears and sighs and deep sadness. Rose's mother is consistently presented as obstructing Rose's religious vocation and thereby causing her great pain. Yet Rose is not consistently remote from her family. Stories of family responsibility abound and portray Rose as exemplary in her concern for and industry to assist her parents and brothers. What hagiographers call Rose's obedience to family and confessors is a remarkably subversive "obedience." Despite the authors' assertions to the contrary, Rose can be seen obeying not the spirit but merely the letter of their orders.

One author, Ferrer de Valdecebro, admiringly describes the ways in which Rose circumvents the requirements placed on her by others and nonetheless calls these examples of her saintly obedience. For example, when Rose's confessors forbid her to use a chain as a flail on her back, she complied but used the chain instead to bind a hairshirt tightly around her body. When they take away the hairshirt, she procures another one. Says Ferrer de Valdecebro: "frequently her confessors consulted the state of her health and on account of the severity with which she

84 "Porque en el jardín se criavan muchos mosquitos: que con la mucha agua que corría por él, como por el fresco de los Platanos, y arboles, estaban bien apacientados. Lavantavanse millones dellos y cercándose de la zelda de la Santa, se juntaron a la puerta, y ventana, sin atreverse á entrar, mientras Rosa estaba dentro." This story occurs on p.77-82 of Lores, somewhat fractured by the inclusion of mosquito negotiations on behalf of various personages who wish to visit Rose out in the bug-infested garden.
attacked herself they would forbid some [practices] and temporarily suspend or moderate others. But this was useless because she only invented others that were different, better, in order that she would not miss those they had taken away. She combined obedience with persistence. She muffled the uproar but did not moderate her rigor."

It hardly needs to be pointed out that “obedience” combined with “persistence” is not a usual saintly combination, nor would Rose’s behavior ordinarily be considered obedience at all by most standards. In the single instance narrated about Solano and his sandals, saintly disobedience might seem exemplary, subverting the rule to point out a higher obedience. In Rose’s Life numerous repetitions of the paradox seem to insist that Rose knew better what she needed than the church or her family did. This, in fact, is the point of all these stories. They are not stories about obedience performed, they are stories about independence required to escape constraints imposed by those who do not know what God wants.

Rose as Icon of Creole Identity

It seems remarkable that a saintly figure constructed to emphasize her differences and transgressions of social norms should also be described as an icon of community identity. Rose’s saintly status is determined, at least in part, by her differences and by her marginalized life which place on the boundary “between” the

---

55 Muchas veces consultaban sus Confeson res sus penitencias con su salud, y como la hallava tan atransada en las fuerzas, le quitaban unas, y le suspendían otras; pero con cuerda estratagemas buscaba otras diferentes, y mayores, que no le hizan falta las que quitavan. Aviendole mandado que devasse la disciplina de las cadenas, dexó la disciplina, pero no las cadenas, porque las dobló, y en forma de silicio se las cino por el cuerpo. Consultó con su obediencia la perseverancia la perseverancia: mudó el estruendo, pero no el rigor.” Ferrer de Valdecebro, p. 79.
city and the ascetic's "desert," and at the edge of earthly and divine worlds. Once her difference and then her sanctity was established, however, a new chain of associations had to be forged to link her to the local community. That community of seventeenth-century Lima was an extremely diverse one. The initial colonial confrontation with radical cultural alterity, which had marked the sixteenth and early seventeenth century, had given way by the mid seventeenth-century to domestic problems of internal cultural division. The social divisions needed symbolic resolution in the figure of a saint, and these divisions are discernible in the Lives of Rose.

When the Lives of Rose are read as examples of colonial literature, reflecting the acknowledged cultural struggle for Creole identity, her family problems appear as convincing metaphors for colonial problems with Spain. Saintly disobedience in Rose's Life subtly sanctioned independence from regulations which were detrimental to the colony. Officials in Spain—just like Rose's benighted mother—could not know what was really in the best interests of colonists in Peru. Rose as the New Eve espoused by God, struggling with her mother, was a figure, albeit an oblique one, of Peru locked in a struggle with her mother country. Peru as much as Rose searched for divine reassurance. Both wanted confirmation that God had not overlooked them.

On Palm Sunday Rose went to Mass but, for some unknown reason, did not get a palm branch to hold.\textsuperscript{56} Seeing everyone else with palms, and having none, made

\textsuperscript{56} The choice of Palm Sunday ties this story to that of St. Clare, who chose this day to publicly renounce her family's plans for her and run away (with Francis) to lead a religious life.
Rose worry that she had been singled out in this way because God was angry with her. After the mass she went to the chapel of Our Lady of the Rosary and asked Mary tearfully if she had offended her or her son in some way. The Virgin smiled and reassured Rose that the loss of the palm was insignificant in comparison to the real treasures she would receive. Then Baby Jesus spoke to Rose: "Rose of my heart, I want you for my spouse." Rose returned home and asked her brother to make her a gold ring, inscribed with Jesus’ words. He did so and Rose wore this ring as a symbol of her espousal to Christ. Gold, the precious treasure which Peru sent to Spain, was made the symbol of Rose’s commitment to God which now, continuing the bridal metaphor, made her the property of her spouse and no longer the property of her parents. The story of Rose’s mystical marriage was preceded by an occasion in which Rose felt excluded and slighted just as the colonials invariably felt.

Gonzales Acuña includes a different version of this mystical marriage which makes the correlation between the mineral treasures, the “mother” country, and Rose’s obligations even more explicit. The family is forced to move for a few years

---

57 "...se hallaba un Domingo de Ramos en la yglesia del Rosario repartieronse con la abundancia y grandeza que a costumbra a quella casa...se vio la Rosa sin Palma, y con el desconsuelo desí por descuido de no pedirla, opor el misterio de no merecerla avia suscedido el caso...entro a la capilla de Nuestra Señora en la oracion propuso estas racones, y la que como Madre de misericordia tenia para desenfajar a su esposo si en castigo de sus culpas no avia querido le sirviesse con el culto exterior de llevar Palma en la mano, conoscio que su Señora con acciones vivas le mostraba en el rostro que estaba en gracia de su hijo, mostrelo esta las que debia a su Madre por la proteccion con quela mitaba sintio por interna iluminacion que le decia ROSA de mi corazon, quiero que seas mi esposa y que su SS. Madre le decia mira Rosa quam favorescida estas de mi hijo," (italics in original) Gonzales Acuña, p. 21c-211.

58 "...pareciale que le daba un anillo mostrandole la forma en que le avia de traer por prenda y arra de a quel despsoorrio, bolvio a su Casa,...pidio a uno de sus hermanos mandasse hacer un anillo del Oro mas puro que pudiesse hallar advirtiendo que en el hiciesse gravar algunas palabras de devoción, ...las palabras mismas que le dijo Christo. Rosa de mi corazon quiero que seas mi esposa..." (italics in original) Ibid., pp. 211-212.
to Quives for the sake of Rose’s father’s work at the quarries. One day Rose’s mother insisted that Rose accompany her to the mining office, suggesting that the girl might find this an interesting place. Rose, however, showed no interest at all in the examples of silver and gold which were displayed to her; when her mother asked her what she thought of the beautiful metals, Rose replied: “Mother, these treasures are lies, the treasure for which the world offers to kill us; the [treasures] of the spirit are the true ones and our wills must persevere in them, as we have them for as long as we desire them. Allow me to return to my garden.” Later, alone in her garden, Christ appeared to Rose as a handsome young stoneworker (cantero). He asked her to become his wife and work with him as a stoneworker. He assured her this labor would not last long. By “stonework” he seemed to mean “the exercise of virtues in difficult things.” In a vision she saw that the water which cut the stones were “tears,” and she understood God’s will to be that she give herself up to the work of contemplation. “He [Christ] then disappeared, leaving her sad and alone.”

59 “Salieron sus Padres de la Ciudad de Lima buscando alivio a su necesidad, fueronse a Canta lugar, que fue celebre en el Perú, por la riqueza que ha dado en sus minerales, llevaron a Rosa...” Gonzales Acuña, p. 43. “Llevola consigo la Madre un día a la oficina en que se labravan los metales de plata, retirase Rosa, y preguntandole sin no le movia la curiosidad; respondio que no, que de los minerales se sacaba muy escasamente el oro de la virtud. Mostraronle unos metales preguntandole lo que de ellos le parecia, y con el conocimiento, que tenia de que los bienes humanos esperados inquietan, congojan posseidos, y perdidos matan, los ojos en tierra respondio, Madre estos son bienes mentirosos, tienen muchos achaques, es la moneda que el mundo ofrece para perdernos; los de el espíritu son los verdaderos, y en la voluntad nuestra tienen assegurada la duracion, pues los tenemos siempre, que queremos tenerlos, dexeme ir a mi retiro...” (Ital. in original), Ibid., p.43-44.

50 Estaba en su jardín elevado el entendimiento en la oracion, arrebatado en extasi vio á Christo con hermosura grande de varon perfecto, parecióle que el traje era de Cantero...Pidiole Christo el consentimiento alegre: humilde se le dió la ROSA con palabra de perpetua fee. Aceiota Christo, y para que entendiese que es naturaleza del matrimonio la semejanza, mandóla entrase al oficio de Cantera, ofreciole piedras que labrase en su ausencia dando a entender seria breve. Desapareció, dexando á su querida triste y sola...” Gonzales Acuña, p. 255-257.; “el labrar piedras, era el exercicio de las virtudes en las cosas arduas; que el agua fuerte, que las enternecia, solo era de lágrimas;...que la voluntad de Dios era, que toda se diese á la contemplacion. Ibid., p. 259.
wished to devote more time to prayer, we are told, but her days were divided by the necessity of work to support her parents (sewing and gardening). Rose spent many hours away from her “celestial Cantero” and so he returned, and said: “Rosa, work stones for me, soften them with your tears; do not busy yourself so in caring for your parents, who are in my care.”91 Rose, who worked for years on behalf of her parents, enduring the reproaches and humiliation of her mother without complaint, was given permission by Christ to follow her own vocation and not to worry about her family. The colony of Peru, by the later seventeenth century began to keep resources for use at home instead of sending everything to Spain.

Two stories provide traditional narratives of the saint’s “charity” in which Rose offers her own physical mortifications in exchange for the sins of her fellow citizens.92 The first we have already encountered in the story of Francis Solano’s sermon. The second is the source for Rose’s iconographic attribute of the anchor and her title of Patron of Lima. In the years between 1610 and 1615, the Dutch fleet defeated Spanish naval defenses and gained access to the western coast of South America.93 Peru, angry with Spain for failing to prevent this threat, retained a significant portion of her treasure for herself in order to provide for her own defenses. This was a pivotal moment in Peruvian/Spanish relations. Gonzales Acuña

---

91 “que le decía el Cantero. *Rosa, labra piedras para mi, entremezclás con lagrimas, no te ocupes tanto en cuidar de tus Padres, que a mi cuido estan...*” Ital. in original. Ibid., p. 209.
92 The third choice of vocation for a woman who was neither wife nor nun was that of a “fallen” woman; Rose’s presence in the streets of Lima as well as the specific offering of her body on behalf of the city suggests that a case could be made for Rose’s incorporation of elements from all three of these types of female models.
93 See Burkholder and Johnson, pp. 146-151.
tells a very famous story about Rose in this way:” In August of 1615, the Dutch were sighted off the coast of Callao, the port city close to Lima. The Archbishop called for the exposition of the Holy Sacrament, and a general confession of sins as the city prayed for God’s aid. The clerics and religious of the city took up arms, prepared to defend the city and the churches from the heretics [Protestants]. The women of Lima were called to go to church and pray. Receiving notice of a false rumor that the Dutch had landed, the women became frightened. Rose, [who] cut off the long skirt of her habit, called to everyone in a loud voice to defend the consecrated host [against the Protestants] and offer themselves as martyrs if necessary. When her mother questioned why she cut off her skirts, Rose replied: “the better to climb up close to the tabernacle [where the host is kept] to defend it, and die if God gives me the opportunity. And I don’t want my clothes to get in the way.” Fortunately the pirates did not attack the city, but backed away. Their retreat was

“Por los años de 1612, asta el de 15 pasaron las Armadas Olandeses ala Mar del Sur, dieron vista a los 22 de Agosto al puerto que llaman del Callao distante dos leguas de tierra llena de la Ciudad de Lima: El Arzobispo como buen Pastor mandó se expusiesse en las Iglesias el Sacramiento, procuró, que por el dela penitencia se pidiese el auxilio a Dios, sabiendo que si ay pecados no bastan ejercitos, y que sin estos obra Dios ayudando a los suyos quando con las acciones selo merecemos. Pusose la Ciudad en arma y tomaronla los Ecclesiasticos y Seculares, que se defendía la fe con resistir al hereje, las mugeres acudieron a los templos, hallose con la Madre en el de el Rosario nuestra Bienaventurada Rosa, vino un rumor de que tomaban la tierra, levantaron los alaridos las mugeres y con la turbacion perdieron el animo; la Rosa sacando de un estuche las tijeras cortó las extremidades del habitio, la madre confusa le preguntó que que hacía, y con denuedo Santo le respondió, he de subir las gradas del Altar mayor para ponerme cerca de la Custodia y defenderla de los herejes si vienen, muriendo a sus manos pues Dios me ofrece la ocasion mas oportuna, y no quiero me estorve la ropa.” Gonzales Acuña, p. 265.; “Levantó la voz animando a todos para que llegando el caso de defender la hostia consagrada se ofreciesen víctimas dando las vidas por quien por redimmernos de nuestro común enemigo la dio. Mejoraron las noticias, y a la resistencia cedieron los Olandeses, retiraron las esquadras, y ya sosegado el pueblo, haciendo memoria del suceso la Santa dixo a Doña F.”. Ibid., p.266.

attributed to Rose's saintly intervention on behalf of the city.” Creole depictions of
Rose as patron of Lima frequently portray her holding an anchor, symbolizing her
defense of the city against attack from the sea. Rose thus provides an icon of Creole
self-sufficiency by having notably participated in the city's history. She helped when
the Spanish did not help and she thus aided her country in its progress toward
financial self-reliance.

Social Differences

One of the aspects of Rose's hagiography that reveals her construction as an
icon for Creole society (as opposed to Peruvian society) is the inclusion of anti-Indian
sentiment. Luis Millones has written on Rose as a focus for Creole identity and
observed that the town of Quives, where Rose was confirmed by Toribio, was well
known for the Kiwis Indian resistance to Christianity. On the day that Rose was
confirmed, a large confirmation of Indians had been scheduled to take place; the
Indians did not come to the church, however, and, therefore, Rose alone received the
sacrament. Millones suggests that except for Rose’s presence—in retrospect the
auspicious confirmation of a saint—the day was famous as a public fiasco from the
church's viewpoint. Rose's confirmation in Quives is presented as a coded rebuke of
the Indians who did not come. In addition, Millones reminds us, the Virgin of the
Rosary, to whom Rose was devoted, was the Virgin who, legend claims, appeared in
the sky at the battle of Cuzco to inspire the Spanish army to victory over the Incas.

---

66 Luis Millones. Una Partecita del cielo: la vida de Santa Rosa de Lima narrada por Dn Gonzalo
67 Ibid.
The statue in the Dominican church was reputed to have been brought to Peru by Pizarro himself. Millones emphasizes the power of this icon, “in the eyes of the Church, nothing could have been more expressive of the triumph of the Spanish conquest than this particular image of the Virgin.”

The emphasis in Rose’s seventeenth-century hagiography to her devotion to this Virgin boldly asserts her identification with the Spanish population “in the antagonism between the Catholic faith and idolatry, between civilization and barbarity, between good and evil.”

In the hagiographical texts themselves, there are several references to the Indian woman who works for the family and, particularly, as Rose’s personal maid. As a young girl, Rose is given the Indian woman Mariana to look after her and work around the house. Mariana, is portrayed as a devoted confidant who helped Rose hide her mortifications and conceal her instruments of self-discipline from the eyes of her mother. Nevertheless, as the following story reveals, the Indian woman is neither thought of as one of the “other” Spanish women whom we have seen already portrayed as frivolous and vain; nor is she really an “insider.” On some occasions, says Gonzales Acuña, Rose asked Mariana to administer her torture. “On her knees, the Virgin [Rose] begged Marianna to abuse her, mistreat her, and treat her in whatever devaluing ways she could think of to revile her.” Sometimes Mariana refused to take part in this but on other occasions, Rose “begged her, compelled her,

---

55 “Desde el punto de vista de la Iglesia, nada resultaba más expresivo que el triunfo de las armas castellanas a través de la propia virgen del Rosario.” Ibid., p. 37-38.

56 This remarkable scene evokes the work of Lacan and the “mirror” stage of awareness in which the “other” reflects the guilt of the self. Paul Coates has noted that this kind of literary figure, “the Double,” is frequently used to display colonial guilt: When one considers oneself in the mirror (of the other now doubled as a self) one cannot help but see the immorality and bad conscience that comes from having exploited the other instead of identifying with him. Paul Coates, p. 34.
and wore her down with reasoning” and then, says Gonzales Acuña, Mariana “with her natural severity, would mistreat [Rose] cruelly.” The “natural” cruelty of the Indian is contrasted with the penitential suffering of Rose although the effect of this story does not leave the reader convinced that, of the two women, it is the Indian Marianna who is the more severe.

One of the significant features of Creole hagiography is that the lives of these saints address the particular cultural assumptions about these groups. The virtues of Rose, for example had to distinguish her from the vices and shortcomings perceived as typical of her sex. Because women were considered vain and frivolous, weak in body and will, Rose had to be portrayed as single of purpose, heroic in her physical mortifications, and devoted exclusively and tirelessly to the pursuit of spiritual goals. It is important to notice that the virtues which are not essential to making these points are seldom mention; there is remarkably little, in Rose’s story, about traditional forms of charity or service to others. Her charity is limited to the stories above in which her prayers and physical mortifications are offered up on behalf of others. For all that bodies are important in these texts, tending to the bodily needs of others is conspicuously absent. This dimension of charity—healing the wounded, feeding the poor, tending the sick, caring for orphans—one which is traditionally

117 “Hemos dicho que se fiaba de una criada llamada Mariana en los ejercicios de su mortificacion, era de condicion reja, pediale derrodillias la santa Virgen, la maltratase, la menospreciasse ejecucando los medios que fuzgasse mas proporcionados a envilecerla, a las veces lo executaba la India, alas veces no, que le lastimaba su delicada y tieno hermosura. La humilde Rosa la exortaba, la compelia y reducia con tan edificaes razones que usando de su natural rigor con crudeldad la maltrataba.” Gonzales Acuña, p. 51-52.
assigned to women and one which reflects their domestic roles and skills, was not considered appropriate for Rose.

By contrast, the mulatto Martin de Porres, whom we come to in the next chapter, is portrayed as a champion of this kind of charity and social service. Blacks, both free blacks and mulattos, were commonly thought to lack civic virtues and responsibility. Creole saints had to be distinguished from their "natural" association with any group considered inferior to Spanish men. The character and devotions portrayed in the Life of the Indian Nicolas de Ayllon thus offer proof that this Servant of God is blessedly free of the sexual immorality and idolatry which Spaniards believed characterized Indians. In this sense, the Creole saints must be firmly chained to cultural constructions of gender and race in order that their Lives can be used to refute these ideas.

Once the ties to their respective social groups are severed in this way, however, it may not always prove possible to reconnect them with new links. For example, the hagiographers' strategy of dissociating Rose from women in general, and reassociating Rose with the city of Lima itself (as I have laid it out above) worked for St. Rose but it did not work so well for the next two subjects whose hagiographies

---

1 For creole attitudes towards blacks and mulattos in this period, see McAleister, p. 397.
2 For creole attitudes towards Indians and mestizos, see McAleister, p. 175.
demonstrate the dangers inherent in the strategy. As Creole identity coalesced, society became less open, more stratified, and racial concerns revived.
CHAPTER FOUR

MARTIN DE PORRAS (1579-1639)

In 1617, the year of Rose's death, another saint at the Dominican convent of the Rosary was approaching the height of his public career. Martin de Porras, who had become a Dominican tertiary one year before Rose adopted the habit, was running the convent hospital and earning the reputation of being a saint with miraculous powers.¹

Martin was a mulatto, the son of a prominent Spaniard and a free black woman from Panama.² The only seventeenth-century hagiographer of Martin, Bernardo de Medina, makes it clear that in the eyes of the Church, at least theologically speaking, race was no indication of spiritual standing.³ Medina says, Martin "was pardo, as they say, not white in color as everyone admires. But God, who does not consider accidents of color, but only the merits of the subject, makes

¹ The last name is frequently spelled Porres; his father was a Spaniard of some means and his mother was a free Black woman, born in Panama.
² Mulato and pardo were Creole terms reserved for the offspring of African and Spanish parents. Martin was said to have been a dark mulatto or mulato prieto. See José Antonio del Busto Duthurburu, San Martín de Porras (Martin de Porras Velásquez). (Lima: Pontificia Univ. Católica del Perú, 1992), note 8, p. 250-251.
³ Martin has only one known seventeenth-century hagiographer, Father Bernardo de Medina, like Martin, a Dominican and a Creole. Medina's Vida de Fray Martín de Porras was published in Lima in 1663 and reprinted in 1675 in Spain. This latter edition was reproduced, in an edited form, in the third volume of Meléndez's Tesoros Verdaderos de las Yndias, in 1681. In addition to this published Life, there are testimonies given in Lima on behalf of Martin's cause in 1660, 1664, and 1671. In 1660, two years before Martin's canonization, Fray Juan de la Cruz Prieto, O.P. published a transcription of all the processos available in the cathedral archives in Lima.
no exception of persons, but cares equally for everyone."\(^4\) The author goes on to say "we Dominicans say that in the color, white and black, of Martin’s parents, God foreshadowed the habit of St. Dominic."\(^5\)

**Martin’s Charity**

The vice that Creoles most frequently associated with Africans was their indifference to civic duties. Seen as lazy and shiftless, possibly even subversive, Africans who were not slaves were considered of little value in Creole society. Because of this, the hagiographer Medina is careful to place charity above all other virtues in the Life of Martin, challenging the prejudice of the community. Thus, Martin de Porres became most famous for his charity.

In Martin’s thirty-eight years as a religious, says Medina, his brothers never saw him eat meat, only very dilute broth and unseasoned greens to go with his bread and water. The better food that was his allotted portion, he gave away to the poor or to the sick in the infirmary. Martin was also said to be able to "multiply" this food miraculously: "God, in his infinite mercy, augmented the food which appeared to visibly grow in the generous hands of the venerable brother."\(^6\) Martin’s charity was so famous and his open-handed spirit so impressive that he inspired many to

---

\(^4\) "Fue pardo, como dizien vulgarmente, no blanco en el color, quando lo era de la admiracion de todos. Pero aquel Señor, que no mira accidentes del color, sino meritos de el sugeto, en quien no cabe excepcion de personas, pues cuida igualmente de todos..." Medina, Vida, p.4. He quotes Galatians 3:28: "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."

\(^5\) "sino es que digamos, que en el color blanco, y negro de los padres, quiso Dios pronosticar el habito de Santo Domingo." Medina, Vida, p.5.

\(^6\) "Dios lo aumente por su infinita misericordia. Y assi parece que sucedia y que visiblemente crecia en las liberales manos del Venerable Hermano." Melendez. III, 3, p. 221; Medina, p. 27v.
contribute generously to his charitable projects. People gave him an abundance of alms, none of which he reserved for himself. Instead he distributed alms to all according to need.7

Medina details how Martin divided up church offerings every day of the week. Martin distributed money to a variety of people—men, women, and children—giving to some eight, to some ten, and to others twenty reales in order to partially remedy their poverty. And the number of poor grew to as many as 170 while the money surpassed four hundred pesos, collected together by Martin on Tuesday and Wednesday—an admirable amount. Thursday’s alms went to poor clergy, forced by necessity to beg from door to door—an abomination denounced by the Council of Trent. The donations received on Sundays, which were smaller, he applied to buy clothes for the needy Spanish and Negro women. The donations from Monday and Saturday went to pay for masses for the souls in purgatory. These details make it clear that Martin’s charitable offerings extended to everyone: to the living and the

---

7 “Como era tan notoria la virtud del siervo de Dios, y tan experimentada su caridad, muchas personas de caudal se lo davan á manos llenas, pero el no reservando cosa par si, y posseuyendo a un tiempo las haciendas de todos, como dezia San Pablo, hazia libera les limosnas á infinitas personas, socorriendo á cada qual, conforme a la necesidad, que padecía.” Melendez. III. p. 237.
dead, to the ecclesiastic and the secular, to men and women, to Spaniards and Negroes. Without excepting anyone, Martin was a universal padre to everyone."

This theme of Martin's charity being available to everyone is everywhere in the Life. The charity of this servant of God was so singular that he carried out extraordinary project. Sometimes he went to the country and planted fig trees on the skirts of the hillsides, with such skill that they miraculously produced in a very short time. Asked once why he took on this work, Martin replied that these trees would bear fruit from which the poor who had no food could eat as they passed by, relieving them of the necessity of entering other people's gardens and stealing fruit. These trees would let them have figs without committing the sin of stealing."

Martin's charity was not only freely extended to all kinds of people, but it reached out to include "brute animals" as well. Medina says that this aspect of

---

5 "A este emhiava todas las semanas el Venerable Hermano, á diferentes casas, de hombres, y mugeres, viudas, y doncellas, á unas á ocho, á otras á die, y á otras á veinte reales, para remediar en parte su pobreza. Y era tan crecido el numero delos pobres, que llegavan a ciento, y sesenta, y el dinero, que expendia, tan quantioso, que passava de quatrocientos pesos, los quales juntava el siervo de Dios, los Martes, y Miércoles, que es cosa para admirar. Fuera desto la limosna, que jueves, y viernes adquiria, la dava á Clerigos pobres, porque la estrema necesidad no les obligasse á pedir de puerta en puerta; cosa que es indecente, en tan sagrados ministros, y que la abomina mucho el Concilio Tridentino. Demas desto la limosna delos Domingos, que no era mucha, aplicava el Varon de Dios, para comprar camisas, y fresas para Españolas, y negras necessitadas, y pobres. Y ultimamente el dinero, que le davan el Sabado, y el Lunes destinava, para mandar dezir Missas, por las animas del purgatorio: con que a todos hazia su caridad limosna, a vivios, y difuntos, a Eclesiasticos, y Seculares. a hombres, y mugeres, a Españolas, y Negras, sin aceptacion de personas, siendo padre universal de todos." Melendez. III, 6, 237.

6 "Como era la caridad del siervo de Dios tan singular, le hazia executar cosas estrañas: ibase algunas vezes al campo, y en las faldas de los cerros, se ponía á plantar higueras, con tan buena mano, que en brevissimo tiempo predian maravillosamente; y preguntándole en cierta ocasión, el mozo, que le assistia, y otros sus devotos, que para que tomava aquel trabajo al parecer escusado le respondio: De aquí á dos ó tres años daran fruto estas higueras, y los pobres faltos de sustento, que passaren por aqui, comeran de sus higos, remediendo en parte su necesidad, sinque sea necesario entrarse en las huertas á coger la fruta de ellas, contra la voluntad de sus dueños, y no teniendo de ellas higueras, podran comer de ellas sin cometer el pecado de tocar en las agas." Ibid., p. 238.

7 This point is well presented in the recent book by Alex Garcia-Rivera, St. Martin de Porres: The "Little Stories" and the Semiotics of Culture. (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis, 1995). This author argues for the utility of Martin's stories for a practical and inclusive Hispanic theology.
Martin’s virtue is all the more remarkable because “certainly charity does not oblige us to love irrational beings.” The stories of Martin’s charity to animals are only thinly veiled prescriptions for charity to lower-caste humans: because Africans and Indians were considered to be like animals, people “without reason,” the significance of extending charity to “lower” animals would not have been lost on Spaniards.

The stories of Medina emphasize Martin’s compassion for work animals and loyal dogs whose owners failed to appreciate them. In many stories Martin himself draws the connections between animals and humans. For example, Medina says that when Martin went to the hacienda at Limatambo, Martin would take it upon himself to feed the livestock, saying that the slaves were tired from their day’s work, while he was so well fed and rested that he should be the one to do the chores (italics mine.) The animals, said Martin, had served better than he so that they should get their well-deserved supper. As for himself, Martin proclaimed, he had done so little in God’s service that day that he should perform the task “so as not to end the day without doing something.” Martin’s words, which are offered as indication of his profound humility, clearly served to remind his audience that the Negro slaves who served them deserved better treatment. Justice is as important as charity to Martin. When Martin found a mule who had been abandoned to die because of a broken leg, he lamented that “such was the way the world repaid” one who could no longer work.

---

11 “Es cierto que la caridad no nos obliga a amar iracionales.” Medina, p. 56.
12 Medina, p.38.
The injustice was too much to bear for Martin and he miraculously healed the beast by saying "Creature of God, be well."

Charity in Conflict with Obedience

Martin was not satisfied with merely treating the sick at home in the convent infirmary, nor with extending himself to the immediate neighborhood which bordered the convent. After the patients in the infirmary had been healed, Martin would go looking for patients in the city, bringing back to his cell Spaniards, Indians, and Negroes afflicted with various illnesses. So many new patients did Martin bring in that the prelates became afraid of starting an epidemic or contagion within the convent. They finally ordered the house cleared. Despite Martin's protests and tears, "he sacrificed his pity for the sake of obedience."

However, Martin's obedience was challenged one day when an Indian was dangerously wounded near the gate of the convent. Brother Martin had been present when this disgraceful [assault] was committed and he could not leave the Indian without treatment. "Although he had the order of his Superior to not bring patients into the convent, the danger in this case was so obvious, and the situation so urgent, that he had to disregard everything else. He could not comply with obedience when charity compelled him otherwise. He took the poor wounded man to his cell and set

---

13 Ibid., p. 60v.; also Melendez, p. 249.
14 "No se satisfacía la ardiente agradecimiento del siervo de Dios, con los enfermos domesticos, ni se estrechaba en los limitados linderos del Convento, cuando tanto asanaba en la enfermería, sirviendo a un tiempo de barbero, enfermero, y Cirujano: sino que buscando su fervor dolientes por el pueblo, acogía en su celda Españoles, Yndios, y Negros, alligidos de varias enfermedades; ...tanto, que temiendo los Prelados, alguna infección, y contagio en el Convento, por ser el numero de los enfermos crecido: le madaron desocupase la casa;" Melendez, III, 7, pp. 242-243.
to work with the treatments, bandaging and medicines. This event was brought to the attention of the Provincial, Sr. D. Fr. Agustin de Vega, who, in order to test the humility and, thereby, the spirit of Brother Martin, spoke angrily to him with words that would mortify him, and went on to give him a discipline to humiliate him further. Martin showed himself to be so religious, and yielding, that raising himself from the floor on which he had been prostrated, he went away so filled with peace that the Provincial was left in admiration.\textsuperscript{16} Martin immediately complied with the convent rules and sent the patient to convalesce at his sister’s house. Thereafter, he sent supplies and necessities for the patient’s care every day.

In a short time the Indian, now healed, returned to the convent to thank Martin for his rescue. Martin, “thinking that the anger of the Provincial still persisted concerning this affair, went to the kitchen and roasted some [potatoes] which he took to the Provincial, saying: ‘Get over your anger, Venerable Father, and eat this that you might know, as I do, the correction I have received.’ ‘I am not angry with the person, only with the transgression,’ replied the Provincial. ‘Ask God to forgive your offense, Brother.’ ‘I, Father, have not sinned,’ replied Martin. Now genuinely angry, the Provincial replied: ‘How’s that? When I ordered you not to bring patients into the convent, you went against my orders!’ ‘That’s true,’ said

\textsuperscript{16} “Hallóse Fray Martin presente a la desgracia, y no quiso dexarla sin remedio, aunque tenía orden del Superior, para no acoger enfermos en el Convento, mas como era tan manifiesto el peligro, y tan urgente la necesidad, huvo de atropellar por todo, pareciéndole no le executava la obediencia, quando la caridad le impelia. Acogió en su celda al pobre herido, assistiéole puntualmente con la cura, regalo, y medicinas. Llegó el caso a noticia del ilustrísimo Señor D. Fray Agustín de Vega, que era a la razón Provincial, y para examinar la humildad, y rastrear por ella, e’ espíritu de Fray Martin; dixóle enojado, palabras, que pudiesen mortificarlo, y pasando de estas a la obra, dióle una disciplina por humillarlo mas. Mostróse tan Religioso, y rendido el sirvo de Dios, que levantándose del suelo, en que estaba postrado, se fue tan lleno de paz, como quedó el Provincial de admiración.” Ibid.
Martin, 'but against Charity there can be no orders.' The Provincial was amazed, and momentarily taken aback, judging this response so timely and so correct that only in the School of God was it possible to learn it."

Medina tells an unusual story in which Martin's charity and his obedience are at odds. In contrast to the previous story, however, this is a case in which Martin apparently avoided being charitable and was compelled by obedience to be so. The Archbishop elect of New Spain was in Lima and was diagnosed with a terminal illness. He was a relative of someone who knew of Martin's miraculous curative powers. The relative sent for Martin and the Dominican brothers sought to find him all over the monastery. Martin could not be found. Then, "inspired by God," the suggestion is made to the Provincial to command Martin to appear. Instantly, and to the amazement of everyone present, Martin walked through the doors of the sacristy.

Medina recounts the story above as an example of Martin's rare obedience. He does not speculate as to why Martin had been so difficult to find only moments

---

17 "Y pareciéndole al siervo de Dios, que todavía durava en el Prelado el enojo...fuese a la cocina, y asando unas sabrosas raíces de tierra, que produce nuestro clima, se las llevó al Provincial, diciendo Desenojese V. P. y coma esto, que ya se, le sabe también, como a mi la corrección, que he recibido. Yo no me enojo con la persona, sino con la culpa, respondió el Provincial, pidale el Hermano perdón a Dios, a quien ha ofendido. Yo Padre no he pecado; dixo Fray Martin. Como no? replicó enojado el Superior, cuando le mande, no truxese enfermos al Convento, y contravino a mi orden? Assi es Padre, respondió Fray Martin, mas contra caridad no ay precepto. Admirado el Provincial, quedose un rato suspeso, juzgando, que respuesta tan á tiempo, y á propósito solo en la Escuela de Dios podia aprenderse." Ibid., p. 244.

18 "inspirado de Dios el señor D. Fr. Cipriano, le dixo al Provincial: Padre nuestro, mande v. Paternidad por obediencia desde aqui al Hermano Fr. Martin, que parezca al instante, y verá con la facilidad que le obedece. Fue prodigioso portento, y caso raro, que llenó de admiración á los presentes. Acabando de intimar el Provincial el precepto, entró por las puertas de la Sacristía Fr. Martin para executar sin duda lo que en virtud de obediencia le mandava." Ibid., 33v.
before. Had he been hiding? Martin was shown to the house where the Archbishop was staying and, right away, the dying man summoned him to the bedside. He asked Martin to give him his hand. Martin asks, "Why do you want, Señor, the hand of a poor, useless mulatto?" The Archbishop, sensing Martin's resistance, asked him to fulfill his request out of obedience. He tells Martin, "Do you not know that it is more pleasing to God that obedience be rendered than a sacrifice made voluntarily?" "That is true," replied Martin. So the sick man asks Martin to lay hands upon him, which Martin reluctantly does. The Archbishop is healed of his pain and illness—and becomes one of Martin's greatest supporters and benefactors.

The story above suggests that Martin did not want to perform this act of charity for the Archbishop. First, he did not let himself be found when he was being sought for this charitable mission. Second, he replied ungraciously to a request for help. In both cases, his resistance was overcome by the command to obedience but, despite the author's aside about how God is pleased by obedience, this anecdote does not seem to illustrate a saintly or charitable attitude in Martin. The story, however, makes more sense when it is considered in the light of these next stories which follow more familiar tropes.

The following example is very similar to the stories of obedience we encountered in the Lives of Francis Solano and of Rose. During the annual winter outbreak of Quartan fever, the brothers saw Martin looking poorly and, as they all

---

22 "'Para que quiere, señor,' dixo el Siervo de Dios [Martin], 'un Príncipe la mano de un pobre mulato inutil?' Ibid.
21 "'No sabéis que es más del gusto de Dios la obediencia rendida, que el sacrificio voluntario?' 'Así es, señor,' respondió humilde el Siervo del Señor." Ibid.
venerated him “like a father,” they reported his condition to the prior. Two brothers suggested that the prior moderate Martin’s usual mortifications and send him to bed “like a sick man with sheets and a pillow.” Under a command of obedience the Prior instructed Martin to “pamper” himself by using a real bed instead of his usual penitential palette. Martin complied and put the bedclothes on the bed. He was later discovered, however, lying down in his dress (the usual habit with hairshirt and chains beneath) and sandals. The brothers howled that this was flagrant disobedience. The prior, however, responded to them saying, “Leave him alone. Brother Martin is a mystical theologian, and he knows well what he is doing, uniting mortification with the precept and obedience with austerity.”

This story, like others in this study, asserts that the saint’s body belongs to God and that only the saint can know what is best for himself. The subversive virtue of obedience is a way of asserting the primacy of spiritual claims on the saint’s body. Reexamining the earlier story of the archbishop, then, it is possible to see that it too asserts the primacy of a saint’s understanding. Miracles which come through Martin are God’s miracles which he administers and cannot be commanded by “worldly” authority—or even by ecclesiastical dignitaries.

The Mortified Body

Like Rose, Martin is said to have mortified his body in extreme ways. Interestingly, however, the motivation behind these prodigious mortifications seems

---

22 “...lo dexassen, que Fr. Martin era Teólogo mistico, y sabia muy bien lo que se hazia, compadeciendo la mortificacion con el precepto, y la obediencia con la austeridad.” Ibid, p.29v-30.
to differ from that attributed to the saints considered above. While Bertran’s physical mortifications were directed to the subjugation of sinful desires, and Rose’s painful tortures effected a change of “world” and consciousness, Martin’s physical disciplines evidence a self-hatred that is unusually explicit. The hagiographer Medina says, “He was so eager to suffer for God that he treated his body as a rebellious slave and a mortal enemy; and, like an inhuman executioner of his own self, he had various instruments of martyrdom.”

The asperity of Martin’s clothing was said to have corresponded to the rigor of his disciplines. We are told that he wore a habit of harsh, rough cloth and a hairshirt underneath, which reached to his knees, as well as a chain of iron around his body cinched “so tight against his flesh that it penetrated to his bones.” Martin’s disciplines, however, had an unusual social dimension which we do not find in the lives of other saints. According to Medina, Martin occasionally visited his friend Juan Macias at the Magdalene across town. The two men “helped each other like brothers on the path of virtue” as they mortified themselves together. Martin purportedly had other religious friends in Lima and together they would occasionally

---

23 “Tan deseoso andava de padecer por Dios, y tratar como à esclavo rebelde, y enemigo mortal al cuerpo, que como verdugo inhumano desí mismo tenia varios instrumentos de martirios...” Ibid., p. 24.
24 “...al rigor de las disciplinas del Venerable Hermano correspondia la aspereza de el vestido...” Ibid., p. 23.
25 “...una aspero silicio, que llegandole hasta las rodillas, le atormentava continuamente. Tenia demas de esto [el silicio] ceñida al cuerpo una cadena de hierro tan aveyzindada à las carnes, que le penetra hasta los huesos” Ibid., p. 23v.
26 “Solia otras vezes irse al Convento de la Madalena, donde en compan ia del gran Siervo de Dios Fr. Juan Macias, y endose a la huerta, hazia sus ordinarios exercicios, ayudandose como hermanos en el camino de la virtud, siendo para esse fin su conversacion del Cielo, en medio de la qual tocavan con las manos, y advertian la vileza del mundo con sus vanidades, y deleites, como de San Agustin, y Santa Monica su madre se retiere.” Ibid.
pass an afternoon flagellating themselves. In the official testimonies for Martin’s cause, there are accounts of Martin’s visiting at least two lay-brothers in other convents with whom he shared a warm friendship and these communal penitential mortifications. 27 This social dimension to self-discipline is unusual—neither public, like the performances of Solano and Rose; nor private and hidden, like the disciplines of Bertran and Toribio.

Martin, however, could be as skilled at public display as Francis Solano and Rose. Medina tells us that Martin mortified not only his flesh but his senses. In particular, says the hagiographer, Martin mortified the sense of smell, going among the disgusting and ulcerous patients, sweeping continuously the immense spaces of the convent, “not only to humiliate himself with the most vile but to mortify himself with the most filthy.” 28 A patient with a fatal edema of some kind came in to the infirmary to have the fluid drained. The liquid was so vile and stinking that no one was able to remain nearby without holding his nose. Martin entered the patient’s room, loudly accusing himself of having insufficient charity, calling himself more disgusting than the putrid smell, and verbally abusing himself. He raised the bowl of infected fluid to his chest, then drank it, apparently savoring it as if it was the most

27 del Bustro Duthurburu notes at least three known contemporaries of Martin with whom he shared his penitential practices and meditations: Juan Masias, a fellow Dominican lay brother; a Franciscan, Juan Gómez, and one other, unnamed. See del Bustro Duthurburu, p. 237.
28 “El olfato también mortificaba, andando siempre entre ascos, y llagas de dolientes, barriendo de continuo los lugares inmundos del Convento, no solo para humillarse en lo mas vil, sino para mortificarse en lo mas asqueroso.” Medina, p. 25.
celestial nectar or the sweetest ambrosia.\footnote{29} Martin’s performances of virtue—aimed at an audience—are characterized by his own abusive words directed against himself.

The Glorified Body

Medina’s Life of Martin recounts many astounding stories in which Martin surpasses all physical limitations and participates in a supernatural world. The miracle of levitation was frequently reported by Martin’s fellow religious. One brother went to Martin’s cell and was surprised to find him floating above the door. Another time Martin was in his cell praying, levitating miraculously in front of an image of a saint. Occasionally when a brother came looking for Martin to do some chore or errand, God made Martin invisible to mortal eyes “so that the exercise of Martha did not interrupt that of Mary.”\footnote{32}

All the saints in this study, without exception, had at least one brief incident, if only a notation, that someone reported having seen them levitate during prayer. The difference in Martin’s Life is not only the greater number of such stories, but also their existence in a narrative that emphasizes the saint’s prowess in transcending bodily limitations. In addition, Medina is careful to attribute to Martin’s body—a culturally despised body—the characteristics traditionally assigned by theologians to the glorified or risen body that the saved are believed to attain at the end of time. Martin’s body has subtlety (the ability to pass through solid walls), luminosity

\footnote{29} “...acusándose de poco caritativo, y de mas asqueroso que la misma corrupción, injuriándose con palabras, se echó a pechos el vaso de agua corrompida, saboreándose tanto al beberla como si fuese el nectar mas celestial, y ambrosia mas suave.” Ibid., p. 25v.

\footnote{32} Ibid., p. 85-85v.
(Martin, like most saints, is said to glow), agility (the ability to go from one place to another instantly, no matter the distance), and lightness (the ability to fly or levitate.)

Language

Martin, who called himself "a mulatto dog," and consistently heaped insult upon his own head, nonetheless spoke quite boldly to superiors when he felt called to do so. Often, in fact, his words instructed these superiors.

He was also said to have the gift of tongues, to be able to talk to Africans in their native patois, even to be able to speak Chinese. This latter is offered as proof that Martin could bi-locate and be in China at the same time he appeared to be in Lima (for he he had never been to China physically but had learned the language). What is significant to my study is that in the Life of this Creole saint, language has become the symbol of inclusiveness. Martin's language reflected his ability to move between all types of people (and even to include animals). This is in sharp contrast to the Lives of the European saints presented at the beginning of this study, Lives in which language marked the *divisions* between people.

Martin's inclusive language, like his charity, enables him to reach out to all, even to animals. When the rats eat some stockings in the infirmary closet, Martin prevents another person from killing the animals. When the rats then begin to eat other clothes for the infirmary, Martin catches one and, before freeing him, says: "Go Brother, and tell your friends that they will not be bothered or killed if they all retire into the garden. I will bring them food every day." The rat, apparently, conveyed this message, because all the rats who had been in the closets took off for the garden.
and vacated the building. This story shows Martin’s concern for the “least” in the kingdom (rats), those which are shunned by others. He tries to provide sustenance for them so they will not have to live sinful lives (by stealing), and he does so by using two skills which demonstrate the saintly incorporation of all alterities: charity and language.

**Martin’s Community**

It is important to bear in mind that Martin de Porras was initially recognized as a saint by his fellow Dominicans at the Convent of the Rosary and it was largely his reputation within the convent that prompted the initiation of his cause for canonization. He was probably well known in the neighborhood bordering the convent and a familiar sight to the poor who inhabited the streets along the Rimac, just north of the convent. Nevertheless, modern readers must remember that however much he might have been revered by the African slaves and Indians who received much of his charity, these marginalized people did not have a recognized voice with which to acclaim him as a saint. Martin was never promoted as a saint for the Negro or mestizo population of Lima. His Dominican biographer Medina writes his Life for fellow Dominicans. Melendez, republishing the work of Medina

---

31 “Vaya hermano, y diga a’ sus compañeros, que no sean molestos, ni nocivos, que se retiren todas a’ la huerto, que yo les llave’ alla’ el sustento cada día. Fue caso raro, y que lleno’ de admiracion al Convento, que todos los ratones, que estavan en la roperia, amaneicieron en la huerta, dexando libre la oficina.” Ibid., p.58.

32 Although Martin was not an unknown in the city of Lima, he did not enjoy much real fame either.... He was of course best known and loved in his own convent, not only in the infirmary but as a confidante of the very old and the very young. del Busto Duthurburu, p. 15.

33 Few mestizos and no Africans were allowed to give testimony on behalf of saints’ causes because Spanish law did not consider them reliable witnesses in courts of law.
in his own *Tesoros Verdaderos de las Yndias*, presents the Life of Martin to Creoles. Martin’s relationship to the African community in which he was raised is ambiguous. This ambiguity is brought out in an account of Martin’s relationship to his natural sister who lived in Lima. This story, which dissociates Martin from his native social group, is one of the few stories which exists in the 1675 Spanish version of Medina’s Life but was omitted from the text reprinted by Melendez. This sister—the same who took Martin’s wounded patient into her home in the story above—came one day to the convent gate and asked for him. Martin was summoned by the porter and he came out to the gate to speak with her. His sister asks Martin why he could not take a few minutes away from the brothers to give to his own relatives. Martin replied, “If I were as I should be, I would lower my eyes to the place where these religious put their feet and, even then, I would not repay the obligation that I owe. They give me their house, they sustain me at their table, they honor me with their company.” Martin’s self denigration here is characteristic of his public displays and suggests that this speech is intended for a larger audience. He ends by saying, “Leave me in my house and go back to your own. God did not call me to the infirmary for you to summon me to the gate all the time.” This story, says Medina,

---

34 Interestingly, the story of the wounded patient and the sister’s assistance occurs in all of the versions.

35 “Viva, a su entender, que puede con razón, del Servo de Dios, una hermana suya, porque no la visitava. Llegóse a las puertas del Convento a darle a Fr. Martin la queixa, rogavale que la viesse y pediale él, que lo olvidasse.Hermmana si yo fuero el que debo, pusiera los ojos donde ponen los Religiosos los pies, y no cumpliera bastante con la obligacion que me executa. Danme su casa, sientanme a su mesa, honorame con su compañía...Medina, p.36.

36 “Porque soy tal, que si no me viessse querido, sufrido, y estimado, fuera un Demonio. Dexeme en mi casa, y vayase a la suya, que a mi no me llama Dios a la enfermeria para que v. Merced me llame a la puerta cada instante.” Ibid., p. 36v.
demonstrates how Martin attended exclusively to things of the spirit, and reduced his communication with the outside world as much as possible. The omission of this story in Melendez's version may be indicative of the differences between Medina's Spanish audience and Melendez's Creole readers. The story narrates Martin's separation from the African community and places him fully within the world of the Dominican convent. This would be an understandable strategy for a hagiographer trying to promote a Negro for sainthood. I see in the reprinted version of Melendez, the characteristically Creole strategy of presenting saints as figures in which social differences are integrated. Therefore, while Melendez keeps the story in which Martin's sister helps with her brother's charity, he omits the story in which Martin severs relationships with his sister and, symbolically, with his community. Instead, Martin belongs to the wider Creole community and lives, like Toribio and Juan Macias, between worlds.  

In 1639 the funeral of Martin de Porres was attended by people from all levels of society in Lima. Among them was surely his friend and fellow Dominican, Juan Massias. There was possibly another saint in attendance: young Nicolas de Ayllon, recently arrived in Lima, was living at the Convent of San Francisco, only blocks away from Martin's Dominican convent. Nicolas was eventually acclaimed as a saint himself and although an official process was begun in the seventeenth century,

---

37 Interestingly, the Lives of Martin written for North American Blacks in the nineteenth century, portray Martin as embracing a very familiar and affectionate relationship with his sister. When Martin was canonized in 1960, his cause was ardently supported both by Latin Americans and by North American Blacks. He is the only saint in North America for whom statues are available in two ethnic varieties: a light brown complexion with Spanish features, and a dark brown complexion with African features. All of the statues available in Lima depict Martin as very dark in color.
Nicolas has yet to be canonized. While Nicolas, an Indian, was not considered representative of the Creole community in the seventeenth century, he is enjoying a modern rebirth of popular interest in his cause. Now he is a saint "under construction" by a new community in Lima who finds in his seventeenth-century story something resonant with their own.

Nicholas de Aylloon (1632-1677)

Nicholas de Aylloon was a simple tailor in Lima. He was also a Mochicas Indian. His hagiographer says he was born in 1632 in "the small village of Chiclayo, ill-fated by the poverty and misfortune to which its inhabitants were subjected under the tyranny of their caciques." At the age of six Nicolas was chosen for his voice to be a choirboy for the Franciscan church, but at the age of eight he entered the service of a Franciscan priest, Father Iuan de Aylloon, from whom he took his surname—a custom which the hagiographer assures the reader that Indians observed out of loyalty and gratitude to their masters.

—

38 He is also called Nicolas de Dios. Although he was probably a mestizo, or half-Indian, the seventeenth-century Life by Sartolo does not say so." P. Bernardo Sartolo, S.J., Vida Admirable y Muerte Prodigiosa De Nicolas De Aylloon y con Renombre mas Glorioso Nicolas De Dios, Natural de Chiclayo En las Indias del Peru. (Madrid: 1684)

39 The cacique was an Indian leader of great influence and political power. Spaniards used these leaders as political intermediaries between European bureaucratic institutions and the Indians. In return for the cacique's cooperation, the Spaniards granted special privileges.

"Chiclavo pueblo pequeño, infeliz por la pobreza, y calamidades á que viven suyos sus habitadores, padeciendo la tyrania de sus Caciques...." Sartolo, I. p.1. As we saw earlier in the story of Bertran, the peninsular Spaniard hagiographer quoted here does not attribute the misery of the Indians to the Spaniards or to the oppressive encomienda system, but to their cruel Indian leaders. Sartolo says only that the village pertained to the diocese of Truxillo but, in fact, Chiclayo pertained to an encomienda of the Franciscan order and was under the Order's ministry. See Ruben Vargas Ugarte. *Vida del Servo de Dios Nicolas Aylloon...*(Buenos Aires: 1964) p.17.

42 "...Padre Fr. Iuan de Aylloon de quien recibió el sobrenombre, conforme al estilo de los Indios, que conservan el nombre de los Españoles, á quienes sirven, en memoria de su lealtad, y gratitud;" Sartolo, I. p. 9.
After Nicholas' death in 1677, the details of his life were documented by his widow and other supporters and sent to Father Bernardo Sartolo, a Jesuit in Spain, to be compiled into a Life.\textsuperscript{41} Sartolo published the \textit{Vida Admirable y Muerte Prodigiosa De Nicolas De Ayllon} in Madrid in 1684.\textsuperscript{42} Nicolas was fortunate to have, as well, a modern biographer in the well-known historian Ruben Vargas Ugarte. Ugarte's \textit{Vida del Siervo de Dios Nicolas Ayllon} (1964) provides an interesting viewpoint from which to interpret the historical reception of the earlier work by Sartolo.

Unlike the other seventeenth-century Lives in this study which begin by affirming the widespread fame of sanctity that their subjects have enjoyed, Sartolo's work begins with unusually lavish praise to those supporters who gave testimony on behalf of Nicholas, giving them special credit for having recognized his sanctity. "The credit for the things contained in this Life, based in the testimony of the confessors, and spiritual fathers who nourished them, must be given to those who discovered in this noble spirit the precious qualities, attentively observing his actions, recognizing that this greatness could no longer be kept hidden."\textsuperscript{43} The hagiographer's implication is that great discernment must have been required to have perceived such spiritual treasure in, of all people, an Indian.

---
\textsuperscript{41} According to Vargas Ugarte, Sartolo may have had access to an earlier biography, \textit{Vida de Nicolás}, by an anonymous author, published in Lima in 1679. Vargas Ugarte says the probable author of this work was P. Alonso de Cereceda, then rector of the Colegio de San Martín in Lima. See Vargas Ugarte, \textit{Vida del Siervo de Dios Nicolas Ayllon}... (Buenos Aires: 1964), p.11-12. I have not been able to locate a copy of this earlier work by Cereceda.


\textsuperscript{43} "El credito que le merecen las que en este libro van escritas, se funda en el testimonio de los Confessores, y Padres espirituales, que la trataron, y descubrieron los quilates de su alto espíritu, observando con atencion sus acciones, cuy a grandezza reconocian y no podia dezar de manifestarse a la publica luz, y ponerse en algun tiempo á la imitacion." Sartolo, \textit{Vida Admirable}, Author's Introduction.
A Female Role

When he was ten or eleven, Nicolas accompanied his priest to the large convent of San Francisco in Lima. While staying in the city, the priest became seriously ill and was forced to remain at San Francisco for the next five years as his condition deteriorated to the point of confining him to bed. The author does not name the priest’s illness, but apparently it made him extremely disagreeable and prone to fits of rage.44 “[N]ot having anyone else to take out his rage upon, he lashed out with harshness at Nicolas” who, we are told, simply put his faith in God and endured without complaint. At this point, the hagiographer Sartolo makes an interesting analogy, saying of Nicolas that he was “like a Mother” to his sick employer because he performed all the nurturing, maternal duties: cajoling him like a child, serving him, nursing him and administering his medicines.45 “Like a mother,” however, is not an inevitable simile. In the lives of other saints in this period (such as Martin), this type of ministry to the sick is not described in maternal terms. Even when the saints are said to be solicitous, tender, and so forth, they are not feminized. The presentation of Nicolas, therefore, in such an explicitly female role as that of “mother” is significant. The analogy appears to be part of a larger strategy to associate Nicolas, as an Indian, with the subservient position, the non-threatening position, of the female.

44 “[su enfermedad] le incitave á iras y furores...y como no tenia otra persona en quien desahogarlos, prorumpia en desabrimientos contra Nicolas...” Sartolo, I, p.20-21.
45 “porque hazia con él todos los oficios de Madre, que le alhaga, de criado, que le sirve, de enfermero, que le asiste, y de Medico, que le cura.” Ibid., p. 19.
This strategy is repeated later in the narrative when Sartolo again uses a feminine attribute to describes Nicolas. Nicolas, now a young man, had left the monastery after the death of the priest and became apprenticed to a master tailor. Living on his own in Lima, he encountered sinful “delights” (delicias). The narrator opines that the city is a dangerous place where “lasciviousness sets snares against chastity through the brazeness of wicked young women.” As in the story of Juan Macias presented earlier, the narrative employs predictable tropes of the evils of city life and the wickedness of women. However, in sharp contrast to Juan’s story, this narrative of Nicholas puts the emphasis not on the external threats but on internal character. In the face of such temptations, says Sartolo, Nicolas “realized his own frailty.” The term frailty (fragilidad) is significant because this is the term traditionally used by Spaniards to refer to women’s lack of self-control and to the feminine susceptibility to seduction. Here it is not our hero’s innocence which jeopardizes him—as was the case for Juan Macias—but instead it is Nicolas’s “frailty” which places his purity in danger. Frailty, that moral failing which (since Eve) has made women so easily tempted or led astray, is here made an attribute of the Indian—and acknowledged by him as an innate shortcoming. Thus Sartolo consigns Nicholas

46 “y viviendo en una Ciudad...y en fin donde la lascivia arma laços contra la castidad con la desemboltura de infames mugercillas....empezó Nicolas a tener mas rezelos de si mismo, y de su fragilidad.” Ibid., p. 5c.
47 In fact, Sartolo makes an aside which reveals his misogyny: “if the world was without women, the intercourse of men would never be separated from the company of God.” (“que si el mundo estuviera sin mugeres, la conversacion de los hombres no se apartaria de la compañia de Dios.”) Ibid., p.66.
48 “‘Fragility’ was the common term for having given in to the desires of the flesh, the word implying that control over the sexual impulse was ‘fragile’ and thus easily broken.” Patricia Seed, To Love Honor and Obey in Colonial Mexico: Conflicts over Marriage Choice, 1574-1821. (Stanford: Stanford UP, 1988), p. 99.
not only to woman’s subservience but also to woman’s moral weakness. Sartolo assures the reader that Nicolas preserved his “purity” through self-discipline, penance and mortification. In this aspect of its depiction of physical discipline as penance for carnal desires, the story strongly resembles the earlier Life of Luis Bertran. Expiation of sin is a strong theme in the hagiographical portrayal of Nicolas. We cannot help but notice that the “innate” sexual license and immodesty which Europeans found scandalous in the Indians is made a failing which Nicolas “recognizes” in himself.52

The role of nurse and mother continued to shape the particular forms that Nicolas’s charity took over the course of his lifetime. While still quite young he took it upon himself to go to the hospital for Indians in Lima51 where he consoled patients “both physically and spiritually,” often taking little presents to them. Furthermore, says Sartolo, Nicolas knew his own limits. Being “untrained for so exalted a ministry,” he would “wait for the Jesuit fathers to come each afternoon to give confession”; then he would tell them of specific patients’ needs so that [the Jesuits] could succor the sick with “spiritual medicine.”52 Once again Nicolas took on the role of the nurse or mother, and offered care and concern to patients but waited for his

---

49 ...dela fuerte conservó intacta su pureza...Sartolo, I, p.5c.
50 Sartolo, like Loarte (Bertran’s hagiographer) is a peninsular Spaniard and the assumptions about both Indians and bodies appear to have been shared by both of them although their projects differ considerably.
51 Sartolo, I, p. 45-46. This would have been the Hospital de Santa Ana, founded by the first Archbishop of Lima, Padre Loayza for the Indians. See Vargas Ugarte, Vida del...Nicolas Ayllon, p. 26. Also see Vargas Ugarte History de la Iglesia en el Peru, (Burgos: 1959), Vol. II, p 464ff; and the “Historia del Hospital de Santa Ana” in Zegarra, Miscelanea, Vol. 61, fol. 5.
52 “Mas porque siavo poco de si para tan alto ministerio, esperava á los Padres de la Compañia de Jesus, que van todas las tardes a consolar, y confesassar a estos miserables dolientes, y en viendoles, acudia luego a darles cuenta de la necesidad en que se hallavan los enfermos, para que les socorriessen con la medicina espiritual, y les dispusiessen...” Sartolo I.45-46.
superiors (always men) to provide the “higher” ministry. Nicholas assisted them, and never overstepped or overreached.

The young woman Jacinta who became Nicholas’s wife was not “frail,” nor was her virtue ever questioned, but nevertheless she was not yet “domesticated”—that is, she did not know her (female) place. Jacinta, a young mestiza woman “adopted” by a Spanish family, was offered in marriage to Nicolas by her father who was one of his customers.33 The young Jacinta was horrified, so we are told, to be married to an Indian; she cried so bitterly and so long that her melancholy made her dangerously ill.34 Nicholas, however, prayed for her recovery. Sartolo says, “Already he knew which Doctor [God] from whom he should ask the remedy for her whom God had destined to be his wife, and he bargained [with God] for her health with prayers, fasting, and tears.”35 Jacinta eventually recovered and the two were married, but initially she proved to be vain and concerned only with clothes and parties.36 Nicolas and his wife Jacinta were well known around town; thus, this aspect of his life was one which many witnesses for the cause were able to recall, and all concurred that Jacinta was initially much given to “galas” and “vanities of the age.” All were agreed, too, that God heard the prayers of Nicolas to recover “a more

33 “una doncella Española pobre, y virtuosa” (Sartolo, I. 59) This may well have been her natural father as the custom was for illegitimate children of Spaniards and Indian servants to be adopted by the legitimate wife (get confirming citation.) The father may well have thought this a good match as Nicolas was quite prosperous by age 24, owning a house and employing several servants. See Vargas Ugarte, Vida de Nicolas Ayllon, p.37-38.
34 “llorando amargamente... pasó tan adelante la melancolia que cubrió su corazón, que le causó una enfermedad peligrosa.” Sartolo, I. 62.
35 “Nicholascomo sabia ya con que Medico avia de solicitar el remedio de la que Dios le avia destinado por su Esposa, trató de negociar su salud con oraciones, ayunos, y lagrimas....” Ibid.
36 Ibid., p. 68.
perfect life" for Jacinta.\textsuperscript{57} She did, apparently, become "converted," for she eventually joined her husband in his charitable work and participated in the "spiritual disciplines" of the house. The witnesses' use of the term "converted" is interesting because that word is usually applied to making Indians into Christians; here, however, the implication is that the woman is being made into a "good Christian woman," domesticated into her socially acceptable place as a wife as well as being instructed in the faith and virtues. Similarly, Sartolo's feminization of Nicolas is a form of domestication, the message being clear: these Indians have been domesticated into Spanish culture and therefore can be considered exceptions to the prevalent negative category of Indians. The charitable activity for which Nicolas and Jacinta were most renowned was their taking in "fallen" women and reforming them.\textsuperscript{58} This charity stemmed, no doubt, from Nicholas's compassion for the sin of sexual "frailty" and confirmed Jacinta's own decision to become domesticated.

Devotion to the Immaculate Conception

The second book of Sartolo's Vida Admirable focuses on Nicolas's devotion to the Virgin Mary,\textsuperscript{59} particularly his devotion to La Puríssima, or The Immaculate Conception, an aspect of the Virgin particularly beloved by Spaniards in the Early

\textsuperscript{57} Taken from testimonies given in Dec. 1700, Folio I, on behalf of the cause. See, for example, the statements of Juan Benites, p.6, and that of Bartolome Vivas, p.8-9v.

\textsuperscript{58} Vargas Ugarte says the house, which Nicolas named Las Casa de Jesus, Maria, y José, began with two "mujeres desvalidas" and may at times have had as many as twelve women in residence. The women were enjoined to follow a strict penitential discipline every evening, attend Mass and confession.

In 1692, after the death of Nicolas the church authorities converted the house to a beaterio (house for beatas) and moderated their austerities. See Vargas Ugarte, p. 43-47.

\textsuperscript{59} Sartolo, Book II, p.372-385 This section of the Vida is all about his devotion to Mary in general and to the Guardian Angel—another cult promoted heavily in this era and especially dear to the Jesuits.
Modern period. The narrative begins with a description of the spread of the cult of The Immaculate Conception in the New World and deliberately associates Nicolas with it, casting him as one of the Virgin’s apostles. Sartolo tells us that Nicolas’s great devotion to Mary began shortly after he was removed from his family at the age of six. An image of the Immaculate Conception in the Franciscan convent, says Sartolo, was one of Nicholas’s earliest memories. As a child he made a makeshift altar to Mary in a corner of the dormitory which he was given as his quarters. He comforted himself with her presence and promised to keep her feasts, in particular that of the Immaculate Conception. Sartolo tells us that Nicolas turned to Mary as a counsellor and friend, even to the point that when he felt inclined to embrace the religious life, he offered this decision to Mary, allowing her to decide for him if he should take vows or seek a wife. Mary told him that she wanted him to marry, so he did.

When Nicolas left the Franciscans, he took the first wages he earned as a tailor and commissioned a painting of “La Concepcion” for his personal oratory. In 1662, Lima held a festival in honor of the extension of the cult of the Immaculate

---

42 His later devotion to the Holy Family, and the name of his house: Casa de Jesus, Maria y Joseph, would also suggest Nicolas substituted a celestial family for the loss of his earthly one and as a symbolic “new genealogy” less associated with his Indian past. For an interesting exposition of this concept of familial substitution, see the treatment of St. Teresa’s devotion to the Holy Family in Carol Slade, St. Teresa of Avila: Author of a Heroic Life. (Berkeley: 1995).
43 Maria Santissima “y para que su dulcissima memoria permaneciesse mas viva en su alma, quiso tener un despertador a sus ojos, que fue(?) una Imagen de la Conception, a quien levantó un pobre Altar en el aposento, que le señalaron para su habitacion, regalándose con su presencia...[he promises to celebrate her feasts] “en especial la de su Concepcion Perissima, que era el misterio que mas le arrebataba los cariños, y a quien avia consagrado sus primeros afectos en la casa de los Religiosos Franciscos...Sartolo f. p. 35; see also pp. 15-17.
44 Ibid., p. 58.
Conception. The entire city was “out in the streets and plazas” celebrating and
Nicolas, listening to the public sermons, became so caught up in the fervor of the
occasion that he called out to the crowd to start a procession, singing praises to
Mary. The crowd, “guided by zealous piety,” followed Nicolas to his house where
he got his painting of La Concepcion. Then they carried the painting in procession
through the streets of Lima singing. Sartolo says they processed “with little
judgement but a lot of pious voices,” a statement which seems curious since there is
no mention of any problem. Yet this remark clearly suggests that this story is being
offered in explanation of or apology for an event for which there existed at the time a
less favorable version. At any rate, Sartolo tells us that as the crowd proceeded, they
were joined by others, including a “river of ecclesiastics,” some of whom brought
candles. Churches were opened for them and as the procession finally arrived at the
main plaza, the archbishop Pedro Villagomez came out onto his balcony and gave the
pious gathering his blessing. The procession, which Sartolo compares to “that which
Christ had on Palm Sunday,” ended finally at the Church of San Francisco. There
the pious crowd set up the painting of the Virgin and made offerings to her. The

---

64 This was the promulgation of a Bull by Pope Alexander VIII, prompted by the Spanish
crown, endorsing the pious belief in the Immaculate Conception. “la Monarquia Españole, estendida el
culto y devoción a la Concepcion purissima de Maria. Llego pues la luz hermosa de aquella tan feliz
corno deseade Aurora de la Bula de Alexandro VII expedida a favor deste misterio, a instancia del
Catholic Reo Phihpe Sartolo II, p. 391.

65 "Respiró el corazón de Nicholasoyendo razones tan piadosas de boca de los Ministros de
Dios...y lleno de un fervor indecible, respondió: Vamos, señores, y hagamos al punto lo que dezis,
Salgamos en procesión por estas calles, diziendo á vozes la grandezas de MARIA; Ibid. p.395.

66 v sin mas deliberacion...guiados de su zelosa piedad...[they go to his house and get his
painting from his oratory...] tomaron la Imagen sobre sus ombros, y empiezaron á caminar con poco
aparato de iuzes, pero con mucho aliento de piadosas vozes.” Ibid., p. 395.

67 Ibid. p. 397.

68 “y solo parecido, y comparable al que tuvo Christo en la entrada de los Ramos...” Ibid.
p.398.
painting, Sartolo says, was conserved there at the church and “remained an object of
great veneration and sweet memories.”

This story of the procession is one of the longest in the *Vida Admirable*, and it
reads much like the apology for Francis Solano’s famous sermon. Clearly Sartolo is
anxious to portray Nicolas as seminal in the propagation of devotion to the
Immaculate Conception in Lima while, at the same time, the repeated assertion that
the high emotional tenor of the procession reflected passionate devotion to the Virgin
is strongly apologetic in its tone. It is probable that someone misinterpreted this
crowd as a riot in the streets led by an Indian. Because the procession continued into
the dark hours, were “a few candles” perceived as torches?

**Candidacy for Sainthood**

In the *Life* by Sartolo, Nicolas does not speak in his own voice. He is rarely
given words by this author. The focus is entirely upon his deeds, his charity, his life.
He shares the words of others with whom he is associated. By his devotion to the
cult of the Holy Guardian Angel or to the Immaculate Conception, he “participated”
in the opular debates on issues and events which are written about and spoken about
by others. Like the other saints in my study, Nicolas lived in a world fractured by
social and racial stratification. In his hagiography, however, he fails to provide an
icon in which that diversity is integrated. Sartolo’s *Life* tells us that Nicolas was
acclaimed as a saint at his death. He was buried at the church of San Juan de Dios,

---

*“donde hasta el día de oy permanece siendo objeto de muchas veneraciones, y despertador
de dulcissimas memorias, y amorosas recuerdos.”* Ibid., p. 399.
where Nicolas had frequently arranged Masses to be said for the souls in
purgatory. The funeral sermon was preached by the famous Jesuit Buendía, and the
crowd was so great that soldiers were posted at the door. Astonishingly, even the
Viceroy himself, Sr. Marquès de Malagos, could hardly get in. This was due, says
Sartolo proudly, to the interest with which everyone heard the praises of an Indian.1

Nicolas de Aylton might well have become the first Indian canonized from
the New World, but he still waits for the honor. If Sartolo’s version of the events is
correct, it seems surprising that Nicolas was not made a saint. He was acclaimed as
such, and his cause was initiated in 1679. His cause was supported not only by the
Spanish king, Carlos II, but also by Pope Clement XI. His Christian life was almost
perfect in its exemplarity, and a rare case of a layperson achieving heroic virtue.2 He
had been committed to charity, active in promoting a number of officially sanctioned
devotions, and diligent in encouraging the faithful to attend Mass and receive the
sacraments. It all looked so promising! What happened? This is exactly what King
Carlos II wanted to know in his letter to the Archbishop Melchior de Llán y
Cisneros in 1693.3

We must turn to historian Vargas Ugarte’s modern account for insight into
the problem with Nicholas’s cause for canonization. Sartolo’s is not the sole Life of

---

1 Sartolo’s description of the funeral solemnities is elaborate. Sartolo, I, pp. 216-222.
2 “...tal era la suspensión con que oían las alabanzas de un Indio...” Ibid., p. 222
3 Moral exemplarity is usually considered to be an important dimension of Early Modern hagiography; Nicolas’ life is the only one of those presented here which could be imitated by faithful Catholics.
4 The letter concerns the state of the investigation for the cause. “sobre que informe el estado
que tiene la averiguacion dela Vida y Virtudes del hermano Nicolas de Dios.” This letter is preserved
in the Archivo Arzobispal among the official papers of Nicolas’s cause; it is in the “Primer Quaderno”
of the “Proceso en Plenario.” which contains mostly material from 1721 and later.
Nicholas; Vargas Ugarte wrote another in the twentieth century that covers the same events but give them a different emphasis and a broader cultural context. To begin with, Vargas Ugarte gives an account of the funeral that is quite different from Sartolo’s, making it known that, when Nicolas’s friends and family tried to celebrate the funeral in the Church of La Merced, they struggled against resistance from those who thought it unnecessary [inappropriate] to give a eulogy from the pulpit for an Indian. Furthermore, says Vargas Ugarte, Father Buendía was heckled from the audience during his eulogy. The soldiers in Sartolo’s account may well have had more to restrain than simply the curious and relic-seeking rabble. Vargas Ugarte also mentions that, on some occasions, Nicolas confronted the Spanish guards near the palace when he witnessed them harassing Indians. Vargas Ugarte says this intervention in police affairs provoked one of two responses: sometimes the police deferred to Nicolas upon hearing an Indian “with his refined words and dress;” at other times, the police only got angrier and beat up Nicolas. Sartolo, who wishes to keep Nicolas an Indian and in a subservient position, does not mention his educated speech. As a hagiographer promoting a candidate for sainthood, Sartolo would never have mentioned Nicholas’s involvement in public brawls. By the end of the seventeenth century, colonial society was less open to Indians.

---

74 “a raíz de su muerte, cuando se trató de celebrar sus exequias en la Iglesia de la Merced hubo que vencer las resistencia que algunos oponían pareciéndoles superfluo...a hacer desde el púlpito el elogio de un indígena.”Vargas Ugarte. Vida del Siervo de Dios...Nicolas Ayllon, p. 94.
The Vida Admirable written by Sartolo had been well received in Spain, obtaining all the requisite approvals and certifications and passing the censors at the Council of the Indies as well as those of the Spanish Inquisition. Churchmen and Spaniards were well aware of the diplomatic importance of a saintly figure such as Nicholas. In a foreword to the book, R.P.Fr. Joseph de Santa Teresa, General Historian for the Discalced Carmelites, writes: “Rare were the beginnings of our Nicolas, and most rare the wisdom and will of God that in an Indian so slight, so “sterile” by nature, and so clever, [He] desired to show another prodigy, no less rare, like that which Moses saw in the burning bush, a sterile plant shining with divine splendor. This is what God did in our Nicolas. We are able to believe that however humble his origin, His Majesty wished to ennoble it with heavenly light in order to show forth in him a miracle.”

The reception of Sartolo’s book in the colony was very different from the one it enjoyed in Spain. The Vida Admirable arrived in Lima just after the testimonies from the local tribunal had been taken (these started in 1683), and when the book was read, serious discrepancies were discovered between the local testimonies Sartolo’s account. Notable among them was Sartolo’s insistence that Nicolas had preserved his virginity intact until marriage. This contradicted testimonies given in the local

---

b “Raros fueron los principios de nuestro Nicolás, y raras la sabiduría, y voluntad del Señor, que en un Indio tan corto, y tan estéril por su natural, e ingenio, quiso mostrar otro prodigio no menos raro, que el que vió Moyses en la zarza, donde dignamente se admiró de ver, que una planta tan estéril luciese con tantos resplandores divinos.....y así lo hizo Dios con nuestro Nicolás, y podemos creer, que lo humilde de su origen, y condición lo quiso su Magestad ennobecer (como a la zarza antigua) con tantas luces del Cielo para mostrarse en él de todas maneras milagroso.” Sartolo, preface: “Aprobacion del R.P. Fr Joseph de Santa Teresa, Historiador General of the Discalced Carmelites.”
process which stated that as a youth Nicholas had lived with a *mestiza* and had a son by her, both of whom had died before he married Jacinta.\textsuperscript{77} Given Sartolo’s use of the word *frailty* in referring to Nicolas’s self-control in sexual matters, it is probable that he hoped that this word would evoke a merciful response to any indiscretions. Instead, the Inquisition of Lima was consulted. The Inquisitors promptly prohibited Sartolo’s work and impounded all known copies, citing “theological errors.” Then the Holy Office impounded the *Informaciones*—the testimonies given on Nicolas’ behalf.\textsuperscript{78} These were soon reported “lost.” The archbishop, we are told, was “alarmed” by these things and promptly confiscated Nicolas’s personal papers and the *Apuntametos* recorded by Jacinta concerning Nicolas’s life. By this time, everyone had begun to doubt the validity of all the testimonies and the reputation of Nicolas was blemished.

No doubt the Life written by Sartolo went too far in trying to make Nicolas virtuous in ways that were not indicated by the evidence. The Jesuits, who were actively supporting the cause of their own candidates for sainthood like Aloysius Gonzaga,\textsuperscript{79} held the virtue of chastity in particular esteem. Sartolo clearly felt that charity was an essential requirement for any venerable life—and a particularly important indication of conversion in one whose native culture was reputed to be sexually immoral. Nevertheless, saints, especially converts such as Augustine, have

---

\textsuperscript{77} Vargas Ugarte says this is one of the discrepancies which brought discredit to the Life by Sartolo and to the cause itself. Vargas Ugarte, *Vida del Siervo de Dios...Nicolas Ayllon*, p.34.

\textsuperscript{78} Ibid. p. 91.

\textsuperscript{79} Aloysius Gonzaga, a Jesuit from Venice who died at the young age of 23, was famous for his chastity, innocence, and unblemished youth; he is the patron of students. His cause was a special favorite in the seventeenth century and he was canonized in 1726.
been recognized in spite of sinful pasts. Most of the saints of this period ran afoul of the Inquisition as well. It is Vargas Ugarte's frank description of the controversy surrounding Nicolas' funeral that arouses suspicions concerning popular support for Nicholas's cause. The public anger over burying an Indian with a solemn church funeral was sufficiently strong that it prompted authorities to provide a security force at the funeral. Anger, Vargas Ugarte tells us, was a common response to Nicolas's polished speech and dress. Close examination of the canonization procedures indicate that the Archbishop had deliberately delayed the initiation of the cause for unknown reasons. Furthermore, even after a new commission opened the informaciones in 1700, these were halted again on account of testimonies deemed "vicious and untrue." Not everyone liked this virtuous Indian.

Vargas Ugarte attributes the failure of Nicholas's cause to anti-Indian prejudice. The confusion over Sartolo's life, while it did cause concern, might otherwise not have derailed Nicholas's progress to sainthood. It is important to emphasize the broader implication: Sartolo's Life of Nicolas failed, ultimately, because it was not written for the Creole readers in Lima, and local support as well as a local identity continue to be essential factors in canonization. Sartolo's Life was written for Europeans and reflected a European view of Indians. Europeans (as demonstrated in Loarte's life of Bertran) perceived Indians as having particular moral

---

12 Teresa of Jesus and Ignatius Loyola, perhaps the two most famous saints of the Early modern period, were investigated by the Holy Office. In Lima, St. Rose had been "examined" for her orthodoxy as well.  
13 Vargas Ugarte reports that José María de Estela asked the Archbishop to begin the local informaciones but Linán y Cisneros waited until 1689 to do so. See p. 92.  
14 Vargas Ugarte quotes the phrase "parecían viciosas y faltas de verdad." p.92.
problems which an Indian saint should overcome: sexual promiscuity, violence, laziness, and indifference to matters of faith and Christian practice. Sartolo constructed, accordingly, an Indian saint who was chaste, domesticated, peace-loving, humble, successful in business, attentive to the sacraments and a champion of nearly every Early Modern popular devotion.

This study of a paragon, however, did not address the view of Indians held by the Spanish colonials and Creoles in Lima, and canonization hinged solely on support from this local community. They saw Indians as social inferiors, even potentially dangerous to society. An Indian saint—very unlikely from their colonial viewpoint—required a hagiography which neither made him the social equal of Creoles nor portrayed him as the proponent of cherished Spanish devotions. It seems likely that the hagiographic construction of an Indian saint who was perfect in his reception of the teachings and examples of other Spaniards would have had much greater success in colonial Peru.

Nicholas de Ayllon is an example of a candidate whose cause for canonization was halted not by Rome but by his own local community. Not only did Carlos II write and inquire as to the fate of this promising case, but as late as 1707 Archbishop Liñán y Cisneros was forced to reply to an inquiry from Pope Clement XI explaining the delay. Clearly, Nicolas was an acceptable candidate from the official point of view. Yet the citizens of Lima, at least some of them in positions of power, did not like the idea of an Indian saint for their community. The Indian could achieve a measure of social and business success in late seventeenth century Creole society but
he could not represent the community to the world. As Vargas Ugarte says that Nicolas was "chained by his race" to an inferior status in the Colonial world. The historian observes that Rome, "free from these prejudices, and with a sentiment more Christian and universalist," was in favor of the glorification of a native Indian because it would affirm the faith of Christians and hasten the conversion of those who had not yet embraced the faith.

---

83 By the end of the seventeenth century, says Williams, "Even the Spanish state now abandoned the pretense of raising the Indians to civil equality with the Hispanic sector; officially, they were still to be protected, but only because their wretched condition was perceived to be irremediable." *Williams, History*, p. 119.


CONCLUSION

In 1679 the citizens of Lima must surely have considered themselves blessed with saints. That year they celebrated the beatification of their former archbishop, Toribio Alfonso de Mogrovejo, who became their third official patron saint. St. Rose of Lima had been canonized eight years earlier. The Franciscans were celebrating the fiftieth anniversary of the decree naming Francis Solano, beatified in 1675, the patron of Peru. Throughout the year of 1679, official testimonies were being taken for the causes of Juan Macias, Martin de Porres, and Nicolas de Ayllon. This abundance of saints, however, was not an indication that the city of Lima was a "heavenly" place—quite the contrary. In the Lives of these saints I have presented evidence for the cultural turmoil of the Spanish colonial world. I have argued that it was excessive need for cultural definitions and identity, not excessive sanctity, which produced so many powerful figures in so short a time.

This study has presented the Lives of seven saints from Spanish colonial Peru, a location I chose precisely because of the large number of saints living there between 1580-1680. I have argued that the turmoil caused by the Spanish encounter with

---

1 St. Toribio is a patron of Lima; St. Rose is a patron not only of Lima but of The Americas, and St. Francis Solano is a patron of Peru. Three major saints acquired by a young country over such a short period of time is quite remarkable.
native populations was a clash of races, religions and cultures that constituted a confrontation with radical "otherness" (or "alterity") which the scholar Tzvetan Todorov has identified as the hallmark of colonial history.²

Colonial identity evolved over time, reflecting Peru's growing economic independence and changing missionary strategies. The seventeenth-century Lives of Spanish colonial saints reflect this evolving search for identity. Spanish Creoles defined themselves in contrast to both the indigenous Indian population and the mother country Spain.³ The saints in this study arose within communities (particularly religious communities as well as the broader colonial society) struggling with both external and internal otherness—alien landscapes and people as well as the perennial problems of race and gender. I found evidence in the Lives of these saints of Lima that a symbolic resolution of the forms of alterity was the dominant theme in the hagiographies. The hagiographers' concern with alterity appeared most prominently in discourse about language and discourse about bodies. So language and bodies became two strands that I followed in comparing the Lives of these seven saints of Peru.

¹ Todorov, in *The Conquest of America*, takes as his fundamental subject "the discovery self makes of the other." (ital. in original), p. 3.
² For one instance of Lacan's description of the definition of a "self" in relation to an "other," which simultaneously diminishes and represses that other, "The signifier, producing itself in the field of the Other, makes manifest the subject of its signification. But it functions as a signifier only to reduce the subject in question to being no more than a signifier, to petrify the subject in the same movement in which it calls the subject to function, to speak, as subject." *The Four Fundamentals of Psycho-Analytic Theory*, ed. Jacques Alain Miller, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Norton, 1978), p. 207.
Three important points deserve review. First, I found that the Lives provided communities with religious narratives of self-legitimation and self-definition. My study calls into question the general scholarly assumption that saints of the Early Modern period are largely the creation of the ecclesiastical powers in Rome and do not reflect the concerns of a local populace. Furthermore, I found that one candidate for sainthood (Nicholas) whom both Rome and Spain strongly endorsed was never canonized, because the Creoles of Lima did not identify with him or want him as their representative.

Secondly, my study found that these saints were described by their hagiographers as inimitable. Either the saints themselves were so ideosyncratic that their aberrant behavior was socially undesirable, or the historical situation that had given rise to their heroics could not be reproduced. This discovery qualifies the frequent assertion by scholars of the period that saints are made (and their Lives are written) in order to provide exemplars of virtue for ordinary people. To the contrary, Lima's saints were not described as exemplars because they had to function, instead, as icons or emblems for whole communities.

The "community" constructing these saints, of course, was not the whole city of Lima nor even all of the Spaniards. The Lives of the saints I have presented here were aimed primarily at a clerical audience. The copy of the Life of Bertran that I read was in the library of the Dominican Convent of the Rosary in Lima and it may well have been little known outside of Dominican circles in Peru. The Life of Rose, however, may have had a wider audience which included the educated and well-to-do
of Lima society. As Lima society coalesced and formed a Creole identity, the saints of the city not only provided legitimation for particular shrines (Our Lady of Copacabana, and Our Lady of the Rosary, for example) or devotions (the Stations of the Cross) but also prompted donations by wealthy patrons. The Convent of St. Catherine, whose founding Rose had foreseen, was built in Lima shortly after Rose's death.  

While the hagiographies themselves were aimed at a small audience, however, the cults of these saints were widespread. Saintly power and reputation were highly respected in this culture, and the faithful, of whom the saints Rose and Nicolas are examples, frequented a number of churches and shrines on a regular basis, chose patron saints and developed "relationships" with particular aspects of Mary or Jesus.

My third point (the most fundamental and intriguing) is that these seventeenth-century Lives seem to mirror two phases of colonial development described by historians. This progression is not perfectly chronological (but relatively so due to overlapping dates of lives and canonization processes), and is strongly affected by the nationality of the audience addressed. Hagiography of the first phase described the Spanish evangelization and confrontation with the native population. Saints of the period (Bertran, Solano, and Toribio) were still strongly identified with Europe and their Lives reflected the ongoing cultural struggle with external others. Their Lives seek to justify the Christian mission and, furthermore, to reassure the

---

1 Rose's mother took the veil at this convent—an event Rose was said to have predicted.
Catholic faithful of the persuasive powers of the Gospel despite unanticipated resistance from the heathen. Preaching the word of God was paramount. The focus of the hagiographers of this period was therefore the power of language. Words were spiritual. The world of words was important and the world of bodies was not. For that reason, saints treated their own bodies with contempt and also disregarded the bodies of Indians by concentrating only on the salvation of souls.

The second phase of hagiography was marked by an increasing sense of Creole identity. The colonists of Peru and their saints became strongly identified with the New World and not with Europe. The Creole saints (Juan Macias, Rose of Lima and Martin de Porras) reflected the maturing colonies’ internal social struggles and growing economic independence from Spain. In this period the hagiographic focus became the body itself—specifically the saintly body as it stood for the social body. Words and language were treated as suspect, prone to misinterpretation. In a very significant way, the later Lives showcase tortures and mortifications of the saints’ bodies in order to dissociate these saints from the inferiorities associated with their race or gender.

Creole saints, furthermore, signify the creation of a new society that (like all societies) must exhibit and deal with issues of boundary—that is, of alterity. Attitudes about the physical body in general, as well as attitudes about ascetic practice, emerge in the narratives when hagiographers describe traditional saintly virtues of chastity, charity, and obedience. Saints acting out a denial of physical limitations must paradoxically emphasize their bodies in order to “speak” of the community’s struggle
with internal multiplicities of race, gender, and colonial status. Saintly bodies become "texts" upon which the discourse of alterity is inscribed.

As figures "between worlds," saints are perceived as able to reconcile the apparently irreconcilable opposition of heaven and earth. While an analysis of saintly confrontation with the Divine Other is beyond the scope of this project, it is crucial to realize that the individual saints were believed by their contemporaries to embody that otherworldly encounter. The saint's role as mediator or bridge between heaven and the earthly community is important in providing legitimation and validation of the community. In this study we have seen that the European saints were interpreted as symbols of God's approval of the missionary enterprise in the New World. For the Creole community, saints represented God's ongoing support and sanction of Creole independence. It is not surprising to find that saints, already figures of cosmic reconciliation, are also figures in which lesser, social alterities can be symbolically incorporated.

In histories of Spanish Conquest two things predominate: the debate about the status of the Indians and the rights of Spaniards to dominion over them; and the importance of language in establishing communication. The first point highlights the confrontation with alterity; the second establishes language as the carrier of cultural identity and the site at which the confrontation occurs. I see the saints of the early colonial period—Bertran, Solano, and Toribio—as embodying the Spanish struggle to justify Christian mission. The superiority of European culture is assumed in all of
these texts. Nevertheless, many of the narratives that record saintly actions reveal European assumptions to be inadequate.

The variety and complexity of the Lives presented in this study challenges scholarly assumptions about the institutional control and monolithic religious culture which is generally assumed to produce formulaic and, therefore uninteresting, hagiography. Despite the presence of many traditional elements, the Lives of saints in colonial Peru are far from formulaic. In fact, the variety of presentation styles as well as the range of issues discussed is as richly diverse as the culture from which they arose. The Lives of these saints portray multiple “voices” much as do novels (a literary form born in the seventeenth century). The hagiographies in this study exhibit what Bakhtin has called *heteroglossia*—they

---

are texts in which characters speak competing world views. Within these narratives, characters provide expressions of many different perspectives on Spaniards, Indians, Blacks, men, women, saints and sinners, and neither the hagiographer’s writing, nor the saint’s words reduce these perspectives to a single, unitary view. The public debates on both sides of the Atlantic about cultural issues such as the status of Indians, the morality of Spanish society and the roles of race and gender in society are all reflected in these hagiographies.

While seventeenth-century Peru seems to have come to political independence quite late in comparison to the United States, Spanish colonists were forced much earlier in their development to deal with issues of race and social stratification. The shifts in colonial identity are mirrored in hagiographical literature. The saintly figure of the Creole Rose of Lima gave clarity and force to the emergent identity of Creole culture. Yet once this colonial identity began to take shape, the racial exclusion of “the other” is sadly reinstated, more sharply than before. The Indian population—now joined by African slaves and the mestizo population—were all still excluded “outsiders.” Holy men and women of color, while representative of a huge section of Peruvian society, were inevitably excluded from sainthood because, in their racial difference, they cannot be identified as icons for the Creole community. Despite Rome’s blessing and Spain’s backing, they simply didn’t “look” like saints.

The Lives of these saints are fascinating and repulsive to the degree that they succeed in conveying the world-shattering impact of the seventeenth century’s confrontation with alterity. The saints of Lima embody Western Christianity’s
ambivalence about encounters with the Divine, its threatened identity in the face of racial and cultural otherness, and its persistent fear of women, sexuality, and nature. The saints’ Lives in this study are, as one might expect, disturbing. Saints are buried in crypts, but, as Derrida points out, bodies in crypts are “excluded inclusions.”
Likewise, saints encrypted into texts ironically serve to “organ-ize” communities to which they never truly belonged.

*Mark Taylor, citing Derrida, \textit{Altarity}, p. 285-286
APPENDIX: TIMELINE
BIBLIOGRAPHY

PRIMARY SOURCES

anonymous. "Memorial por la religión de San Francisco, en defensa de las doctrinas del Seráfico Doctor San Buenaventura...sobre juramento que hizo la Universidad de Salamanca, de leer y enseñar tan solamente la doctrina de San Agustín, y Santo Tomás. excluyendo las demás que fuesen contrarias..." In Miscelanea, vol. 111. edited by Zegarra, fol.9. Lima: Gerónymo de Contreras. 1630.


-----. "Testimonium cause beatificationis u canonizationis venerabilis P. Francisci Solani..." In Miscelanea. vol. 7, edited by Zegarra, fol. 12, 1640.

Córdova Salinas, Diego de. Coronica de la Religiosissima Provincia de Los Doze Apostoles del Peru, de la Orden de N.P.S. Francisco de la Regular Obeservancia.. Lima: Jorge Lopez de Herrera, 1651.

-----. "Relación de la causa...del venerable Padre Fray Francisco Solano." In Miscelanea. 7. edited by Zegarra. fol. 10, 1641.

Echave y Assu, D. Francisco, de,. *La Estrella de Lima Convertida en Sol sobre sus tres coronas El B. Toribio Alfonso Mogrobexo, su segundo Arzobispo.. Amberes: Juan Baptista Verdussen, 1688.

Ferrer de Valdecebros, Andres. *Vida Maravillosa y Admirable De La Esclarecida y Bienaventurada Virgen Rosa de Santa Maria.* Madrid: Maria Rey, 1669.


---------. *Santa Rosa, religiosa de la tercera orden de S. Domingo.* Madrid: Francisco Nieto, 1671.


---------. *Tesoros Verdaderos de las Yndias En la Historia dela gran Provincia de San Juan Bautista del Peru De el Orden de Predicadores, Tomo Segundo.* Rome: Nicolas Angel Tinassio, 1681.

---------. *Tesoros Verdaderos de las Yndias En la Historia dela gran Provincia de San Juan Bautista del Peru De el Orden de Predicadores, Tomo Tercero.* Rome: Nicolas Angel Tinassio. 1681.


Zárate, Gabriel de. "Dos Relaciones Verdaderas del rigurcso martyrio, que el Padre Fray Iuan de Prado..Padeciô en la Ciudad de Marruecos..." In *Miscelanea,* vol. 7, edited by Zegarra, fol.3. Lima: Gerynomo de Contreras, 1633.

**SECONDARY SOURCES**


