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Spiritual Subjecthood and Institutional Legibility in Early Modern Spain and Spanish America

by

Molly Elizabeth Borowitz

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the

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in

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in

Critical Theory

and

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in the

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of the

University of California, Berkeley

Committee in charge:

Professor Ivonne del Valle, Chair

Professor Michael Iarocci

Professor Diego Pirillo

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## Abstract

Spiritual Subjecthood and Institutional Legibility in Early Modern Spain and Spanish America

by

Molly Elizabeth Borowitz

Doctor of Philosophy in Hispanic Languages and Literatures

with Designated Emphases

in Critical Theory and Renaissance and Early Modern Studies

University of California, Berkeley

Professor Ivonne del Valle, Chair

My dissertation, “Spiritual Subjecthood and Institutional Legibility in Early Modern Spain and Spanish America,” argues that early modern subjects of the Spanish Empire respond intentionally and strategically to institutional interpellation, representing their subjection in ways that advance their own spiritual and political agendas. The project traces subjects’ efforts to shape, limit, and exploit their legibility to spiritual and political institutions through texts by Teresa of Ávila, Ignatius of Loyola, Martín de Azpilcueta, fray Luís de Granada, and the Third Provincial Council of Lima.

The concept of institutional legibility originates with James C. Scott’s *Seeing Like a State* (Yale UP, 1998). Scott argues that institutions in early modern Europe develop “state simplifications”—shorthands by which they assimilate local variations in language, practice, or record-keeping to a state-wide standard—in order to distill from their subject populations the information they need for operations like taxation and political control. State simplifications make local activities “legible” to institutions by producing homogeneous data that reflects their interests. I invert Scott’s definition of legibility, focusing on local subject formation rather than institutional data collection. Following Althusser, I contend that the attempt to render oneself legible is a response to interpellation; it entails self-subjection to the relevant institution. However, I argue with Butler that self-subjection occurs not once, but continually; it is a constant and evolving performance, a creative act as well as a compelled response to authority.

The first chapter, “Limited Legibility in Teresa de Jesús’ *Las Moradas del castillo interior*,” shows how Teresa promotes the suspect practice of mental prayer by establishing a shorthand for assessing the orthodoxy of practicing mystics while also obscuring the content of her own mystical encounters. She provides confessors with ready-made state simplifications to determine the provenance of a mystic’s visions, but then sidesteps the obligation to describe the content of her own visions by allegorizing her relationship to God as a spiritual marriage, recasting their encounters as moments of spousal intimacy that good Christian wives should never discuss.

The second chapter, “Making mystic texts: Jesuit subject formation in the *Spiritual Exercises*,” argues that, through the *Exercises*, Ignatius of Loyola teaches Jesuits not only how to make their own mystical experiences, but also how to translate those experiences into mystic “texts”—verbal accounts of their immediate encounters with divinity—expressed in a standard, Society-wide language. The mutual legibility of Jesuit superiors and subordinates through the creation of mystic texts fosters the organizational cohesion and hierarchical stability that each individual Jesuit’s power to make mystical experience puts at risk.

The third chapter, “Sacramental confession and institutional strategy in sixteenth-century Spain and Peru,” suggests that confession works to maintain imperial hegemony by teaching penitents to police their behavior for sins that undermine the Crown’s projects of cultural homogenization and political compliance. Confessional manuals by Martín de Azpilcueta, fray Lu s de Granada, and the Third Lima Council show how the sacrament controls the penitent’s conscience through the inspiration of guilt, the obligation to self-examination, and the expansion of the categories of sin to encompass social, political, and economic activities that contravene imperial interests.

Constructing legibility as a process of subject formation illuminates the agency of institutional subjects. Though compulsory, legibility affords the early modern subject some room to negotiate with the institution, and can create opportunities for her to advance her individual agenda.

Acknowledgements	ii
Introduction	1
Of state simplifications and subject formation: Toward institutional legibility	
Chapter 1	23
Limited legibility in Teresa de Jesús's <i>Las moradas del castillo interior</i>	
Chapter 2	66
Making mystic texts: Jesuit subject formation in the <i>Spiritual Exercises</i>	
Chapter 3	107
Sacramental confession and institutional strategy in sixteenth-century Spain and Peru	
Conclusion	147
<i>Rendirse cuenta</i> : To give an account of oneself	
Works Cited	152

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## Introduction

### Of state simplifications and subject formation: Toward institutional legibility

If ... becoming a subject requires a kind of mastery indistinguishable from submission, are there perhaps political and psychic consequences to be wrought from such a founding ambivalence? The temporal paradox of the subject is such that, of necessity, we must lose the perspective of a subject already formed in order to account for our own becoming. That 'becoming' is no simple or continuous affair, but an uneasy practice of repetition and its risks, compelled yet incomplete, wavering on the horizon of social being.

Judith Butler, *The Psychic Life of Power* 30

Between 1575 and 1580, the royal chroniclers of King Philip II circulated a questionnaire about local customs to all the cities, towns, and villages of New Castile. The questionnaire was extensive—the 1575 version included fifty-seven questions, the 1578 version forty-five—and wide-ranging, inquiring about each town's history, geography, topography, natural resources, economic production, commercial activity, civil and ecclesiastical administration, religious traditions, and social composition. The instructions asked each town to select at least two representatives, ideally the brightest and most knowledgeable about local life, to provide answers to these questions before a notary, who would transcribe them and dispatch them back to Philip's palace at El Escorial.<sup>1</sup> Supposedly, the chroniclers intended to stitch these answers into a history of the kingdom (which, incidentally, they never did; instead, they carefully filed the more than five hundred responses they received in Philip's library, where they remain to this day) (*Relaciones II* xiii-xxiii; Christian, Jr. 3, 5-6, 11). However, the content of the questions suggests that they also sought to obtain a comprehensive and comprehensible overview of Philip's subject population, a body of data about New Castile that they could cross-cut along historical as well as geographical, economic, religious, and social lines. The structure and goals of the enterprise imply that Philip and his chroniclers considered the aggregation and organization of knowledge an important function of royal or state authority, but also that they understood the production of that knowledge to

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<sup>1</sup> The New Castile questionnaires were forerunners of the more extensive *Relaciones geográficas de Indias*, designed by Philip's royal chronicler and cosmographer Juan López de Velasco, which circulated throughout the Empire from 1578 to 1585. These questionnaires were dispatched to local officials, who were asked to distribute them to individual subjects, both Spanish and Indian, in their jurisdictions. The content of the American questionnaires closely resembled that of their New Castilian predecessors, including questions about climate and disease, geography and toponymy, botany, natural resources, population, commerce, political history, and local languages. Some 168 responses survive (Gruzinski, *Conquest* 71).

occur mostly at the local level, in the practices and experiences of the individuals and communities that populated New Castile.

In keeping with the questionnaire's stated mission, some of the questions do inquire after local history, requesting an account of each town's founding, the date and details of its reclamation from the Moors, and lists of its most significant historical events and distinguished natives:

- 1.º Primeramente, se declare y diga el nombre del pueblo cuya relación se hiciere; cómo se llama al presente, y por qué se llama así. Y si se ha llamado de otra manera antes de ahora; y también por qué se llamó así, si se supiese.
- 2.º Si el dicho pueblo es antiguo o nuevo, y desde qué tiempo acá está fundado, y quién fue el fundador, y cuando se ganó se los moros, o lo que de ellos se supiese.  
...
37. Los hechos señalados y cosas dignas de memoria, de bien o mal, que hubiesen acaecido en el dicho pueblo o en sus términos, y los campos, montes y otros lugares nombrados por algunas batallas, robos o muertes, y otras cosas notables que en ellos haya habido.
38. Las personas señaladas en letras o armas, o en otras cosas buenas o malas que haya en el dicho pueblo, o hayan nacido o salido de él, con lo que se supiese de sus hechos y dichos, y otros cuentos graciosos que en los dichos pueblos haya habido. (*Relaciones* xiii, xvi)

These questions aim to establish a continuous account of the history of New Castile from the Moorish occupation through the Reconquista and up to the present day, mining the population for local and regional knowledge that the royal chroniclers can assimilate into an official imperial narrative. Other questions, however, seek to locate each municipality in space rather than time; by determining their relative positions, the questionnaire will ultimately yield an absolute rendering of the kingdom's geography:

- 4.º El reino en que comúnmente se cuenta el dicho pueblo, como es decir si cae en el reino de Castilla, o de León, Galicia, Toledo, Granada, Murcia, Aragón, Valencia, Cataluña, o Navarra, y en qué provincia o comarca de ellos, como sería decir en tierra de Campos, Rioja, Alcarria, la Mancha, etc.
- 5.º Y si es pueblo que está en frontera de algún reino extraño, qué tan lejos está de la raya, y si es entrada o paso para él. ...
13. Assi mesmo se diga el nombre del primer pueblo que hubiese, yendo del lugar donde se hiciere la dicha relación, hacia donde el sol sale, o desviado algo al parecer, y a qué mano; y si las leguas son ordinarias, grandes o pequeñas, y por camino derecho o por algún rodeo.
14. Item, se diga el nombre del primer pueblo que hubiese, yendo de donde se hiciere la relación hacia el medio día, y el número de las leguas que hubiese, y si son grandes o pequeñas, o por camino derecho o torcido, y si el tal pueblo está derecho al medio día, o al parecer algo desviado, y a qué parte. (*Relaciones* II xiii-xiv)

The phrasing of these questions anticipates variety in the responses; the chroniclers seem to expect that residents of different towns will have different ideas not only about where regional and

provincial borders fall, but also about how to record distance. To create their map, they need to standardize the incoming information—hence the questions about whether the closest town to the east is due east or some gradation thereof, whether the route is measured as the crow flies or along a winding road, and whether the leagues used to measure it are big, small, or “ordinary.” At some points, the questionnaire sounds like a survey of natural history, inquiring after the names and locations of nearby mountains and rivers, the quality of the land, and the most common flora and fauna (qq. 17-20, xv). At others, it more closely resembles a census, asking for the number of houses and inhabitants in each town, to which social class and family line they belong, and how they earn a living (qq. 39-42, xvi-xvii). On occasion, it sounds suspiciously like a tax assessment, trying to pin down all the natural resources from which each town’s inhabitants draw profit (orchards, farms, fisheries, wind- and watermills, mines, quarries), precisely how much profit those resources generate each year, and which tax privileges and exemptions the local religious orders and landowners enjoy (qq. 21-22, 25-29, 45-47, xv-xvii).<sup>2</sup> These divergent lines of inquiry all tend, however, toward a single goal: the reduction of the vast variety of local memories, records, resources, and customs to a standardized, organized dataset that will facilitate the governance of New Castile.

In sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe, states and other supervising institutions engaged in similar efforts to extract data useful to their purposes from their subject populations with increasing frequency.<sup>3</sup> Agrarian theorist James C. Scott calls these top-down efforts to assimilate individual or local practices to an institutional standard “state simplifications”—administrative shorthands for isolating and organizing the information necessary for population-wide operations like taxation, military conscription, and political control. Scott identifies state simplifications as one of the hallmarks of modern statecraft, arguing that their development enables states and state-like institutions such as the Catholic Church, the military, administrative bureaucracies, and private corporations to intervene effectively in the lives of their subjects, and to shape those subjects’ reality according to their own interests. He contends that the premodern European state was “partially blind,” insofar as it possessed very limited information about its subjects—who and where they were, how much wealth they had, how much land they owned, and the nature and value of the products it yielded. This blindness resulted from the absence of

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<sup>2</sup> These detailed questions seem to have aroused concerns about tax hikes among many respondents; one, a priest from Toledo, went so far as to raise the point in his response: “En esta examinacion que a cada pueblo se manda a hazer, se temen muchas personas ... si esto que se pide es para la valiacion de sus tratos y cosechas para maiores cargas” (*Relaciones* III 492).

<sup>3</sup> At the outset of this discussion of the state, the Church, and their less-specific analogue, the institution, I feel obliged to acknowledge that my project engages quite often in what Michael Taussig calls “State fetishism,” attributing to both the Spanish Crown and the Catholic Church that “certain aura of might as figured by the Leviathan in Hobbes’ rendering as that ‘mortal god,’ or, in a quite different mode, by Hegel’s intricately argued vision of the State as not merely the embodiment of reason, of the Idea, but also as an impressively organic unity, something much greater than the sum of its parts. We are dealing with ... the cultural constitution of the modern State—with a big S—the fetish quality of whose holism can be nicely brought to our self-awareness by pointing not only to the habitual way we so casually entify ‘the State’ as a being unto itself, animated with a will and mind of its own, but also by pointing to the not infrequent signs of exasperation provoked by the aura of the big S” (111-12). I do, throughout the dissertation, fetishize the Institution—with a big I—in the way that Taussig describes here, but I also try to look critically at the ways in which the institution establishes that kind of fetishism around itself (the ways that it implements power by constituting its subjects according to its categories of knowledge and discourse), and in which the subject reinforces or responds to the fetish of the institution: how does she work with or around the monolith of power? What does she assume about institutional power, and how do those assumptions inform the tactics she employs in response?

standard measures or metrics that would enable the state to convert the information it did have into a useable overview of its territory and subject population, a “map” to inform the state’s interventions to pursue or protect its own interests (Scott 2). In the early modern period, however, the state gradually developed a clearer vision of its subjects and their environment through efforts to collect, standardize, and organize information about them:<sup>4</sup>

Processes as disparate as the creation of permanent last names, the standardization of weights and measures, the establishment of cadastral surveys and population registers, the invention of freehold tenure, the standardization of language and legal discourse, the design of cities, and the organization of transportation seemed comprehensible as attempts at legibility and simplification. In each case, officials took exceptionally complex, illegible, and local social practices, such as land tenure customs or naming customs, and created a standard grid whereby [they] could be centrally recorded and monitored. (Scott 2)

To comprehend the tendencies of an entire subject population, state functionaries must find ways to simplify or schematize the complex realities of local life. One thinks of Borges’s “Del rigor en la ciencia,” in which an emperor’s mapmakers, unwilling to efface a single detail from the landscape in the name of accuracy, ultimately produce a map that is the same size as the empire it represents (103). A useful map, by contrast, incorporates only the details relevant to the topic at hand—elevation, for instance, in a topographical map, or the boundaries and values of landholdings in a cadastral map. By the same token, a completely faithful record of family names or product yields, each rendered according to its local custom or convention, would constitute a body of information so extensive and so internally inconsistent as to be incomprehensible. As Scott explains, local practices

were ‘illegible’ to the state in their raw form. They exhibited a diversity and intricacy that reflected a great variety of purely local, not state, interests. That is to say, they could not be assimilated into an administrative grid without being either transformed or reduced to a convenient, if partly fictional, shorthand. The logic behind the required shorthand was provided ... by the pressing material interests of rulers: fiscal receipts, military manpower, and state security. (24)

To render its subject population “legible,” then, the state must devise simplifications to efface local differences in knowledge and practice systematically, to assimilate all variations to a single, universal standard. These simplifications—censuses, maps, registries of landholdings, standard units of measurement, official languages, and so on—streamline the dense tangles of local records into homogenous datasets that facilitate consultation and allow comparison between different points in space and time. The more legible the subject population, the greater the state’s capacity to intervene on behalf of its own interests in a timely and effective manner: through the application of state simplifications, Scott argues, early modern states improve systems for tax

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<sup>4</sup> On sixteenth-century Spain’s growing interest in the synoptic or God’s-eye view, see Ricardo Padrón, *The Spacious Word: Cartography, Literature, and Empire in Early Modern Spain* (U of Chicago P, 2004).

collection, enforce laws of conscription, implement measures to support public health, and establish political surveillance and control (3, 76-77).<sup>5</sup>

In both its intention and method of circumscribing and rendering legible a specific subject population, the state simplification rather resembles what Michel de Certeau, in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, calls a “strategy”: a situated exercise of power and will that seeks to control the activities under its jurisdiction by organizing its domain into predictable, visible, “readable” spaces. To effect a strategy, the subject of power and will—usually a large organization like an army, a business, a municipality, or, one presumes, a state or state-like institution—must first designate a place of its own, a place “proper” to its operations (*Practice* 35-36). In designating the place proper to its power, the strategic subject protects itself from the vagaries of time and circumstance in three ways. First, it establishes a safe space in which to accumulate advantages and prepare future actions. Second, it masters this space through panoptical supervision; by observing and measuring all actors, objects, and activities within its proper place, the strategic subject acquires (to some extent) the ability to predict and control them. Its predictive powers over both its own future actions and those of the actors, objects, and activities in its domain confers upon the strategic subject the capacity “to transform the uncertainties of history into readable spaces” (*Practice* 36). Third, the knowledge that the strategic subject accumulates through the exercise of its power upon its proper place enables the perpetuation of that power. In de Certeau’s words, the strategy represents “a specific type of knowledge, one sustained and determined by the power to provide oneself with one’s own place. ... In other words, *a certain power is the precondition of this knowledge* and not merely its effect or its attribute. It makes this knowledge possible and at the same time determines its characteristics. It produces itself in and through this knowledge” (*Practice* 36). By establishing control over a designated place, the strategic subject collects the information necessary to develop systems and models for organizing its knowledge about that place, which in turn reinforces its control. This positive feedback loop of power and knowledge exactly mirrors the ongoing “project of legibility” that, according to Scott, state simplifications realize among their subject populations.

This dissertation traces both institutional efforts to establish and local efforts to manipulate the legibility of spiritual subject populations in sixteenth-century Spain and Peru. Scott explains that, in its efforts to organize, supervise, and control a subject population or proper place of intervention, modern statecraft “is largely a project of internal colonization, often glossed, as it is in imperial rhetoric, as a ‘civilizing mission’” (82). Spain’s simultaneous pursuit of large-scale projects of religious and cultural homogenization in Europe and conquest and settlement in America—that is, both internal and external colonization—in the sixteenth century affords unique insight into the development and operation of the modern institution. The transatlantic scope of the dissertation allows for a comparative analysis of the implementation of the major Spanish institutions’ projects of colonization across the Empire, and an examination of how factors of race, religion, geography, population density, and proximity to seats of institutional power

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<sup>5</sup> What Scott calls the “legibility” of the institutional subject quite closely resembles the quality of “visibility” that Foucault attributes to subjects of the penal state in *Discipline and Punish*: an accessibility and familiarity, on the part of the subject, to the institution’s normalizing gaze, which enables the institution not only to surveil, but also to differentiate, to judge, “to qualify, to classify, and to punish” its subject population (184). Foucault argues that the disciplinary power of the state—more or less what Scott calls “modern statecraft,” especially as exercised through the state simplification—“imposes on those whom it subjects a principle of compulsory visibility. In discipline, it is the subjects who have to be seen. Their visibility assures the hold of the power that is exercised over them. It is the fact of being constantly seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in his subjection” (187).

affected its goals and strategies. We know that the Catholic Church in particular perceived the projects of internal and external colonization as analogous; according to Adriano Prosperi, missionaries in Europe “discovered early on that the same campaigns for religious conquest pursued in distant lands needed to be waged within the ‘Christian Continent,’ and by the mid-sixteenth century it had become normal to speak of ‘these Indies’ or ‘the Indies in these parts’ in connection with labors of preaching and catechizing in rural areas of Catholic countries or in areas of Europe infested with heresy” (178).<sup>6</sup> In the eyes of Church functionaries, both European peasants and indigenous Americans were “savages” who needed to be civilized.

In the chapters that follow, I argue that functionaries of the Spanish Church in particular pursue its civilizing mission through the regulation of individual spiritual experience: inquisitors, retreat directors, and confessors in both Spain and Peru attempt to assimilate local practices of devotion to a universal standard by reducing them to a series of standard sins, terms, and beliefs. I treat the Catholic Church as a state-like institution in part because it resembles the imperial states of sixteenth-century Europe in many ways. It has its own territories, and armies to defend and expand them; it levies taxes and amasses wealth; it has its own legal code, courts, and judges; it maintains diplomatic relations with several kingdoms; it is governed by a central monarch who exercises his power at the super-regional, regional, and local levels through an extensive hierarchy; and its subjects comprise a body politic, the *res publica Christiana*, that is united by its subjection to God and the Church. Perhaps more to the point, the Catholic Church, like other early modern states and state-like institutions, works to secure its territory (and here I refer not to the Papal States, but to the more ineffable territory of Christendom) against internal and external threats, and to perpetuate its own power (O’Malley, *Trent* 7-8; Reinhard 395-96; Höpfl 6; Esposito 6).

Just as Philip’s questionnaire presumes that the information necessary for regulating and directing the population is held at the local level, in individual and community practices, so do the Spanish and Peruvian Churches rely on local accounts to inform their interventions within their subject populations. Through individual disclosures of memory and experience like prayer manuals, spiritual autobiographies, and sacramental confessions, the Church can assess the continuing influences of Judaism, Islam, and Andean religion; the spread of Protestant, Illuminist, and idolatrous heresies; the extent of popular familiarity with the principal tenets of the faith; the prevalence of particular sins; and general trends or tendencies in devotional practice. As we’ll see, the Church and the smaller institutional actors beneath its banner, such as the Inquisition and the religious orders, standardize the local information that they extract from their subject populations in much the same way that Philip’s questionnaire does: by creating universal categories of knowledge and discourse to which subjects must assimilate their responses. Whether by issuing a state-wide edict describing a specific heresy, creating a standard language around affective experiences of divinity, or composing and circulating an official confessional manual, spiritual institutions in the sixteenth-century Spanish Empire design shorthands with which to reduce the variety and complexity of local spiritual experience to a standard grid.

At the same time, early modern subjects of the Spanish Empire respond intentionally and strategically to these demands for legibility, representing their interior experiences of God in ways that advance their own spiritual and political agendas. The dissertation analyzes discursive attempts to shape, limit, and exploit the individual subject’s legibility to spiritual and political

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<sup>6</sup> See also Adriano Prosperi, “‘Otras Indias’: Missionari della Controriforma tra contadini e selvaggi.” *Scienze, credenze occulte, livelli di cultura (Convegno internazionale di studi, Florence, 26-30 June 1980)*, edited by Gian Carlo Garfagnini, Olschki, 1982, pp. 205-34.

institutions through texts by Teresa of Ávila, Ignatius of Loyola, Martín de Azpilcueta, fray Luís de Granada, and the Third Council of Lima. Teresa's *Las moradas del castillo interior* (1577) and Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* (1540) show how strategic performances of subjection to Church authority can create space for spiritual autonomy both for individual Christians and for religious communities within the Catholic Church. Rather than restricting the practices of mysticism and interior spirituality in which the members of their religious orders can engage, both writers require their confreres to articulate their interior experiences of God in institutionally-accepted language, so that they become accessible to representatives of ecclesiastical power. Azpilcueta's *Manual de confesores y penitentes* (1549), fray Luís's *Guía de pecadores* (1556), and the Third Lima Council's *Confessionario* and *Tercero catecismo* (1585) show how sacramental confession functions as a state simplification in both peninsular Spain and colonial Peru, providing standard categories of sin according to which penitents must assess and report their behavior. The Church expands these categories to encompass non-Christian customs as well as economic and political activities that contravene the interests of the imperial regime, thereby repurposing the sacrament of confession as a tool for the cultural homogenization and political subjection of both Spanish and indigenous Christians.

To be clear, despite their name, state simplifications are often highly complex heuristics or models for organizing and generating knowledge. The facts that they generate, according to Scott, share two key characteristics: interestedness and standardization. First, state simplifications produce interested facts—data that support the state's or institution's pursuit of its own material interests (80). State simplifications provide a strategically-restricted view of their subject populations, allowing functionaries to isolate the information that interests them: birth rates, yearly incomes, landholdings, the distances between municipalities, and so forth. Philip's questionnaire, for instance, requests information about economic yield and imperial security, two pressing interests for a state regularly at war with its neighbors:

26. Y si es tierra de labranza, las cosas que en ella más se cogen y dan y los ganados que se crían y hay, y lo que comúnmente suele cogerse de los diezmos, y lo que valen, y las cosas de que tienen más falta, y de dónde se proveen de ellas.
27. Si hay minas de oro, plata, hierro, cobre, plomo, azogue, y otros metales y minerales de tinturas y colores.
31. La defensa de fortalezas que hubiese en los dichos puertos para seguridad de ellos, y los muelles y atarazanas que hubiese.
32. El sitio y asiento donde el dicho pueblo está poblado; si está en alto o en bajo, llano o áspero; y si es cercado, las cercas y murallas que tiene y de qué son. (*Relaciones* II xv-xvi)

The material interests that motivate these questions are easy to trace. In asking after the variety and availability of natural resources in New Castile, and how effectively its inhabitants convert those resources into profit, the chroniclers attempt to determine whether and where the Crown could raise additional tax revenues, to locate underutilized resources, to track the importation of raw materials, and to identify local shortages and surpluses that a redistribution of resources can rectify. Along similar lines, assessing the defensibility and strategic preparedness of the region's cities and towns allows the chroniclers to predict how many resources the Crown will have to expend to secure them in the event of war. The resulting information has direct bearing on the Crown's financial interests, and may be used to protect those interests down the line.

Second, state simplifications produce standardized facts—facts measured in the same units, or organized according to the same categories, to facilitate consultation and comparison at the institutional level. Even within these restricted categories, the way data is collected or reported may vary vastly from place to place or from person to person, so the state simplification also incentivizes each source to assimilate the information it provides to a universal standard. As Scott explains, “however unique the actual circumstances of the various individuals who make up the aggregate, it is their sameness or, more precisely, their differences along a standardized scale or continuum that are of interest” (80). This effort at standardization emerges most clearly in Philip’s questionnaire in the repeated requests for clarification around the distance to the closest town in each cardinal direction. Is the town due east, or slightly to the north or south? Is the route straight or winding? Are the leagues in which the route is measured big, small, or ordinary (qq. 13-16)? Here the chroniclers strive to assimilate the information they receive to the universal standards they have chosen for measuring direction and distance, so that they can cross-check the reports against one another to create an accurate map of New Castile (still undoubtedly a herculean task). We also find efforts to standardize incoming facts in the multiple-choice format of some of the questions. For instance, when asking how the lord of the town achieved his rank, the chroniclers limit the possible responses to appointment by the King, membership in an order of knights, or election by the community: “7.º El señor o dueño del pueblo, si es del Rey, o de algún señor particular, o de alguna de las Ordenes de Santiago, Calatrava, Alcántara, o San Juan, o si es behetería, y por qué causa, y cuándo se anagenó de la corona real y vino a ser cuyo fuese, si de ello se tuviese noticia” (*Relaciones* II xiii). By restricting the answers to a predetermined set of options, the chroniclers guarantee that the responses they receive will conform to a standard grid. The application of the state simplification thereby reduces the variety and complexity of local information to a comprehensive and comprehensible set of data selected according to the state’s interests and organized according to its preferred standards or categories.<sup>7</sup>

One particularly expedient way to render local practices institutionally legible is through linguistic standardization. Local languages and terminologies erect barriers around the worlds they describe, rendering them opaque to outsiders. Nuance and meaning are easily lost—or

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<sup>7</sup> N.B., Scott suggests that state simplifications also tend to generate what he calls “documentary” facts—that is, primarily verbal and delivered either orally or in writing (80). The format of Philip’s questionnaire, which requires respondents to deliver their answers to a notary for transcription, clearly aims to produce a written record of the information requested. However, the sources I examine in the chapters that follow produce oral records, spoken accounts of individual spiritual experience delivered to a representative of spiritual authority, whether an inquisitor (the *Moradas*), a retreat director (the *Spiritual Exercises*), or a confessor (the *confesionarios*). Insofar as they entail the verbal transfer of information from a local source to an institutional recipient, these accounts also constitute documentary facts. They are also standardized facts, insofar as they attempt to assign the activities upon which the individual reports to pre-existing institutional categories: are the mystic’s visions divine, demonic, or imaginative in provenance? Is the exercitant experiencing consolation or desolation? Which of the Ten Commandments has the sinner broken? Like Philip’s questionnaire, the *Moradas*, *Spiritual Exercises*, and *confesionarios* try to standardize incoming information to render it more useful to the relevant institution (the Inquisition, the Society of Jesus, and the Church of Peru, respectively). Once assimilated to standard categories, oral accounts of individual spiritual experience become aggregable—they can be compared across space and time. Are the nuns in a certain convent especially prone to demonic deception? Is the exercitant making spiritual progress? Is a particular sin endemic of a particular population, and is its incidence increasing or decreasing over time? The standardized, documentary facts that these sources generate, like those produced by Philip’s questionnaire and other secular state simplifications like censuses and registries of landholders, allow spiritual institutions to intervene effectively in the activities of their subject populations on behalf of their own interests (see pp. 3-4 above).



deliberately obscured—in translation to the hegemonic tongue. A unique local language constitutes a “powerful basis for autonomy . . . , a formidable obstacle to state knowledge, let alone colonization, control, manipulation, instruction, or propaganda. Of all state simplifications, then, the imposition of a single, official language may be the most powerful” (Scott 72). Linguistic standardization—which I expand in my analysis to include the standardization of terminology used to describe interior experiences of religious devotion—performs a colonizing function, eliminating the possibility of autonomy within the institution by compelling discrepant individuals or populations to make themselves accessible to hegemonic supervision. The imposition of an official language also fosters homogeneous institutional expansion and more consistent assimilation of outsiders into the institutional culture.

The institution incentivizes the adoption of the standard language by rewarding subjects who align themselves with institutional standards and penalizing those who deviate—for instance, the seventeenth-century French state granted provincial adopters of Parisian French greater mobility, expanded career options, access to a national education system, and political patronage, while speakers of local languages suffered a decline in economic, political, and social opportunities. Indigenous speakers of Spanish in colonial America acquired similar advantages, including access to both secular and ecclesiastical courts (Scott 73, Benton 382-83). The Third Council of Lima promoted linguistic standardization among indigenous Andeans by forbidding the circulation of any evangelical materials except its own trilingual catechism, confessional manual, and *sermonario*, effectively limiting the possible languages of exchange between Spanish missionaries and their indigenous congregants to Spanish, Quechua, and Aymara. The Council designed the catechism in particular as a literacy aid, with a trilingual *abecedario* and *silabario*, to further incentivize the adoption of one of the three official languages by associating them with the social and economic advantages that literacy conferred. The Spanish secular and ecclesiastical bureaucracy employed Quechua in particular as a “*lengua general*,” reinforcing hierarchies of social prestige and access to resources among Andean indigenous communities that the Inca Empire had already established through its own imposition of Quechua as the *lingua franca* of Peru (*Doctrina christiana* [24r-v] 67-68, Estenssoro Fuchs 191-92).

In the subsequent chapters, we will see analogous efforts to standardize religious terminology as a means of improving institutional access to individual spiritual practices. The texts under discussion all work to establish standard terms or categories for devotional activities and experiences. In the *Moradas*, Teresa encourages the Spanish Church to recognize interior spirituality as orthopraxy by providing lists of multiple-choice questions about the nature, content, and aftereffects of mystic visions, so that confessors and inquisitors who do not practice mental prayer themselves can still assess the orthodoxy and provenance of such visions in Christians—and particularly women—who do. Teresa’s questions aim to assimilate the variety and complexity of these interior experiences to a standard grid: visions that come from God; visions that come from Satan; and visions that originate in the devotee’s own imagination. In the *Spiritual Exercises*, Ignatius teaches prospective Jesuits to describe all of their interior spiritual experiences according to a standard language of affect, in which positive emotions and sensations are subsumed under the category of “consolation,” and all negative emotions and sensations under the category of “desolation.” The mandatory thirty-day retreat laid out in the *Exercises* immerses exercitants in this standard language, isolating them from their existing habits of thought, speech, and prayer, and incentivizing frequent disclosure of their spiritual experiences to their retreat directors, who help them to master Ignatius’s terminology. The confessional manuals also create a standard grid of sins to which the penitent must assimilate her thoughts and actions before

disclosing them to the confessor. The penitent internalizes this grid through repeated administration of the sacrament; the confessor models the examination and interpretation of her sins according to the Church's categories—most often the Ten Commandments and the seven deadly sins—with the hope that, over time, she will become increasingly proficient at assessing and regulating her own behavior according to the Church's rules. In this way, sacramental confession seeks to standardize the norms of Christian behavior as well as the language with which penitents describe their departures from these norms.

As discussed above, by standardizing and organizing local variations in language, knowledge, and practice, state simplifications enhance the efficacy of interventions intended to promote institutional interests—raising taxes on a particularly abundant good, for example, or posting a customs official in a town near a foreign border or waterway. However, the simplification itself is already an intervention: because it comes from the institution, the designation of standards or categories, carries the force of law. State simplifications, when invested with or backed by state power, “enable much of the reality they [depict] to be remade. Thus a state cadastral map created to designate taxable property-holders does not merely describe a system of land tenure; it creates such a system through its ability to give its categories the force of law” (Scott 3). To this point, when Philip's questionnaire asks whether the lord of the town is a royal appointee, a knight, or a community representative, it also informs the subjects completing the questionnaire that these are the only acceptable answers. Teresa's restriction of the possible origins of a mystical vision to God, the Devil, and the human imagination, Ignatius's reduction of diverse affective responses to consolation or desolation, and the *confesionarios*' assimilation of all sins to the Ten Commandments achieve similar effects. In other words, state simplifications not only describe the subject population as it currently is, but also prescribe the standards and categories to which the institution expects its subjects to conform. In this way, state simplifications support the creation of a subject population that actually reflects those standards and categories and, as a result, becomes easier for the institution to supervise and govern: “The modern state, through its officials, attempts with varying success to create a terrain and a population with precisely those standardized characteristics that will be easiest to monitor, count, assess, and manage. ... The builders of the modern nation-state do not merely describe, observe, and map; they strive to shape a people and landscape that will fit their techniques of observation” (Scott 81-82). The state simplification is not just a matrix for the assessment of an existing social reality, but also a projection of the institution's ideal reality or end state. The more closely the institution's subjects conform to its standards or categories, the more legible they become, and the more effectually they promote or uphold the institution's interests, perhaps over and against their own. The same holds true in the texts under study here; by designating and standardizing the aspects of religious activity that they consider of interest to the institutional observer (the inquisitor, the retreat director, the confessor), the *Moradas*, the *Spiritual Exercises*, and the *confesionarios* strive to reconcile transgressive or non-conformist spiritual practices with the prevailing model of Catholic orthodoxy—to recast or re-present mystics, contemplatives, and new Christians as observant and submissive subjects of the Church.

Philip's questionnaire exposes this underlying goal of remaking local realities in its preoccupation with the reach and effectiveness of Spain's major institutions: the Courts, the Crown, and the Church. The survey includes several questions that assess the townspeople's familiarity with the operations of civil and ecclesiastical bureaucracy and their proximity to representatives of both forms of authority. These questions also help the royal chroniclers to determine which

members of the civil and ecclesiastical hierarchies are responsible for enforcing institutional standards in each town, and how easily they can access the subjects under their jurisdiction:

- 8.º Si el pueblo de quien se hiciese relación fuese ciudad o villa, se declare si tiene voto en Cortes; y si no, qué ciudad o villa habla por él, o a dónde acude para las juntas o concejos o repartimientos que se hiciesen. ...
10. La gobernación, corregimiento, alcaldía, merindad o adelantamiento en que está el dicho pueblo; y si fuere aldea, cuántas lenguas hay hasta la ciudad o villa de cuya jurisdicción fuese.
11. Item, el Arzobispado, o Obispado, o Abadía y Arciprestazgo en que cae el dicho pueblo, cuya relación se hiciese, y las leguas que hay hasta el pueblo donde reside la catedral, o que es cabecera de su partido. ...
43. Las justicias eclesiásticas o seglares que hay en el dicho pueblo y quién las posee; y si en el gobierno y administración de justicia hubiese alguna diferencia de lo que en otras partes se platica.
44. Los ministros de justicia eclesiástica y seglar que hubiese en el dicho pueblo, y el número de regidores, alguaciles y escribanos, y otros oficios y oficiales de concejo. (*Relaciones II* xiv, xvii)

These questions reveal just how many levels of civil and ecclesiastical hierarchy exist in New Castile alone, illuminating the bureaucratic distance between Philip and his chroniclers at the top and the survey respondents at the bottom. The chroniclers ask after the respondents' proximity to their local seats of government because most individual subjects encounter institutional power through lower-level functionaries like the ones named above—*corregidores* and *alcaldes*, arch-priests and parish priests, judges, scribes, and the notaries to whom the questionnaire's respondents should deliver their responses. These functionaries carry out the state's ongoing "project of legibility": they are the subject's points of contact with the state simplification, the people in dialogue with whom she assimilates her knowledge and practice to the institutional standard (Scott 80). These interactions give rise to the facts upon which the state bases its interventions; once they are committed to paper, they become the state's reality (recall the responses to Philip's questionnaire that are sitting in El Escorial even now—and that in recent decades have been compiled, published, digitized, and uploaded to HathiTrust for the international community to see). They can guarantee rights, decide court cases, and justify the deployment of armies or police forces (Scott 83).<sup>8</sup> The effectiveness of the project of legibility, of modern statecraft, ultimately relies on these points of contact: does the interaction between institutional subject and representative of institutional power generate accurate and useful information?

Scott acknowledges that in many instances it does not. Sometimes functionaries make mistakes; sometimes equipment fails; sometimes misunderstandings occur, or bribes change hands, or subjects either misrepresent the truth or refuse to respond at all. For instance, in his analysis of the responses to the questions about local expressions of religious devotion in Philip's survey, Bill Christian, Jr. observes that several towns gave only minimal information—such as

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<sup>8</sup> On the production of "official" reality through the bureaucratic generation of paper records, see David Dery, "'Papereality' and Learning in Bureaucratic Organizations," *Administration and Society*, vol. 29, no. 6 (1998), pp. 677-689. For an examination of the manifestations of paperreality in colonial Spanish America, see Joanne Rappaport, "Letramiento y mestizaje en el Nuevo Reino de Granada, siglos XVI y XVII," *Diálogo Andino*, no. 46 (2015), pp. 9-26.

listing a few local hermitages or monasteries—while others either dismissed the questions with the response “nada de eso” or skipped them entirely (7-8). This example reminds us that the state simplification’s utopian goal of establishing a fully legible society continually runs up against the obstacles of fraud, negligence, incompetence, rivalry, technical error, political distortion, and the reticence, resistance, or inaccessibility of institutional subjects (Scott 80).<sup>9</sup> The transmission of information about spiritual experience and the process of establishing the veracity or orthodoxy of religious beliefs is particularly fraught. How exactly does a subject prove that she experiences mystical phenomena, feels true Christian devotion, or holds orthodox beliefs—or, as is more often the case in early modern Spain and Peru, that she does *not* receive visions from the devil, feel scorn for ecclesiastical authorities, or secretly hold heretical or heterodox beliefs? The texts studied here suggest that such decisions remain almost entirely at the discretion of the individual functionary—the inquisitor, the retreat director, the confessor—based on his interactions with the subject herself. It is at this point that I diverge from Scott: while he examines the project of legibility from the institution’s perspective, focusing on the creation and aims of the state simplification, I privilege the individual perspective, the discursive manipulation and negotiation that takes place at that point of contact between the subject and the representative of institutional power. Studying the generation and effects of institutional legibility from the bottom up, rather than the top down, opens up a new series of questions—for instance, who has the power to deploy the institution’s standards and categories, and to populate its grid with information? Can individuals or groups of subjects appropriate these standards and categories to advance their own interests alongside the institution’s? And if so, how?

My aim in this project is to invert the concept of legibility such that it exposes processes of local subject formation, rather than those of institutional data collection. To accomplish this inversion, I draw upon Judith Butler’s and Louis Althusser’s models of subjectivation, as well as de Certeau’s framework of strategies and tactics, to recast subjection to institutional authority as an evolving performance that reflects the individual’s interests as well as those of the institution. Following Althusser, I contend that the subject’s attempt to render herself legible is a response to interpellation; it entails self-subjection to the relevant institution. However, I argue with Butler and de Certeau that self-subjection occurs not once, but continually; it is a constant and evolving performance determined by the subject’s circumstances and interlocutors, a creative act as well as a compelled response to authority. As de Certeau writes in *The Practice of Everyday Life*, “If it is true that the grid of ‘discipline’ is everywhere becoming clearer and more extensive, it is all the more urgent to discover how an entire society resists being reduced to it, what popular procedures (also ‘miniscule’ and ‘quotidian’) manipulate the mechanisms of discipline and conform to them only in order to evade them” (xiv-xv). Not unlike de Certeau, I aim to draw attention to some of the ways in which the grid of institutional discipline is applied at the local level, and in which subjects of institutional power appropriate and repurpose elements of that grid in pursuit of their own interests.

Before going any further, I must address the use of the word “subject” here and in the rest of the dissertation. Although, as Butler observes in *The Psychic Life of Power*, the term “the

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<sup>9</sup> It should be noted that these obstacles to legibility, while they may diminish the efficacy of the state simplification as a data-collection strategy, do not invalidate it as an exercise of institutional power. The simplification’s goal is to extract and assemble useful, standardized facts, but its immediate effect is to make non-compliance a punishable offense, a form of opposition that carries the risk of retribution. Depending on the institution involved, non-compliant individuals and communities may be subject to social, political, or economic exclusion, fines, expropriation, excommunication, incarceration, or condemnation to eternal torment.

subject” is often treated as a synonym for “the person” or “the individual,” I use it here to mean a person or an individual who is at once *subject to* institutional power and *the subject of* actions or decisions (that is, an agent) in response to that power (10-11). As Butler explains, “power acts on the subject in at least two ways: first, as what makes the subject possible, the condition of its possibility and its formative occasion, and second, as what is taken up and reiterated in the subject’s ‘own’ acting. . . . If subjection produces a subject and a subject is the precondition of agency, then subjection is the account by which a subject becomes the guarantor of its resistance and opposition” (*Power* 14). Institutional power is a force prior and external to the subject, one that subordinates her and operates in and on her, but it is also the source of her self-recognition as an autonomous agent that can resist those operations. One becomes a subject through submission to power—by recognizing oneself as a subject of power. The experience of self-recognition cannot be disentangled from the experience of subordination; fittingly enough, the word “subjection” refers to both processes (Butler, *Power* 2).

Althusser gives a simplified account of the instantiation of this double movement of subordination and self-recognition in “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatus”: some representative of institutional power—a police officer, in his example—hails the individual, who recognizes herself as the intended recipient of his call. The process by which the institution recruits and transforms individuals into subjects, which Althusser also calls “interpellation,”

can be imagined along the lines of the most commonplace everyday police (or other) hailing: ‘Hey, you there!’ Assuming that the theoretical scene I have imagined takes place in the street, the hailed individual will turn round. By this mere one-hundred-and-eighty-degree physical conversion, he becomes a *subject*. Why? Because he has recognized that the hail was ‘really’ addressed to him, and that ‘it was *really him* who was hailed’ (and not someone else). Experience shows that the practical telecommunication of hailings is such that they hardly ever miss their man: verbal call or whistle, the one hailed always recognizes that it is really him who is being hailed. (118)

In this moment of mutual recognition—the police officer’s recognition of the individual as someone under his jurisdiction, and the individual’s recognition of herself as the intended target of his shout—the individual is constituted as a subject.<sup>10</sup> In the context of the state simplification, this moment of recognition entails the subject’s self-identification with a specific institutional standard or category—her turning in response to a functionary’s call of “Hey, you mystic!” or “Hey, you sinner!” In contrast to the shout of a friend or acquaintance, the police officer’s call carries the connotation of wrongdoing, or at least of the exercise of the law; whether the police officer is accusing the hailed individual of a crime, requesting her assistance in tracking down some other suspect, or offering her directions because she looks lost, the interaction revolves around his presumption that something about her is amiss.

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<sup>10</sup> Both Althusser and Butler emphasize that, while it is difficult to narrate this process of interpellation without giving it an extension in time, in fact it has no temporal dimension: the subject in both senses—in her relationship to institutional power and in her “freedom” to act within the space bounded by that power—is always already defined by the matrix of norms, rules, and categories into which she emerges. Before she becomes a subject, an “I” that recognizes itself as an agent and source of action, she is already subject to the operations of institutional power; she is a subject even before she is born (Butler, *Senses* 6-7; Althusser 119). Thanks to state simplifications, all her vital information—her name, the date, time, and place of her birth, her racial or ethnic background, her sex, her family lineage, even her religious affiliation—may be generated and recorded before she utters her first words.

While Althusser suggests that the possibility is a remote one—he says that hailings “hardly ever” miss their mark, later putting their success rate at nine times out of ten—the risk of misrecognition remains: sometimes the individual does not turn around, whether because the police officer does not know what to shout, or because the individual mishears him, or because she does not answer to the name he has called (118). Butler suggests that this possibility increases when the subject is interpellated according to a social category rather than a proper name:

Consider the force of this dynamic of interpellation and misrecognition when the name is not a proper name but a social category, and hence a signifier capable of being interpreted in a number of divergent and conflictual ways. ... If that name is called, there is more often than not some hesitation about whether or how to respond, for what is at stake is whether the temporary totalization performed by the name is politically enabling or paralyzing, whether the foreclosure, indeed the violence, of the totalizing reduction of identity performed by that particular hailing is politically strategic or regressive or, if paralyzing and regressive, also enabling in some way. (*Power* 96)

When the policeman calls out the category to which he thinks she belongs, the hailed individual must assess, in the space of the moment, not only whether she recognizes herself as a member of that category, but also whether acknowledging that recognition is to her advantage or disadvantage. Moreover, the results and the very possibility of this cost-benefit analysis vary with the identities and circumstances of both the subject and the functionary. For instance, in sixteenth-century Spain, being labelled a “mystic” puts an uneducated woman with only a tertiary affiliation to a religious order at a much greater disadvantage than a monk with a theology degree. By the same token, a confessor who calls his penitent a “sinner” during her annual confession presents much less of a threat than an inquisitor who applies the same label to his interrogee before a tribunal. In coercive contexts like the latter, it may not even matter whether the individual turns when hailed; the functionary’s decision to label her a heretic or an idolater, backed as it is by the force of law, is sufficient to assign her to that category in the institution’s eyes (and records). Hence the subject’s hesitation when hailed; does the functionary’s call even apply to her? If it does, do the advantages of turning around outweigh the risks? And does she even have a choice?

Here we begin to understand the necessity of negotiation at the point of contact between the subject and the representative of institutional power: what do they do when former does not recognize, or declines to respond, to the latter’s call? In *Giving an Account of Oneself*, Butler recasts the process of interpellation and recognition as a discursive exchange in which the representative of institutional power calls upon the subject to present a narrative of herself and her actions, which he can use to categorize her more accurately. As in Althusser’s model, this exchange between functionary and subject occurs under the sign of wrongdoing; Butler, following Nietzsche, presumes that the representative of state power demands a self-narrative from the subject because she has committed some kind of offense. Through the functionary’s request, the subject recognizes herself as both an agent capable of transgressive action and a subordinate held responsible for that action by an external power:

We are being asked by an established authority not only to avow a causal link between our own actions and the suffering that follows, but also to take responsibility for these actions and their effects. In this context, we find ourselves in the position of having to give an account of ourselves. We start to give an account only because we

are interpellated as beings who are rendered accountable by a system of justice and punishment ..., because someone has asked me to, and that someone has power delegated from an established system of justice. I have been addressed, even perhaps had an act attributed to me, and a certain threat of punishment backs up this interrogation. And so, in fearful response, I offer myself as an 'I' and try to reconstruct my deeds, showing that the deed attributed to me was or was not, in fact, among them. (Butler, *Account* 10-11)

Butler introduces shades of grey into a process that Althusser represents as black and white. Whereas Althusser's model permits only a binary response—when the policeman calls, the subject either turns or does not turn—Butler's reframing of subjection as the functionary's demand for an account of the subject's deeds allows for greater nuance and variety in her response. In addition, the dialogic structure of the interaction affords opportunities for clarification and negotiation, which might mitigate the subject's hesitation at responding to the functionary's request.

That said, the interaction is still predicated upon the suspicion of wrongdoing; the functionary requests the subject's account of herself to determine whether she has committed an offense (and I would add that failing to conform immediately to an institutionally-sanctioned standard or category is itself an offense against the institution; as the multiple-choice questions in Philip's survey demonstrate, subjects are expected to adhere to the options provided, and that expectation carries the force of law). For this reason, the onus lies with the subject to assimilate herself as closely as she can to an existing category, in order to facilitate recognition: "If I try to give an account of myself, ... I will, to some degree, have to make myself substitutable in order to make myself recognizable. The narrative authority of the 'I' must give way to the perspective and temporality of a set of norms" (Butler, *Account* 36-37). Whereas in Althusser's model of subjection the functionary assumes the primary responsibility for categorizing the subject, insofar as he decides what name to call her, in Butler's model the subject must do the work of making herself recognizable to him. However, let us recall that the subject is not only subject *to* power but also a subject *of* power. When asked to give an account of herself that will render her legible to the interpellating institution, she may refuse, either by falling silent or by preserving some space of secrecy, of illegibility, within her narrative:

It is always possible to remain silent in the face of such a question, where the silence articulates a resistance to the question: 'You have no right to ask such a question,' or 'I will not dignify this allegation with a response,' or 'Even if it was me, this is not for you to know.' Silence in these instances either calls into question the legitimacy of the authority invoked by the question and the questioner or attempts to circumscribe a domain of autonomy that cannot or should not be intruded upon by the questioner. (Butler, *Account* 11-12)

Like the respondents to Philip's questionnaire who skipped certain questions or responded with "nada de eso," the subject can refuse to expose certain aspects of her experience, knowledge, or practice to the institutional gaze, or to translate them, as it were, from her local dialect into the standard tongue (Christian, Jr. 7-8). In this way, she can avoid institutional intervention or correction, and perhaps even resist or change the terms of her subjection—though always, of course, at the risk of punitive response.

There is also a third option between submission and silence: negotiation. An instance of misrecognition need not represent a failure on the functionary's part or an offense on the

subject's; it can also signal an opportunity (or a need) for the revision or expansion of the institution's categories. Because these categories constitute the ground for subjection, the terms through which or by which the institutional subject recognizes herself as an agent,

what I can 'be,' quite literally, is constrained in advance by a regime of truth that decides what will and will not be a recognizable form of being. Although the regime of truth decides in advance what form recognition can take, it does not fully constrain this form. Indeed, *decide* may be too strong a word, since the regime of truth offers a framework for the scene of recognition, delineating who will qualify as a subject of recognition and offering available norms for the act of recognition. ... There is always a relation to this regime, a mode of self-crafting that takes place in the context of the norms at issue and, specifically, negotiates an answer to the question of who the 'I' will be in relation to these norms. (Butler, *Account* 22)

The institution's categories always already structure the subject's self-recognition; that is, she can only recognize herself as a subject of power in relation to those categories. However, she plays a role in the negotiation of that relation: will it be one of identification and alignment, of resistance and opposition, or of approximation and expansion? Butler's use of the term "self-crafting" also points us toward the performative nature of subjection: the process of negotiating with the representative of institutional power requires the subject to narrate or otherwise exteriorize some aspect of her "self," to craft an account of her experience or practice that he can understand and assess. I suspect that the work of self-crafting plays an especially significant part in the formation of the spiritual subject, because so many of the experiences and practices that she is asked to narrativize—attitudes, beliefs, practices of prayer—take place within the self. Misrecognition is quite difficult to avoid when the clues or markers that the functionary needs to make his categorization are interior to the subject. As Butler asks in *Gender Trouble*, "How does a body figure on its surface the very invisibility of its hidden depth?" (183)

The subject must perform her relation to the institution's categories through her espousal of the proper beliefs and the humble posture of her soul, which requires some exterior manifestation of those beliefs and posture, whether discourse or action.<sup>11</sup> In other words, the representative of institutional power apprehends the subject's discourse and behavior as indicators of the real content and disposition of her soul; her devotional acts and gestures are performative insofar as they "produce the effect of an internal core or substance, but produce this *on the surface* of the body .... If reality is fabricated as an interior essence, that very interiority is an effect and function of a decidedly public and social discourse, the public regulation of fantasy through the surface politics of the body" (Butler, *Gender Trouble* 185). I am not trying to argue that individual religious devotion—like gender in Butler's formulation—exists solely in the performance while also maintaining the collective social illusion of the prior existence of an interior soul (though I would be eager to see how that argument plays out in dialogue with the boom in lay and mystical spirituality in sixteenth-century Spain, and even more so with the campaigns of extirpation of idolatry in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Peru). I am, however, arguing that individual devotion exists solely in the performance *for the institution*—or, more precisely, that institutions cannot access their subjects' interiority. The reality that the functionary commits to paper is

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<sup>11</sup> Along these lines, Althusser helpfully reminds us that the ruling ideology recognizes that "the 'ideas' of a human subject exist in his actions, or ought to exist in his actions, and if that is not the case, it lends him other ideas corresponding to the actions (however perverse) that he does not perform" (113-14).



fabricated from his apprehension of the subject's interior beliefs and postures entirely on the basis of what she says and does. As a result, the subject must carry out the cost-benefit analysis of the initial moment of subjection—should I turn around? or, more accurately, how should I enact my relation to the institution's categories?—at every point of contact with a representative of institutional power. If her beliefs and postures are categorized as heretical, heterodox, or recidivist, the subject runs the risk of punishment. For this reason, she must prove to the functionary that she stands primarily in a relation of identification and alignment with the institution's categories. This initial submission is the ground upon which she can build a case for revising or expanding those categories, particularly if the institution has already called upon her to defend her actions.

We can identify the performance of this primary relation of alignment quite easily in the texts of our two Catholic reformers, Teresa and Ignatius. Both writers are founders of religious orders built around the practices of mental prayer and interior spirituality—risky choices precisely because they occur in the individual soul, and therefore foreclose upon the possibility of external supervision by representatives of the Church. As manuals for their particular practices of mental prayer, the *Moradas* and the *Spiritual Exercises* effectively lobby for its incorporation into the category of Catholic orthopraxy. To avert misrecognition as heretics or dissenters (a categorization that neither Teresa nor Ignatius escaped entirely: both made multiple appearances before the Inquisition, resulting in the confiscation of one of Teresa's manuscripts and two stints in jail for Ignatius), the two reformers incorporate explicit declarations of submission to the institutional Church alongside their endorsement of these controversial prayer practices (Llamas Martínez 141-44, Émonet 54-56). For example, in the prologue to the *Moradas*, Teresa professes her subordination to the Church and excuses any deviations from received doctrine as evidence of her ignorance, rather than her dissidence: “Si alguna cosa dijere que no vaya conforme a lo que tiene la Santa Iglesia Católica Romana, será por inorancia y no por malicia. Esto se puede tener por cierto y que siempre estoy y estaré sujeta, por la bondad de Dios—y lo he estado—a ella” (207-8). Ignatius includes a similarly unconditional declaration of submission in the “Rules for Thinking with the Church” that he appended to the *Exercises* before their publication: “Debemos siempre tener, para en todo acertar, que lo blanco que yo veo, creer que es negro, si la Yglesia hierárchica assí lo determina” (*Exx.* 365). What's more, this performance of alignment as the primary relation, and negotiation as the secondary relation, to the categories of the institutional Church actually worked: the Inquisition approved both texts for general circulation, and the Catholic Church canonized both Teresa and Ignatius as saints in 1622 (Dandeleit 106-7).

In the *Confessionario*, the Third Lima Council requires the indigenous penitent to make a similar declaration of submission as her primary relation to the Church before she can negotiate her recategorization from “sinner” to “Christian in good standing” ([4v] 204). The confessor will not allow her to recount her sins unless she has first recited the general confession, a prayer in which she declares her guilt and begs both God's and her confessor's forgiveness:

Confieffome a Dios todo poderoso, y a la bienaventurada siempre virgen Maria, y al bienaventurado S. Miguel Archangel, y al bienaventurado Sant Iuan Baptista, y a los sanctos Apostoles Sant Pedro y Sant Pablo, y a todos los sanctos. Y a vos padre: que peque mucho, con el pensamiento, con la palabra, y con la obra. Por mi culpa, por mi culpa, por mi gran culpa. Por tanto ruego a la bienaventurada siempre virgen Maria, y al bienaventurado Sant Miguel Archangel, y al bienaventurado Sant Iuan Baptista, y a los sanctos Apostoles Sant Pedro, y Sant Pablo y a todos los sanctos y a vos padre, que rogueys por mi al Señor Dios nuestro. (*Doctrina christiana* [11r-v] 41-42)

Here, the profession of subordination to the institutional Church more broadly, which we saw in Teresa's and Ignatius's texts, gives way to a more intimate and immediate submission to the specific representative of institutional power with whom the penitent is currently interacting: "y a vos padre." At a more fundamental level, the penitent's very presence in the confessional enacts her relation of alignment with the Church insofar as it fulfills her annual obligation to confess her sins to her parish priest ("Fourth Lateran Council"). Merely by showing up, she performs her self-recognition as a subject of the Church's power.

In addition to the fact that negotiation with the institution is contingent upon one's prior submission to it, these examples show us the need to repeat the performance—to manifest one's subjection as a relation of alignment with the institution's categories at each point of contact with institutional power. The initial moment of subjection has long since passed for all the subjects named above: Teresa and Ignatius had reached late middle age (sixty-two and forty-nine, respectively) and attained wide renown as religious leaders when their texts were published, and, as we've seen, indigenous penitents were expected to go to confession—and to recite the general confession—at least once a year, if not more. And yet, even though they are always already subjects, the possibility (and the risk) of misrecognition never goes away. The continual enforcement of the institution's categories by different functionaries at different places and times requires this individual performance of subjection, like the performance of gender in Butler's account, "to materialize itself in obedience . . . not once or twice, but as a sustained and repeated corporeal project" (*Gender Trouble* 190). Butler clarifies that, despite her use of the word "project," the repeated performance is really more of a tactic for survival, in that the impetus comes not from the performing subject herself but from the prevailing culture—or, in our case, the supervising institution—that subjects her. In response to this external pressure, the subject must recount and enact her interior beliefs, postures, and devotional experiences as evidence of her relation to the institution's categories continuously over the course of her lifetime, such that she is never definitively formed, but always forming.

While this repeated performance of subjection may seem onerous for the subject, each new point of contact with a representative of institutional power also affords her a new opportunity for negotiation. She need not always give the same performance; the advantages and disadvantages of exteriorizing certain beliefs or experiences, much like the advantages and disadvantages of turning in response to the policeman's call, vary with the circumstances. In other words, the subject's performance of subjection is contingent upon a variety of factors—time and place, language of exchange, institutional records or memories of previous performances (if any exist), and above all her intended audience and her own interests and agenda. In this regard, the performance of subjection resembles to some extent what Michel de Certeau calls a "tactic": the individual complement to the institutional "strategy" described above. As discussed, the strategy consolidates its power by circumscribing a space "proper" to it and gathering enough information about that space to predict and control the actors, objects, and activities within it. The tactic, by contrast, has no proper place: it is the individual actor's unexpected or unpredictable movement through the space of the strategy, in pursuit of goals or interests that differ from the strategy's own. In de Certeau's words, tactics

trace 'indeterminate trajectories' that are apparently meaningless, since they do not cohere with the constructed, written, and prefabricated space through which they move. They are sentences that remain unpredictable within the space ordered by the organizing techniques of systems. Although they use as their *material* the *vocabularies* of established languages (those of television, newspapers, the supermarket or city

planning), although they remain within the framework of prescribed *syntaxes* (the temporal modes of schedules, paradigmatic organizations of places, etc.), these ‘traverses’ remain heterogeneous to the systems they infiltrate and in which they sketch out the guileful ruses of *different* interests. (*Practice* 34)

The action that de Certeau describes is an individual appropriation of an institutional logic, the turning of the institution’s categories of knowledge or discourse, if only momentarily, to the subject’s ends. The indeterminate movements of the tactic do not enable the actor to escape regulation, but they do introduce the possibility of pursuing her own interests or establishing her own rules as secondary to the strategy’s. De Certeau offers the example of *la perruque* (“the wig”), the worker’s trick of doing work for himself while on the job by disguising it as work for his employer—a secretary writing a personal letter from his desk, for instance, or a furnitemaker using company tools to make a piece for her home (*Practice* 25). We might think of Teresa emphasizing her feminine simplicity and lack of education to justify her reluctance to put the content of her mystical encounters with God into words, or of Ignatius entrusting the power to assign Jesuits to missions to the already overburdened papacy, so that in practice all the decisions will fall to the Jesuit superior general, or of penitents packing the Church during Holy Week, so that the only way the priest can possibly absolve them all before Easter is to confess them *en masse* (Weber, *Rhetoric* 103; *Const.* VII.1-2; Harrison, *Sin* 5-6). All of these subjects perform their submission and obedience to the institution while also protecting their own interests or pursuing their own ends. I should add, though, that sometimes those ends revolve around the tactic’s revision of or incorporation into the strategy. Both Teresa and Ignatius wanted to reform and revitalize the institutional Church through their practices of interior spirituality and the religious orders that they built around those practices. Teresa invited the Carmelite prior general to visit her reformed convent and lobbied him to support the foundation of several more. Ignatius petitioned the Holy See to issue a papal bull of foundation for the Society of Jesus. Both argued for the orthodoxy of their forms of mysticism in texts that they crafted to satisfy inquisitorial censors. And, as we’ve seen, it worked: the Church canonized them both as part of a new class of Counter-Reformation saints who embodied a militant and missionary Catholicism (de Certeau, “Mystic Speech” 86; Ahlgren 46; Émonet 87; Dandélet 106-7).

All of these examples illuminate the possibility for creativity and plurality in one’s responses to the institution’s demands, but they also underscore the institution’s inexorability and the extent to which its rules and categories dominate the field of action. De Certeau explains that because the tactic has no place of its own—because it is a maneuver executed in the enemy’s territory, as it were—it cannot accumulate advantages and plan future actions like the strategy can. Instead, it must “seize on the wing the possibilities that offer themselves at any given moment. It must vigilantly make use of the cracks that particular conjunctions open in the surveillance of the proprietary powers” (*Practice* 37). While strategies strive to resist the effects of time through the circumscription and control of a proper place, tactics rely almost entirely on time. They capitalize upon the personal opportunities that arise from particular configurations of circumstances—an inquisitor who also practices mental prayer, a bishop who hasn’t yet read the decrees of the Council of Trent, a confessor who doesn’t really speak the local language. The subject’s performance of subjection is contingent upon such variations in circumstance; in each interaction with a representative of institutional power, she can choose what to conceal or reveal, which words to use, and how forcefully or explicitly to negotiate. From her perspective, neither her subjection nor the institution that subjects her is monolithic. Both are plural and evolving, structured by the

institution's rules and categories but contingent upon the particular conjunction of circumstances and interests at each point of contact.

In the chapters that follow, we will examine specific textual performances of subjection to the institutional Church in sixteenth-century Spain and Peru, and the ways in which the subjects and functionaries involved adapt their discourse to the particular circumstances of the point of contact. The first chapter, "Limited legibility in Teresa de Jesús' *Las moradas del castillo interior*," shows how Teresa promotes the suspect practice of mental prayer by simultaneously exposing and concealing its inner workings from the representatives of ecclesiastical power reading her text. She provides inquisitors and confessors with a ready-made state simplification for assessing the orthodoxy of practicing mystics, including detailed questions to help them categorize the provenance of a subject's mystical visions as divine, demonic, or human. The format of these questions—enumerated lists of propositions—closely mirrors the format of the edicts that the Inquisition issued to all members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy to assist with the identification of certain types of heresy, suggesting that Teresa is appropriating institutional discourse to lend authority to her own claims. However, even as she creates standard categories for the assessment of mental prayer, she refuses to assimilate the content of her own mystical encounters to the grid. She sidesteps the obligation to describe the content of her own visions by allegorizing her relationship to God as a spiritual marriage, recasting their encounters as moments of spousal intimacy that good Christian wives should never discuss. In this way, she promotes institutional acceptance of mental prayer while also limiting her own exposure to inquisitorial scrutiny.

The second chapter, "Making mystic texts: Jesuit subject formation in the *Spiritual Exercises*," argues that Ignatius of Loyola installs a paradox between absolute autonomy and absolute obedience at the heart of the Society of Jesus. The *Exercises* teaches the Jesuit how to generate his own mystical encounters through a proprietary process called the "discernment of spirits," in which he interprets affective experiences as definitive signs of God's will. This skill of discernment grants the Jesuit more or less total spiritual autonomy; it enables him to request and receive a sign of God's preference with regards to any choice, anywhere, anytime. However, each individual Jesuit's power to generate mystical encounters puts the Society's organizational cohesion and hierarchical stability at risk, insofar as it eliminates the need for external spiritual input and guidance. To counter this autonomy, Ignatius also establishes an imperative of total obedience to one's superior, as if to Christ. A crucial component of this obedience is the regular disclosure of one's interior experiences and interpretations of God's will. To ensure that the subordinate's disclosures are legible to his superior, the *Exercises* teaches each Jesuit how to express his immediate encounters with God into a standard, Society-wide language—to translate them into mystic "texts" that any Jesuit can read.

The third chapter, "Sacramental confession and institutional strategy in sixteenth-century Spain and Peru," suggests that sacramental confession serves as a Certeaulian strategy for the maintenance of imperial hegemony on both the Peninsula and in the colony. By designating the penitent's conscience as its proper place of operation, confession teaches Spanish and Andean subject populations to police their own behavior for sins that contravene the interests of the imperial regime. Both peninsular and colonial manuals secure the penitent's conscience for future interventions by inculcating her with a psychological need for the sacrament; they teach her to associate the commission of sin with guilt about offending God and fear for the fate of her soul. The manuals also enlist the penitent as an agent of her own surveillance by predicating forgiveness and absolution upon her making a thorough self-examination and complete confession of her sins to the priest. In this way, sacramental confession encourages the penitent to

internalize the Church's categories of sin and to regulate her behavior according to them. In both Spain and Peru, the confessional mechanisms of self-examination and self-policing work to turn penitents into homogenous and compliant subjects of the imperial regime; Azpilcueta's *Manual de confesores y penitentes* and the Third Lima Council's *Confessionario* categorize not only non-Christian religious and cultural customs, but also social, political, and economic activities that run counter to the interests of the Spanish secular and ecclesiastical hierarchies, as sins.

As I've suggested, inverting Scott's model of legibility to privilege the subject's perspective, rather than the institution's, opens up a series of questions about how individual subjects experience and assimilate to the state simplification, and about what exactly happens at the point of contact between the subject and the representative of institutional power. Thinking about institutional legibility in the context of subject formation helps to destabilize monolithic conceptualizations of power and oppression in the early modern period because it reminds us that the institution itself has many faces: Teresa encounters more and less sympathetic confessors, and more and less sympathetic censors; Ignatius receives friendly advice from the Archbishop of Toledo right after spending six weeks in an Inquisitorial jail; indigenous penitents confess to priests with differing evangelical agendas and differing linguistic competencies (Mujica, *Woman* ix; Gracián 58-59; Llamas Martínez 141-42, 154; *Acta* VI:60-63 446-52; Estenssoro Fuchs 17, 25). If we treat institutional subjection as a repeated and contingent performance, we start to see possibilities for negotiation between the subject and the institution, acknowledging the latter's authoritarianism and violence without ignoring the former's creative agency. The subject's process of rendering herself legible to representatives of institutional power is a compelled response to an authoritarian system, but one that allows her some agency over her relation to the institution and permits the pursuit of a plurality of interests within the institutional domain—even if the subject's interests are always secondary. Following Butler, I submit that even if the institution “supplies a set of norms that produce a subject in his or her intelligibility, it also remains a set of norms and rules that a subject must negotiate in a living and reflecting way” (*Account* 10).

In an essay on Althusser and Cervantes, Anthony Cascardi suggests that the early modern subject performs external compliance to institutional rules in order to preserve within herself a position of internal dissidence (153). I would argue that, more than a simple screen for heterodoxy or recidivism, the sustained performance of compliant subjecthood can serve as a means to a personal or organizational end. By performing her subjection to both God and the Church, Teresa petitions the latter to recognize interior forms of devotion as orthopraxy without having to reveal the content of her most private interactions with the former. Ignatius cultivates the elaborate exteriorization of orthodox devotion in his fellow Jesuits in order to create a space of organizational autonomy under the banner of the Church. In both cases, these future saints compel the Church to embrace the orthodoxy of practices of interior spirituality to which it has no access and over which it has no control, in service of the Catholic Reform. By recognizing the stylistic idiosyncrasies of Spanish religious reformers as a means of appropriating existing discourse to promote controversial expressions of spirituality, my project sheds some light on the ways that early modern Catholics create spaces of autonomy within subordination. At the same time, my investigation of the colonial Church's deployment of sacramental confession as an acculturative and regulatory tool points to the institution's awareness of the possibility of internal dissidence and the risks associated with these spaces of autonomy. The peninsular and colonial confessional manuals move beyond the surface control of the subject's behaviors to try to regulate the interior space of her soul; by installing feelings of guilt and a psychological need for confession, the

sacrament prompts penitents to internalize of the Church's categories of sin so that they can police themselves between points of contact with institutional power.

In the essay mentioned above, Cascardi argues that although Marxist thought "has rarely been incorporated into peninsular Spanish studies," contemporary critical theory around the function of the State, the formation of subjects, and the nature of ideology might help Hispanists to explain the ambiguities and contradictions of the early modern moment (143-44). Despite the dangers of anachronism, I believe that the dialogue my project fosters between sixteenth-century manuals of prayer and confession and twentieth- and twenty-first century theories of statecraft and subject formation can illuminate the dynamics of institutional subjection underlying the former and the historical trajectory behind the latter, and, as a result, can advocate for the mutual utility of these corpuses.

## Chapter 1

### Limited legibility in Teresa de Jesús's *Las moradas del castillo interior*

El qual est tal medio de dos coraçones  
que la voluntad que estaua no junta  
la su dulcedumbre concorda e ayunta  
faziéndoles vna sus dos opiniones,  
o dando tal parte de sus afeçiones  
a los amadores sin gozo cadena,  
e a los amados deleyte sin pena,  
a los menos méritos más galardones.

Juan de Mena, *Laberinto de Fortuna* CXV

Saint Teresa of Ávila (1515-1582) wrote constantly: mystical treatises, poems, administrative documents, and correspondence with her family, her confessors, the prioresses of the many Discalced Carmelite convents she founded in the 1560s and 1570s, the superior general of the Carmelite order, and, on a few occasions, King Philip II of Spain (Mujica, *Woman* 103; Slade 234). However, between her many responsibilities as foundress and prioress and the time her religious rule required her to spend in contemplation, Teresa had hardly enough hours in the day to keep up with her literary ambitions—especially after she broke her writing arm in 1577 in a tumble down the convent stairs. In order to continue her work, Teresa requested the help of a young Carmelite, Ana de San Bartolomé, who sometimes served as her nurse and personal assistant. Ana was from a peasant family and did not know how to write, so Teresa taught her by writing a few sentences for her to trace over (Mujica, *Woman* 43; Donahue 7-8). In her testimony at Teresa's canonization proceedings, Ana recalled that just by tracing over those two lines, she miraculously learned to write in a single afternoon:

Hallándose la santa madre Teresa de Jesús fatigada por tener muchas cartas a que responder, la dijo a esta declarante: si tú supieras escribir, ayudárasme a responder a estas cartas. Y ella le dijo: deme Vuestra Reverencia materia por donde dependa. Dióla una carta de buena letra de una religiosa descalza, y díjola que de allí aprendiese. Y esta testigo la replicó que la parecía a ella que mejor sacaría de su letra, y que a imitación de ella escribiría. Y la santa Madre luego escribió dos renglones de su mano y dióselos; y a imitación de ellos escribió una carta esta testigo aquella tarde a las hermanas de San José de Avila. Y desde aquel día la escribió y ayudó a responder las cartas que la Madre recibía, sin haber, como dicho tiene, tenido maestro ni aprendido

a escribir de persona alguna, ni haberlo aprendido jamás, y sin saber leer más de un poco de romance, y con dificultad conocía las letras de cartas; por do conoce ser obra de Nuestro Señor. (Silverio 173)

I begin with this story because it shows Teresa, very literally, making herself legible to a fellow Carmelite and teaching her to do the same.<sup>1</sup> Ana de San Bartolomé traced over Teresa's lines with great precision; she, too, was a mystic who received visions of God, a prioress for the Discalced Carmelites, and the author of a spiritual autobiography (Donahue 8-9, 16). Teresa taught Ana not only how to write, but also how to be a woman mystic and spiritual leader in a moment when, as we shall see, the Spanish ecclesiastical establishment harbored deep suspicions about the spiritual legitimacy of both women and mystics.

Writing lines for others to trace over was very much Teresa's goal as a reformer and a writer. She was, as Jodi Bilinkoff says, "a woman with a mission"—a mission to support a beleaguered Church with apostolic activity, despite the norms and limitations of her sex, and to extend the same opportunity to other women ("Mission" 101). Because women in post-Tridentine Spain could not preach or evangelize, Teresa proposed that they fight a rearguard action, using prayer to bring souls to God and send strength to the preachers and missionaries on the front lines. A community of women joined in constant prayer could, she believed, battle heretics and heathens just as effectively as their male colleagues in active ministry. To achieve her mission, Teresa had to accomplish two things: she had to found new convents that dedicated a significant proportion of their time to praying for the Church (as opposed to other activities that nuns were often required to perform, such as providing companionship to widows and entertaining their convent's patrons), and she had to teach the women in those convents how to pray properly (Bilinkoff, "Reform" 174; Mujica, *Woman* 2-3).

Teresa wanted to teach her nuns "mental prayer," a contemplative practice she had learned from two devotional books by Franciscan mystics: Francisco de Osuna's *Tercer abecedario espiritual* (1527), and Bernardino de Laredo's *Subida del monte Sión* (1535). Mental prayer is a progressive practice that begins with silent meditation on Christ's humanity and proceeds to the prayer of *recogimiento* (recollection), a state of "effortless receptivity to God's will" in which the practitioner's senses and faculties are completely suspended (Weber, "Administration" 124). In the *Subida*, Laredo explains that during *recogimiento*

el ánima, encerrada en su quietud, no entiende en lo que contempla. Y porque contempla en Dios solo, y Dios es bondad incomprehensible; y así, cuando el ánima, puesta en su estrecha quietud, está empleada en sólo amor, no sabe entender en aquel su esencial encerramiento otra cosa sino amar. Y es menester que sepamos que en aqueste recogimiento del ánima que contempla consiste la mayor satisfacción, y mayor contentamiento, y más gran felicidad que cualquier contemplativo puede tener en esta vida. (III.2.305-6)

While Teresa practiced *recogimiento* as Laredo and Osuna described it, she also expanded the definition of mental prayer to incorporate any form of prayer that requires original thought; even rote recitation can become mental prayer if the devotee concentrates deeply and reflects upon the words she is saying (Márquez Villanueva 363; Weber, *Rhetoric* 83). When Teresa mastered the practice of *recogimiento* in the mid-1550s, she began to receive visions and revelations from

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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed definition of legibility in the context of this project, see the Introduction, pp. 3-4.



God, and she became convinced that mental prayer could serve as an alternative apostolic activity for Christians, and particularly women, who could not perform more active ministries.

While Teresa considered the unmediated relationship with God that mental prayer afforded its practitioners one of the practice's greatest spiritual advantages, the Spanish ecclesiastical establishment saw it as cause for concern (Pérez González 8-9). As the fear of Lutheranism pushed the Spanish Church toward a more catechetical and hierarchical model of piety, theologians regarded mysticism and mystical theology—the knowledge obtained through visions and other direct revelations—with growing suspicion. Women mystics faced even greater suspicion; in the middle part of the century, the Inquisition condemned many female visionaries as heretics or frauds, and attributed their visions to diabolical seduction, or sexual possession by the Devil (Weber, *Rhetoric* 45). To limit the circulation of mystical ideas among uneducated readers, the Inquisition also banned several of the books from which Teresa had learned about mental prayer, and which she was planning to use as instruction manuals in her new convents. In order to proceed with her reforms, Teresa saw no choice but to write her own book on mental prayer, the grave risks of inquisitorial persecution notwithstanding (Ahlgren 33).

Though Teresa's first attempt at a mental-prayer manifesto, the *Libro de la Vida* (1565), has historically received the lion's share of scholarly attention, it did not achieve her goal of improving popular access to instruction in and examples of mental prayer (at least not during her lifetime): in 1574, the Inquisition confiscated the manuscript because, according to the censors, it contained too much visionary material and complex theology for public consumption, and was only suitable for highly-educated readers (Ahlgren 47-50, Llamas Martínez 141-42). The censors' responses to the *Vida*, though disappointing, improved Teresa's understanding of institutional expectations. In order to publicize her doctrine successfully, she needed to render her prayer practice at once more legible—to show confessors and examiners that they could, with the right information, effectively evaluate the orthodoxy of mental prayer, and to show prospective contemplatives that they could, even with no theological education, understand and reproduce the difficult concepts of interior spirituality—and also less: if she revealed too much, she risked falling into heterodoxy or esotericism, either of which would prevent the circulation of her work.<sup>2</sup> In other words, Teresa needed, in a single text, to prove to her institutional readers that uneducated Christians (and especially women) could practice mental prayer safely, and to show uneducated Christians (and especially women) how to practice it.

That text is the *Moradas del castillo interior*. Written in 1577, with the *Vida* in the hands of the Inquisition and accusations of heresy and carnal indecency before the tribunal of Seville threatening Teresa's future as prioress, reformer, and writer, the *Moradas*, of all Teresa's works, most clearly bears the marks of institutional pressure.<sup>3</sup> Teresa wrote the *Moradas* to guarantee that her doctrine would circulate even if the *Vida* never emerged from the Inquisition's archives;

<sup>2</sup> As Josefina López puts it, Teresa “tuvo que buscar las estrategias discursivas y comunicacionales adecuadas, no sólo que le permitiesen transmitir dichos conocimientos sin ser acusada de heterodoxa, sino que su mensaje fuese comprendido por todos, sobre todo, si sus destinatarios, en este caso, sus monjas, carecían del substrato doctrinal teológico; además de que la mayoría de ellas no sabían leer” (1).

<sup>3</sup> Given the gravity of the accusations against Teresa in Seville (see pp. 33-34 below), one wonders why she might risk additional trouble with the Inquisition by writing another manual on mental prayer. Francisco Márquez Villanueva contends that Teresa's mission to get mental prayer recognized as orthopraxy—to remove for future practitioners the institutional obstacles with which she has struggled—is what drives her to write the *Moradas* despite the danger: “Lo hace por legitimar a aquéllas para siempre en el seno de la ortodoxia y por caridad con las almas angustiadas de miedo e incomprensión. En adelante, ninguna conciencia cristiana habrá de sufrir como sufrió la suya, bajo tiranía de manos ignorantes por espacio de tantos años” (376-77).

in it, she reproduced and expanded upon many of the same themes, this time with a watchful eye on the censors who had validated the *Vida*'s doctrine but recommended against its publication. The *Moradas* also incorporates a realm of mystical experience beyond that described in the *Vida*, a favor that Teresa first received in 1572: the "spiritual marriage" (Morón Arroyo 188).

In the *Moradas*, Teresa works simultaneously to extend and to limit the legibility of her doctrine. She makes two major efforts to translate the practice of mental prayer into language that her core readerships will understand—the institutional language of state simplifications, and the popular language of chivalric romances—but imposes limits in both cases, preserving a small degree of illegibility in order to grant herself some measure of spiritual autonomy. In the first instance, she addresses the Inquisition's concerns about the difficulty of supervising and controlling practitioners of mental prayer. How can you tell if a vision is divinely inspired? What do you do when it's not? How do you counsel contemplatives? Teresa draws upon her extensive experience as both practitioner and prioress to answer these questions with neatly-enumerated lists for her institutional readers to consult. Rather than presuming to speak for the Church, she evokes its authority discursively, imitating the language of state simplifications both to suggest the orthodoxy of mental prayer and to facilitate its incorporation into confessors' and examiners' understanding of acceptable devotional practice. However, the mystical experience upon which she founds her authority to provide state simplifications for mental prayer is, at its core, incommunicable. The transcendence of the divine referents of mystical knowledge inevitably defies the immanence of human language, so that, ultimately, only individuals with similar experiences will fully understand Teresa's imperfect explanations of them. The same experience and expertise that enables Teresa to articulate these explanations also authorizes her to determine which institutional representatives are competent to assess practitioners of mental prayer. Tellingly, in Teresa's estimation, only confessors and examiners with direct experience of interior spirituality—in other words, those most likely to endorse its orthodoxy—can safely and effectively advise the individuals who practice it.

In the second instance, she helps uneducated readers to follow the obscure path to interior spirituality. By allegorizing the soul's relationship to God as a "spiritual marriage," she transforms the practice of mental prayer into a love story between God and the soul. To tell this love story, she describes the soul's progress toward mystical union in terms of the events, emotions, and obligations of two popular models of romance, courtly love and Christian wifedom, with which her uneducated readers were likely to be familiar. Here, too, her means for legibility has a limit: the allegory of spiritual marriage with which she elucidates the soul's most obscure movements also requires that she conceal the content of its most intimate exchanges with God, under the seal of conjugal privacy. In both instances, Teresa sidesteps the traditional means of spiritual authority—the citation and interpretation of sacred texts—and instead invokes sources of knowledge available to women: lived experience (of convent life, mystical favors, womanhood, and wifedom) and vernacular literature (chivalric romances and courtly love poetry).<sup>4</sup> By building both her spiritual credibility and her doctrine of mental prayer upon these foundations,

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<sup>4</sup> In the Prologue, Teresa explains that her text is intended for a female audience—namely, her Carmelite sisters—and that she plans to write directly to them, using "women's" language to facilitate their understanding: "Díjome quien me mandó escribir que, como estas monjas de estos monesterios de Nuestra Señora del Carmen tienen necesidad de quien algunas dudas de oración las declare, y que le parecía que mejor se entienden el lenguaje unas mujeres de otras, ... tiene entendido por esta causa será de alguna importancia si se acierta a decir alguna cosa, y por esto iré hablando con ellas en lo que escribiré" (*Moradas* 208).

Teresa manages the tricky task of communicating and disseminating her ideas without violating the Church's injunction against women "teaching" any spiritual content.

These apparent concessions to women's moral and intellectual inferiority actually work to expand their spiritual autonomy: Teresa's valorization of individual experience confers upon religious women the agency to assess their own spiritual progress and elect their own spiritual guides, while her utilization of chivalric metaphors affords them the opportunity to embark, albeit internally, upon heroic adventures in God's service. Teresa's version of interior spirituality enables women to become Christian knights in their own way; they can quest for God's glory and crusade against his enemies through mental prayer. In the *Moradas*, she presents mental prayer as the means to an active apostolate; while prayer itself is a form of service, souls that have received divine favors like spiritual union and spiritual marriage also feel a strong drive to express their love for God outwardly, through good works in his name. By committing to text her own experiences as both practitioner and guide, she seeks to legitimize mental prayer as a form of Catholic orthopraxy and to expand its practice among women and the unlettered. The *Moradas*, then, is the textual complement to Teresa's founding of new convents and the Carmelite Reform, another vehicle for the realization of her mission to expand women's apostolic activity in support of the Counter-Reformation Church.

To illuminate Teresa's methods for simultaneously extending and limiting legibility, I'll first examine the evolution of her mission to develop an apostolate for women, her attempts to reform the Carmelite order and expand the practice of mental prayer, and the risks to which these attempts exposed her. I'll turn next to her efforts to show that mental prayer need not threaten the Church's hierarchical model of piety, by providing clear instructions for assessing the provenance (divine, diabolical, or human) of a practitioner's visions and for handling cases of demonic or self-deception. I'll then show how she undermines these efforts by insisting upon both the incommunicability of mystical experience and the spiritual harm that inexperienced confessors and examiners can inflict upon contemplatives—and how, with these claims, she attempts to smuggle mental prayer into orthopraxy by suggesting that only those members of the ecclesiastical hierarchy who are themselves practitioners are qualified to confess and examine their fellow contemplatives. Finally, I'll look at the ways in which Teresa's allegory of spiritual marriage reproduces the key characteristics of courtly love and Christian wifehood, as articulated in two representative marriage manuals, Juan Luís Vives's *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana* (1524) and fray Luís de León's *La perfecta casada* (1583).<sup>5</sup> I'll show first how this allegory clarifies the mystical favors of mental prayer and emphasizes their Catholic orthodoxy, and then how it justifies Teresa's tacit refusal to disclose the content of the revelations the soul receives through spiritual marriage by characterizing them as intimate secrets of the conjugal chamber. I hope to demonstrate that Teresa, by both expanding and limiting her legibility, creates a small space of individual spiritual autonomy within the mediated and controlled piety of the institutional Church.

#### TERESA'S MISSION AND ITS RISKS

Teresa's simultaneous efforts to increase and limit the institutional legibility of mental prayer, undertaken at great personal risk, reflect the same apostolic zeal that motivated her

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<sup>5</sup> N.B. While Teresa could not have read either of these texts (Vives's was originally published in Latin, and fray Luís's only after Teresa's death), she most likely encountered many of the ideas they contain; both texts exemplify both the contemporary Spanish vision of the ideal Christian woman in her three "estates" (virgin, wife, and widow) and the corresponding trend to write treatises on the subject (Ahlgren 7).

efforts to reform the Carmelite order and to expand women's role in the Counter-Reformation. Her literary production formed part of her lifelong crusade to defend the Church against enemies both external and internal. Teresa's missionary vocation emerged early, thanks to her extensive reading of hagiographies, *libros de caballería*, and crusade and conquest accounts (Bilinkoff, "Reform" 173-74; "Mission" 102). In the *Vida*, she recalls that she and her favorite brother shared a childhood dream of dying heroically in combat with the Moors:

Como vía los martirios que por Dios las santas pasavan, parecíame compravan muy barato el ir a gozar de Dios y deseaba yo mucho morir así ... y juntávame con este mi hermano a tratar qué medio 28abría para esto. Concertávamos irnos a tierra de moros, pidiendo por amor de Dios, para que allá nos descabezasen; y paréceme que nos dava el Señor ánimo en tan tierna edad, si viéramos algún medio, sino que el tener padres nos parecía mayor embarazo. (*Vida* 1:5 597-98)

Jodi Bilinkoff says that this anecdote reveals both Teresa's "sense of mission, and the frustration she felt at her inability to exercise an active apostolate" ("Mission" 102). More specifically, it reflects a desire for adventure and Christian heroism that women had almost no means to express. Teresa longed to fight for a Church that she perceived to be facing crises both at home and abroad; the expansion of Lutheranism in northern Europe and the challenges of evangelization in America posed threats from without, while corruption, apathy, and a lack of effective prayer instruction sapped strength from within (Bilinkoff, "Mission" 102-3; Márquez Villanueva 366). However, her sex effectively barred her from apostolic activity, and she felt profoundly jealous of friars and priests for their ability to preach, evangelize, and crusade. In the *Libro de las fundaciones*, she recounts her frustration and envy upon meeting a Franciscan missionary

con los mismos deseos de el bien de las almas que yo, y podíalos poner por obra, que le tuve yo harta envidia. Este venía de las Indias poco había. Comenzóme a contar de los muchos millones de almas que allí se perdían por falta de doctrina.... Yo quedé tan lastimada de la perdición de tantas almas, que no cabía en mí. Fuíme a una ermita con hartas lágrimas; clamava a Nuestro Señor, suplicándole diese medio cómo yo pudiese algo para ganar algún alma para su servicio, pues tantas llevaba el demonio, y que pudiese mi oración algo, ya que yo no era para más. Havía gran envidia a los que podían por amor de Nuestro Señor emplearse en esto, aunque pasasen mil muertes. (*Fundaciones* 1:7 683-84)<sup>6</sup>

In post-Tridentine Spain, women could neither missionize nor preach publicly, and their mobility was severely restricted (Bilinkoff, "Mission" 111).<sup>7</sup> This state of affairs originated with the

<sup>6</sup> Teresa expresses similar feelings in the *Moradas*, explaining that the soul "se querría meter en mitad del mundo, por ver si pudiese ser parte para que un alma alabase más a Dios; y, si es mujer, se aflige del atamamiento que le hace su natural, porque no puede hacer esto, y ha gran envidia a los que tienen libertad para dar voces, publicando quién es este gran Dios de las caballerías" (VI.6 378). Her use of the word *caballerías* suggests that the appearance of chivalric tropes in the *Moradas* may be related to this envy. Her depiction of the soul as a knight echoes the medieval monastic conceits of *militia spiritualis*, man's life as a spiritual battle, and *miles Christi*, the Christian soul as a soldier for God (Chorpenning, "Monastery" 247; Weber, *Rhetoric* 110), but might it not also lay claim to the right to participate in the heroic activities typically reserved for men?

<sup>7</sup> Enclosure was considered the natural state for all women; as fray Luís explains, "como son los hombres para lo público, así las mujeres para el encerramiento" (XVI.147). Women who spent too much time in the street

religious reforms of the Reyes Católicos, who associated female enclosure with religious purity and attempted to enforce perpetual strict cloister among Spanish nuns by sending ecclesiastical visitors from convent to convent to assess observance. Thus, by the time that the Council of Trent officially decreed it in 1563, strict claustration had already become a familiar aspect of female monastic life in Spain. The claustration of nuns gave rise to a particularly passive vision of female sanctity; while holy men distinguished themselves as religious leaders, missionaries, or preachers, holy women tended the sick and needy or stayed in their cells to pray and do penance (Mujica, *Woman* 3-5; Ahlgren 26). Any apostolic model that Teresa designed for women would therefore have to conform to the limitations of strict enclosure and contemplative piety.

Teresa's interest in mental prayer led her to a possible solution. She first developed the practice in 1536, after reading Francisco de Osuna's *Tercer abecedario espiritual*, and renewed her commitment to it in the mid-1550s (Mujica, *Woman* 29; Weber, "Administration" 124). Osuna elegizes mental prayer as both a refuge for the soul and a powerful tool against evil: "Es una continua resistencia contra los príncipes de las tinieblas, que secretamente nos combaten; ... es una resurrección a vida espiritual, donde es dada al justo potestad en el cielo de su ánima y en la tierra de su cuerpo; ... y es sacerdocio real, con que, siendo de nosotros señores, nos ofrezcamos a Dios; ... y es victoria que vence el mundo menor, sujetándolo enteramente a Dios" (VI.3 241). This presentation of mental prayer as a means of resistance, a source of strength, a form of priesthood, and a path to victory bears the echoes of a more active apostolic model; Osuna suggests that its practitioners can be evangelists, missionaries, preachers, and crusaders all at once.<sup>8</sup> As Teresa's practice of mental prayer deepened, so did her apostolic drive. Sometime in 1560, she had a vision of hell that brought her mission into clearer focus:

Estando un día en oración, me hallé en un punto toda, sin saber cómo, que me parecía estar metida en el infierno. Entendí que quería el Señor que viese el lugar que los demonios allá me tenían aparejado y yo merecido por mis pecados. ... El caso es que yo no sé cómo encarezca aquel fuego interior y aquel desesperamiento sobre tan gravísimos tormentos y dolores. No vía yo quién me los dava, más sentíame quemar y desmenuzar, a lo que me parece, y digo que aquel fuego y desesperación interior es lo peor. ... De aquí también gané la grandísima pena que me da las muchas almas que se condenan (de estos luteranos en especial, porque eran ya por el bautismo miembros de la Iglesia) y los ímpetus grandes de aprovechar almas, que me parece cierto a mí que por librar una sola de tan gravísimos tormentos pasaría yo muchas muertes de muy buena gana. (*Vida* 32:1-6 797-98)

This vision of the torment of souls in hell motivated Teresa to contribute to their salvation. She conceived of an apostolic model whereby she could battle God's enemies without compromising her commitment to enclosure and contemplative piety: strict observance of her religious rule and continuous mental prayer in support of the Church (*Vida* 32:9 799). She also envisioned a new convent that would uphold a more rigorous version of the Carmelite Rule and house "a

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were "vagabundas"—the papal nuncio Filippo Sega, frustrated by Teresa's frequent travels around Castile and Andalusia, famously called her a "restless gadabout" in a 1578 letter (Mujica, *Woman* 181).

<sup>8</sup> Neither is this mental apostolate exclusive to men; because all humans are made equally in the image of God, they are equally able to seek him out. Osuna argues that every individual, regardless of sex or schooling, can communicate with God if she so desires: "Esta comunicación no es a ti, ¡oh hombre quien quiera que seas!, menos posible que [a] los otros; pues que no eres menos hecho a imagen de Dios que todos los otros, ni creo que tienes menos deseo de ser bienaventurado que los otros" (I.1 131).

community of committed women engaged in unceasing prayer” (Bilinkoff, “Mission” 106). Teresa’s apostolic model treated both religious observance and mental prayer as forms of action, the former because it transformed God’s word into reality, and the latter because it delivered souls to God and strengthened his soldiers (Chorpenning, “Monastery” 250; Bilinkoff, “Mission” 107).<sup>9</sup> In the *Moradas*, Teresa assures her sisters that their prayers are a form of service to God:

No podéis vosotras ni tenéis cómo allegar almas a Dios, que lo haríades de buena gana, mas que, no habiendo de enseñar ni de predicar, como hacían los apóstoles, que no sabéis cómo. . . . ¿Pensáis que es poca ganancia que sea vuestra humildad tan grande, y mortificación, y el servir a todas, y una gran caridad con ellas, y un amor del señor, que ese fuego las encienda a todas, y con las demás virtudes siempre las andéis despertando? No será sino mucha, y muy agradable servicio al Señor, y con esto que ponéis por obra —que podéis— entenderá Su Majestad que haríades mucho más. (*Moradas* VII.4 457-58)

Teresa envisioned the Carmelite nuns as fighting a kind of rearguard action behind a front line of male evangelizers and missionaries.<sup>10</sup> Since nuns could not preach publicly against Protestantism, Teresa made it one of her Carmelites’ special missions to pray for the priests and prelates who did—and their prayers, she believed, could fight heresy as powerfully as any sermon (Ahlgren 36; Bilinkoff, “Mission” 107-8, “Reform” 174). To build up her rearguard troops, Teresa launched a campaign to reform the Carmelite order; with the founding of the convent of San José in 1562 she created a new branch, the Discalced (*descalzados*) Carmelites, that observed a stricter version of the Rule and spent at least three hours a day in mental prayer. After visiting San José in 1567, the Carmelite prior general was so impressed that he authorized Teresa to found several more convents. When she died in 1582, Teresa had opened another sixteen Discalced Carmelite houses across Castile and Andalusia (Ahlgren 46; Bilinkoff, “Reform” 175).

Teresa’s original plans for the Carmelite reform depended upon the large canon of devotional texts that were written in or translated into Spanish in the first half of the sixteenth century, many of them during the primacy of Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros (1436-1517). Cisneros—a Franciscan ascetic, monastic reformer, and Christian humanist—exercised a major influence over Spanish religious attitudes from his concurrent posts as Archbishop of Toledo, Inquisitor General, and confessor to Queen Isabella (Hamilton 10, Ahlgren 10). He practiced mental prayer (while Spanish provincial of the Franciscans, he required ninety minutes of meditation a day) and supported both mystical theology and popular devotion, which flourished during his

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<sup>9</sup> The substitution of monasticism for martyrdom had some medieval precedent; as the persecution of Christians grew rarer, the faithful sought other means of self-sacrifice. The monk in his asceticism aims to imitate Christ in his passion, so the observance of monastic norms is always already a practice of *imitatio Christi* (Chorpenning, “Monastery” 246-47). This substitution seems particularly relevant to women, who could not missionize.

<sup>10</sup> The military metaphors that pervade Teresa’s writings reflect this martial mentality. Chorpenning proposes that, by likening the monastery to a castle, she inserts convent life into a broader battle metaphor wherein the nuns, sheltered within the castle’s keep, help its defenders in their fight against external enemies (“Monastery” 250). Per Mujica, Teresa often encouraged her nuns to picture themselves as soldiers fighting their enemies with prayer; she saw the reform as “a war in which God was the supreme commander or captain general, she was a general, her collaborators were lieutenants, and the nuns and friars were soldiers” (*Woman* 69).

primacy and for many decades thereafter.<sup>11</sup> According to Gillian Ahlgren, the Spanish translations that he commissioned of the Scriptures, the Church Fathers, and many mystical works facilitated “major developments in lay spirituality and allowed women increased access to the mystical tradition” (10). Teresa, because she had no Latin, owed her spiritual formation entirely to devotional texts in the vernacular: she read St. Jerome, St. Augustine, Ludolph of Saxony, and Thomas à Kempis in Spanish translations commissioned by Cisneros and the Reyes Católicos; she began to practice mental prayer after reading the Franciscan mystics (namely Osuna and Laredo); and she drew much of her understanding of mystical theology from spiritual writers like Juan de Ávila, fray Luís de Granada, and fray Pedro de Alcántara (García de la Concha 54-62; Mujica, *Woman* 29). The latter writers were extremely important for Teresa because they vindicated spiritual experience as a source of knowledge equivalent to theological education; Osuna, Laredo, and Luís de Granada in particular assured aspiring devotees, including women, that they could cultivate meaningful relationships with God even without a university degree or fluency in Latin. For this reason, Teresa made their texts the backbone of her nuns’ spiritual formation. The Discalced *Constitutions* required that all Carmelite nuns know how to read Spanish, that prioresses teach novices who had not yet learned, and that all convents keep a supply of “good books”—including works by Ludolph of Saxony, Thomas à Kempis, Antonio de Guevara, Luís de Granada, and Pedro de Alcántara—for their residents to consult (Ahlgren 38; Mujica, *Woman* 54-55, 165).

Unfortunately, Teresa’s plans for a textually-based reform coincided with sweeping institutional measures to reduce public access to devotional literature in the vernacular. As part of a broader effort to bring Spanish ecclesiastical practices in line with Tridentine reforms and to prevent the dissemination of heretical ideas, Inquisitor General Fernando de Valdés (r. 1547-1566) decided to limit the circulation of religious texts (Nalle, “Inquisition” 558, “Literacy” 72-73). Valdés’ Index of Prohibited Books, issued in 1559, forbade the circulation of vernacular Bibles and banned many Spanish-language treatises on interior spirituality and mystical theology. Because it deprived Teresa of the literature she needed to instruct her nuns in mental prayer, the Valdés Index seriously endangered her plans for the Carmelite reform (Ahlgren 34; Mujica, *Woman* 55; Pérez González 8).<sup>12</sup> In order to proceed with her mission, she decided to write her own devotional text, the *Vida*, to help fill the void the Index had created; per Ahlgren, “the prohibitions in the Valdés Index were a major motivation for Teresa to move from reading books to

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<sup>11</sup> Sara T. Nalle shows that, based solely on the number of editions, the most popular authors in Spain in the 1500s were Antonio de Guevara and Luís de Granada, whose *Libro de la oración* was the best-selling book of the century. From the 1520s on, devotional literature in the vernacular comprised between one-third and one-half of the total stock in Castilian bookshops, which often included several of the works named here in editions that cost less than a laborer’s daily wages. According to Nalle, the consumption of devotional literature spanned all socioeconomic groups and both sexes; many members of the lower and middle classes owned a few devotional books, which they perceived as an extension of their religious lives (“Literacy” 80-86).

<sup>12</sup> As Gillian Ahlgren explains, the Index’s elimination of the corpus of vernacular texts left unlettered contemplatives with no access to orthodox language for describing their interior experiences. As a result, female practitioners of mental prayer ran great risk of institutional persecution: “Because many women did not conform their expression of their experience to scholastic categories (or found that their experience did not conform to them), they were vulnerable to the scrutiny of the Inquisition’s censors. As the genres of theological discourse shifted from speculative and mystical treatises to dogmatic texts, the technical terms used to describe mystical states were not accessible to vernacular writers. Religious women, increasingly pressured by their confessors into experiential exegesis, scrambled to find a vocabulary that would separate them from innovators and establish them within orthodox circles” (20).

writing them” (41). With her writing, Teresa sought to restore her Carmelite sisters’ (and other unlettered readers’) access to spiritual direction, and, as with her foundations, to realize her apostolic mission: she herself would provide the prayer instruction and good example that the Church, in her eyes, so desperately needed.<sup>13</sup> In the last twenty years of her life, she wrote four books (*Libro de la vida* [1565], *Camino de perfección* [1567], *Libro de las fundaciones* [1573-1582], and the *Moradas* [1577]), several Carmelite administrative materials, dozens of poems, meditations, and reflections, and hundreds of letters. She considered these literary works a means for bringing souls to God; by sharing the practice of mental prayer with a broad readership, she might increase the number of rearguard soldiers—and especially female soldiers—supporting the Church’s ongoing war against heresy and apathy (Ahlgren 37; Bilinkoff, “Mission” 110).<sup>14</sup>

Conscious of the looming threat of the Index, Teresa took especial care in drafting the *Vida*. Between 1565 and 1566, she solicited feedback from her then-confessor, García de Toledo, and from other spiritual advisers, including Juan de Ávila. In response to their comments, she refined the vocabulary that she used to describe mystical phenomena, and removed passages that might embroil her in ongoing theological debates (Ahlgren 46). All seemed well until April 1574, when Teresa’s decision to relocate a group of nuns from Pastrana to Segovia prompted Ana de Mendoza y Silva, princess of Eboli and patroness of the Pastrana convent, to denounce her to the tribunal of Córdoba by way of revenge.<sup>15</sup> During their investigation, the inquisitors

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<sup>13</sup> In the *Tercer abecedario*, Osuna encourages experienced contemplatives to share their knowledge with the uninitiated, like the eagle who encourages her children to fly by pantomiming the action for them: “A la cual cumbre y altura debe el contemplativo, como el águila, provocar a que los otros vuelen, siendo en ello tan solícito como el águila para que sus hijos vuelen, cuando los siente para ello aparejados. Y débelos provocar y volar sobre ellos, que es enseñarlos por palabra y por ejemplo” (VIII.1 277). Perhaps Teresa felt interpellated by this injunction to instruct others, and saw herself, in the *Vida* and the *Moradas*, showing her readers how to fly by flying over them. The avian metaphor she chooses to explain the value of spiritual guidance in the *Moradas* certainly suggests as a connection: “Procurar quien esté con mucho desengaño de las cosas del mundo, que en gran manera aprovecha tratar con quien ya le conoce para conocernos. Y porque algunas cosas que nos parecen imposibles, viéndolas en otras tan posibles y con la suavidad que las llevan, anima mucho y parece que con su vuelo nos atrevemos a volar, como hacen los hijos de las aves cuando se enseñan que, aunque no es de presto dar un gran vuelo, poco a poco imitan a sus padres” (*Moradas* III.2 265-66). Teresa’s depiction of new devotees as baby birds who learn to fly by imitating their parents echoes the maternal efforts of Osuna’s eagle.

<sup>14</sup> In her study of the *Vida*’s readers and uses, Alison Weber suggests that Teresa’s literary activity is inseparable from her missionary vocation to build an apostolate of mental prayer within the bounds of Catholic orthodoxy. Beginning with the *cuentas de consciencia* she wrote at her confessors’ behest in the 1550s, Teresa not only convinced many of her spiritual advisers of the orthodoxy of mental prayer, but even converted them into practitioners (“Three Lives” 108-9).

<sup>15</sup> In 1569, Doña Ana and her husband Ruy Gómez de Silva, a highly-placed adviser to Philip II, had bankrolled the foundations of both a Discalced nunnery and friary on their property in Pastrana. However, when Ruy Gómez died in 1573, Doña Ana decided to enter the convent herself, along with her mother and a large retinue of servants. Her repudiation of the order’s rules and her insistence on special treatment quickly soured her relations with both the nuns and the prioress, and she returned home within a year. However, even after leaving the convent, Doña Ana continued to punish its residents, once going so far as to suppress their revenue to force them to submit to her will. Upon hearing of the Pastrana nuns’ suffering at Doña Ana’s hands, Teresa ordered them to relocate to a newly-founded convent in Segovia, which they did in April 1574, under cover of night. Doña Ana retaliated by taking her personal copy of the *Vida*—which she had demanded from Teresa around the time of the Pastrana foundations—directly to the Inquisition (Mujica, *Woman* 39-40; Weber, *Rhetoric* 130-31). In the *Fundaciones*, Teresa tactfully explains that during her time in the convent, Doña Ana “vínose a desgustar con [la priora] y con todas de la manera que aun después que dejó el hábito, estando ya en su casa, le davan enojo, y las pobres monjas andavan con tanta inquietud que yo procuré con cuantas vías



learned that Teresa reportedly “tenía un libro de revelaciones, más alto que el de Santa Catalina de Siena”: the *Vida* (Llamas Martínez 141). The tribunal confiscated the manuscript in October 1574 and sent it to the Consejo de Madrid for examination. The censor, Hernando del Castillo, gave a favorable report of Teresa’s doctrine, but he considered the book unsuitable for circulation, so the Holy Office did not return it (Ahlgren 47-48; Llamas Martínez 141-42).<sup>16</sup> The tribunal of Valladolid undertook a second examination of the *Vida* in 1575. The assigned censor, Domingo Báñez (a former confessor of Teresa’s), issued a verdict similar to Castillo’s: he found nothing objectionable in the doctrine, but, given the book’s visionary content, did not believe it should circulate, especially among women. In his estimation, it was suitable only for educated readers. Many of the theologians who ultimately read the *Vida*, including Juan de Ávila, agreed (Ahlgren 49-50; Llamas Martínez 141-42).<sup>17</sup>

Around the same time that Báñez issued his report, Teresa founded a new convent in Seville that almost immediately ran into trouble with the Inquisition. A dissatisfied nun denounced Teresa in the summer of 1575, and the investigation lasted until late 1576. The tribunal ultimately dropped the case without issuing a formal verdict, but in early 1577 two nuns made grave accusations of carnal indecency against Teresa and her confessor, Jerónimo Gracián, that launched another trial (Llamas Martínez 143-44).<sup>18</sup> With the *Vida* in inquisitorial custody and her

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pude, suplicándolo a los perlados, que quitasen de allí el monesterio, fundándose uno en Segovia, ... adonde se pasaron, dejando cuanto les había dado la Princesa y llevando consigo algunas monjas que ella había mandado tomar sin ninguna cosa” (17:17 760).

<sup>16</sup> Raquel Trillia’s study of the manuscript of the *Vida* at El Escorial shows that “los cambios hechos al manuscrito por otra mano sugieren que los censores no encontraron graves problemas doctrinales con su contenido, aunque debe tenerse en cuenta que si el manuscrito no estaba en circulación, su contenido ya no necesitaba considerarse peligroso. Dicho esto, es de notar que los cambios, aunque no sean sustanciales, se encuentran en las secciones del texto que tratan sobre arrobamiento y sobre profecía, ambas experiencias espirituales problemáticas por su misma naturaleza. El lector/censor se veía ante la necesidad de creerle a Teresa o no, sin poder verificar lo escrito, lo cual puede explicar que el censor leyera con más detenimiento estas secciones” (61).

<sup>17</sup> Ryan Prendergast explains this institutional ranking of a text’s prospective readers in his *Reading, Writing, and Errant Subjects in Inquisitorial Spain*: “Perhaps what was most dangerous about books in the hands of a reader was the possibility for misinterpretation or the communication of unfiltered information, and this was the basis for the debate regarding two distinct Golden Age reading publics, the *lector discreto* and the *lector vulgar*. There was no way to control exactly how someone would understand a text, giving rise to the institutionally sanctioned censorial procedures to monitor content and control access. If questionable material could be kept out of the hands of undiscerning readers, officials might be able to curtail the dissemination of ideas and ideologies considered erroneous or heretical. Of course, the control of the printed word did not prevent manuscripts from circulating among readers of all classes” (12-13). Indeed, although the *Vida* was neither approved nor published in Teresa’s lifetime, it did circulate in manuscript even after the Inquisition had confiscated it. While the extent to which Teresa facilitated this circulation remains unclear, Alison Weber tells us that, according to beatification testimonies, “the *Life*, or parts of it, as well as Teresa’s subsequent works were copied and circulated among four groups: 1) regular and secular clergy, 2) Discalced Carmelite nuns as well as a few nuns from other orders, 3) lay patrons, 4) women from the highest nobility, including members of the royal family and their retinue. From the beatification and canonization proceedings, it is difficult to get a consistent picture of precisely how clandestine this circulation was. ... Some witnesses gave the impression that the reading, copying, lending and borrowing of manuscripts was carried out in great secrecy, while others give no indication of such concerns at all. Dorotea de la Cruz testified that Teresa brought her writings with her when she visited various convents and that she knew many nuns who helped to copy them. In the beatification proceedings, thirty-eight nuns testified that they had seen some or all of Teresa’s writings, and most asserted that they had seen works written ‘in her own hand’” (“Three Lives” 111-12).

<sup>18</sup> Upon learning of these denunciations, the Calced Carmelite friars in Seville, who resented Teresa’s reform efforts, circulated vicious rumors about Gracián’s conduct with the Discalced nuns: that he danced naked

convent under investigation, Teresa feared for the success of her missions to reform the Carmelite order and expand the practice of mental prayer. Since she did not know whether the Inquisition would ever release the *Vida* for publication—especially given the gravity of the case before the Seville tribunal—Teresa had to write another prayer manual to replace it: the *Moradas*. In the margins of his copy of Francisco de Ribera’s 1590 biography of Teresa, her confessor Gracián (to whom the *Moradas* is addressed) recalls the conversation that prompted her to write it:

Lo que pasa acerca del libro de las moradas es q siendo yo su perlado y tratando en Toledo una vez y muchas de cosas de su spiritu ella me decia: o q bien escrito esta esse punto en el libro de mi vida q esta en la Inquisicion. Yo le dixi: pues que no le podemos auer, haga memoria de lo que se le acordare y de otras cosas y escriba otro libro y diga la doctrina en comũ sin que nombre a quien le aya acaescido aquello q alli dixere y assi le mande q escribiese este libro de las moradas. (Gracián 58-59)

By Gracián’s account, the decision to write the *Moradas* grew out of Teresa’s frustration over the *Vida*’s confiscation, and her desire for her work on mental prayer to circulate more widely. At his urging, she developed a new text that reproduced much of the *Vida*’s original content in ways less likely—or so they hoped—to draw the censors’ attention, which she then submitted to her spiritual advisers for initial revision. In Weber’s estimation, this anecdote shows that Teresa and Gracián “viewed the new text as a way to circumvent prohibitions against the circulation of the *Life*” (“Three Lives” 110). The *Moradas* reflects an additional decade’s worth of mystical experience as well as institutional savvy—the Inquisitional know-how that Teresa had acquired through interrogations, trials, and censors’ reports. She strove to turn this hard-won knowledge to her advantage in her second prayer manual, writing strategically so that it might escape the fate of her first: “Se tomará, acorde, exquisito cuidado en proteger el código de *Las Moradas* del sino inquisitorial de la *Vida*” (Márquez Villanueva 367-68).

That extreme care was necessary, as Teresa’s mission to expand the practice of mental prayer, especially among women, flew squarely in the face of the catechetical and misogynistic policies of the Spanish ecclesiastical establishment. According to Gillian Ahlgren,

Teresa’s bid for women’s spiritual autonomy and authority was difficult to reconcile with the trend toward increased clericalization and a more catechetical approach to piety. Further, her teachings on visions and union were controversial not because of their novelty but because . . . they demonstrated forcefully the importance of continued revelation in the Christian tradition, implicitly arguing that access to God cannot ultimately be controlled by the institutional church. (85)

Both the *Vida* and the *Moradas* sought to reclaim some of the dwindling measure of spiritual authority accorded to unlettered Christians and women. By advocating in this way for personal, unmediated access to God—and in the vernacular, no less—Teresa risked condemnation for Protestant or Illuminist heresy, and for *atrevimiento* and the usurpation of male authority.

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before them, slept in the convent, and engaged in improper relations with both Teresa and María de San José, the Discalced prioress. When interrogated by inquisitors, the nuns at the Seville convent confirmed the scandalous charges of carnality and procurement. Meanwhile, Teresa wrote a letter to the well-placed prior of another Seville monastery, complaining of the nuns’ abuse at the hands of the inquisitors, whose questioning was hostile, extended, and intended to intimidate the nuns into acquiescing with the charges. Ultimately, the Inquisition dropped the case and the witnesses recanted their testimony (Mujica, *Woman* 97-8).

By the mid-sixteenth century, mental prayer had become highly controversial; while some theologians upheld the spiritual value of meditation for all Catholics, “others believed that this practice should be restricted to the learned, *ipso facto* male clergy. The staunchest opponents of mental prayer associated it with a broad spectrum of religious and social threats—spiritual presumption, neglect of work, insubordination, Protestant anticereemonialism, false ecstasies, demonic possession, sexual license, and Illuminist heresies” (Weber, “Administration” 124). The Inquisition’s growing suspicion that interior spirituality served primarily to screen heterodox beliefs developed in response to both Protestantism and *alumbradismo* (Illuminism), a term that unified several spiritual groups dedicated to discovering God’s light within the soul. The *alumbrados* sought to develop personal, unmediated relationships with God and claimed to receive direct enlightenment through a mystical practice called *dejamiento*, a complete submission of the self to God, through which, they believed, the soul could achieve perfection (Weber, *Rhetoric* 34; Mujica, *Woman* 33; Hamilton 29-31).<sup>19</sup> The *alumbrados* of Toledo, in particular, attracted a large following in the early sixteenth century, but as the Reformation spread through northern Europe their opponents held them up as an example of the chaos that popular spirituality and unmediated access to Scripture could create if left unchecked. In 1525, the Inquisition issued an official edict against *alumbradismo* that also “cast public doubt on internal revelation and was used as a resource for inquisitors for decades to follow” (Ahlgren 13). This edict, discussed below, laid out the specific beliefs to which *alumbrados* supposedly ascribed, and by which they could be recognized—such as the claim that mental prayer surpassed all other Christian activities, including fasting and good works, in importance and effectiveness.<sup>20</sup> Mysticism and mental prayer, because they promised uneducated people and women an unmediated relationship with God that resisted institutional oversight, threatened the highly-regulated model of piety that measures like the Valdés Index sought to enforce. By suggesting that outsiders could not monitor an individual’s relationship with God unless she chose to share it with them, Teresa’s writings directly defied the ascendant institutional preference for hierarchical and mediated knowledge of God (Ahlgren 13, 112).

Teresa’s sex made this defiance particularly acute. Ecclesiastical authorities discouraged women from practicing mental prayer, because their inferior understanding of Scripture supposedly left them more susceptible to heresy and demonic manipulation. Vocal prayer—literally prayers recited aloud—was offered as a safe alternative form of devotion: “Los teólogos . . . solo verán con buenos ojos, para las mujeres, la oración vocal. Atemorizaban a las mujeres para que no procurasen la oración mental, porque a ellas se les atribuía especial debilidad ante la seducción del demonio. Por todas partes se les representaba el fantasma del alumbradismo y el riesgo

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<sup>19</sup> The *alumbrados* most likely adopted the doctrine of *dejamiento* from the Franciscans. The difference between *dejamiento* and *recogimiento* (a suspension of the senses) was a topic of heated debate. The body’s role in prayer was one point of distinction: *recogidos* prescribed certain postures, forms of abstinence, etc., while *dejados* dispensed with any concern for the physical self. Some reports suggested that to achieve *dejamiento* “the subject merely had to submit himself to God without forcing himself to pray or even to reject temptations. Temptations, evil thoughts, might come; they might be sent by God to purify the soul. The *dejado* was not to combat them; all he could do was not consent to them wilfully. This form of prayer—for a form of prayer it was—could be used at all times, in all places and by all people” (Hamilton 30-31).

<sup>20</sup> The condemnation and punishment of the *alumbrados* of Toledo in the early 1520s prompted many advocates of mental prayer to distance themselves and their practices from Illuminism; according to Trillia, Francisco de Osuna—who occasionally kept company with Isabel de la Cruz and Pedro Ruiz de Alcaraz, the leaders of the Toledo circle—carefully distinguished his doctrine of *recogimiento*, as laid out in the *Tercer abecedario*, from the *alumbrado* practice of *dejamiento* (52).

de la herejía” (Pérez-González 9). Women’s exclusion from mental prayer reflected a broader trend of ecclesiastical misogyny that strengthened throughout the century. Under Cisneros, female spirituality expanded; as a Christian humanist, he embraced women as spiritual equals, advocated for their inclusion in religious education, and endorsed the sanctity of *beatas* (local holy women) and other female religious leaders despite their lack of formal education (Weber, *Rhetoric* 21-22; Ahlgren 10).<sup>21</sup> After his death, however, the Spanish ecclesiastical hierarchy quickly turned against these women. The Inquisition denounced holy women’s public activities as “*atrevimiento*” as early as 1524, and convicted and punished the two female leaders of the *alumbrado* movement in Toledo, Isabel de la Cruz and María Cazalla, later in the 1520s.<sup>22</sup> The most common means of disenfranchising female religious leaders was the propagation of what Ahlgren calls “the doctrine of women’s intellectual and moral inferiority” (22). A slew of male-authored texts, from treatises on witchcraft to contemporary catechisms, suggested that women were fussy, irrational, unable to master their passions, naturally sensuous, mentally and physically frail, easily deceived, and incapable of sound moral judgment—and that these weaknesses left them acutely vulnerable to demonic deception and temptation (Ahlgren 7-8; León I.47). Even the most pious of women still lacked the “capacity to discern between divine and diabolical inspiration. Thus women had a difficult time overcoming the assumption that, no matter how accomplished they were, they could always be ‘instruments of the devil’” (Ahlgren 22). The doctrine of women’s inferiority suggested that female power, because it resided in weak minds and bodies, constituted a public menace—and that, as a result, restricting women’s authority, mobility, and public voice constituted a public service. The equation of female sanctity with humility, obedience, and contemplative piety formed a part of this agenda, as did the enforcement of strict claustration; cloistered women were easier to monitor and control (Ahlgren 26).

The increasingly strict interpretation of the “Pauline injunction”—a prohibition of female apostolic activity drawn from the letters of St. Paul—offered another means to silence religious

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<sup>21</sup> Cisneros’ tenure as confessor to Queen Isabella left him “an enthusiastic supporter of female piety. Many of his monastic reforms were directed specifically toward improving the religious life of nuns and women tertiaries. During the years of his ascendancy women were granted a greater role in the educational and administrative life of convents” (Weber, *Rhetoric* 21-22). Like other Christian humanists of the early sixteenth century (including Erasmus), Cisneros rejected the idea that women were spiritually inferior to men, and worked to improve their access to Scripture and devotional literature both by commissioning the relevant Spanish translations (see p. 31 above) and by distributing them to convents. However, he did not consider religious education a necessary prerequisite to spiritual knowledge. As a contemplative himself, Cisneros encouraged all Spanish Catholics, regardless of sex or learning, to explore the practice of interior spirituality. During his primacy, mysticism “was generally commended as the best means for even the humblest Spaniard to reach God. It was a short cut, described in the vernacular, and open to the unlearned” (Hamilton 20-21). And the more unlearned, the better—like many of his *letrado* contemporaries, Cisneros felt that women’s ignorance, innocence, and humility lent them a moral advantage over highly-educated men, and that as a result they were more likely to receive spiritual knowledge through direct revelation and divine favor (Weber, *Rhetoric* 26). Cisneros not only permitted the veneration of popular religious figures like María de Santo Domingo, the Beata of Piedrahita—whose prominence in Toledo earned her the patronage of the Duke of Alba and the responsibility of reforming many Dominican convents and monasteries in the area—but also participated in it: he himself visited María, presented her with a rope belt, and asked her to pray for him (Weber, *Rhetoric* 25).

<sup>22</sup> The Dominican theologians (Alonso de la Fuente, Juan de Orellana, and Juan de Lorenzana) who wrote denunciations of the *princeps* edition of Teresa’s complete works (1588) accused her of precisely this sort of effrontery. Per Llamas Martínez, “se sienten ofendidos en su soberbia, porque una mujer pretenda erigirse en maestra de doctrinas espirituales, y quiere darles lecciones, sin haber estudiado teología” (154).

women.<sup>23</sup> In the relevant passages, Paul required that women keep silent in church to show obedience to their superiors, and that they learn in silence out of deference to male authority:

Let your women keepe silence in the Churches, for it is not permitted vnto them to speake; but to bee vnder obedience: as also saith the Law. And if they will learne any thing, let them aske their husbands at home: for it is a shame for women to speake in the Church. (I Cor. 14:34-35)

Let the woman learne in silence with all subiection: But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to vsurpe authoritie ouer the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eue: And Adam was not deceiued, but the woman being deceiued was in the transgression. (I Tim. 2:11-14)

Conservative theologians read these passages as an indictment of women's intellectual and moral inferiority, which mandated their exclusion from any activity—Scriptural commentary, preaching, public speaking on spiritual topics—that resembled “teaching.” This injunction created difficulties for Teresa, who wrote her prayer manuals, at least nominally, at the behest of her spiritual advisers. The order to elucidate her prayer practice placed Teresa in a “double bind,” insofar as she could not comply without teaching: “As a woman without ‘letter’ (or theological studies in Latin) Teresa could not presume to have the necessary theological learning to support her claims or fully understand her experience. Even if she could convince her confessors that the favors were not diabolical delusions, how could she do so without appropriating the male prerogative in theological disquisition?” (Weber, *Rhetoric* 46). In the *Moradas*, then, Teresa must somehow demonstrate that mental prayer does not violate Church law, and that her visions of God are not diabolical deceptions, without recourse to either Scripture or the Church Fathers; she must prove the orthodoxy of her doctrine without the aid of the texts against which it will be judged.

However, given her mission to develop a female apostolate of prayer and to incorporate mental prayer into the institutional understanding of orthopraxy, these risks are inevitable for Teresa. Since women could neither study nor teach scholastic theology, mystical theology—revelation obtained through mental prayer and ecstatic visions—was their only source of religious authority, and so it had to be vindicated. In her writing, then, Teresa must maintain her unconditional obedience to the Church while also insisting upon the validity of mental prayer as a spiritual practice for women (Pérez González 9). According to Ahlgren, this validation of mental prayer was crucial for Teresa's reforms “because her own authority stemmed in part from such experiences. If Teresa's prayer and visions were not judged to be authentic, then neither her mystical doctrine nor her reform could be valid either” (96). In the *Moradas*, Teresa strives to defend interior spirituality as an expression of orthodox Catholicism that representatives of the institutional Church can supervise and evaluate. She shows that mental prayer can be assessed from

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<sup>23</sup> Marriage manuals also used the Pauline injunction to encourage married women to respect their husbands' authority. Fray Luís recommends that all women, educated or unlettered, prize silence: “Como quiera que sea, es justo que se precien de callar todas, así aquellas a quienes les conviene encubrir su poco saber, como aquellas que pueden sin vergüenza descubrir lo que saben; porque en todas no es sólo condición agradable, sino virtud debida el silencio y el hablar poco” (XV.138-39). Vives forbids women from interpreting texts by themselves even in their private reading, recommending that they seek explanations from someone who knows better—namely, a man: “Si la mujer leyendo en buenos libros dudare en algo o se le atravesare algún escrúpulo (como suele acaecer) no se vaya luego por allí, ni siga a su propio juicio, mas consúltelo con quien más sabe, porque no reciba algún engaño y tome falso por verdadero, dañoso por útil, vano por muy cierto” (I.5 66).

without, and that it upholds key components of female piety like obedience and good works. To fulfill her mission, she must make mental prayer sufficiently legible to pass through the censors' hands and into orthodoxy; only the free circulation of her doctrine will give prospective practitioners access to the instruction they need, while also improving confessors' understanding of mystical theology and preparing them to counsel its adherents more compassionately, more intelligently, and more effectively.

#### EXPERIENCE AND ITS DISCONTENTS

Teresa uses her extensive experience with mystical theology both to guarantee the orthodoxy of mental prayer and to exclude the inexperienced from full comprehension of the revelations it provides. As we know, the Church's principal objection to mental prayer is that, because it occurs within the individual soul, it resists the supervision and control of institutional superiors, leaving its practitioners more susceptible to heterodoxy, heresy, and deception. As Pérez González explains, "la oración mental . . . tiene una característica que la hace peligrosa: en el interior de la conciencia, en la intimidad de la relación del alma con Dios nadie puede escudriñar ni juzgar. Es un viaje en libertad, del que solo la persona y Dios son testigos, como ella [Teresa] misma exclama: 'Cómo no son menester terceros para vos!'" (8-9). Mental prayer's greatest advantage—unmediated access to God, free of scrutiny or judgment—is also its greatest risk. In order to convince institutional readers to recognize mental prayer as a form of orthopraxy, Teresa has to validate mystical experience (especially in women) as a reliable source of revelation that neither threatens nor undermines the existing ecclesiastical hierarchy. To do so, she must establish a standard for evaluation that shows how members of the hierarchy (confessors, visitors, inquisitors) can assess such visions from without. At the same time, she has to protect herself from the accusations of *alumbradismo* and Protestantism that invariably arise in response to any account of interior spirituality, and to forestall such denunciations among her more conservative readers (Weber, *Rhetoric* 34-35). She must explain her experiences of mental prayer in sufficient detail to develop a useful state simplification, while also hedging the content of those experiences to prevent their association with existing state simplifications for heterodoxy.

To clarify: by mirroring the language of state simplifications in her own text, Teresa presumes neither to speak on behalf of the institutional Church nor to occupy its role as policymaker, but merely to prove that mental prayer belongs beneath its banner. In order to legitimize mental prayer as orthopraxy, Teresa needs either to convince skeptical confessors and examiners of its safety and effectiveness, or to ensure that its practitioners only interact with confessors and examiners who also engage in—and, by extension, approve of—interior spirituality. In the *Moradas*, in fact, she attempts to do both: by mirroring the discourse of state simplifications in form (an enumerated, annotated list) as well as content (concrete indicators by which to classify or categorize individual Christian practice), she offers institutional representatives skeptical of the unmediated nature of mental prayer a ready-made checklist with which to supervise it. However, among these checklists she also intercalates dire warnings about the risks of inexpert supervision, and the harm that confessors and examiners with no direct experience of mental prayer can wreak upon its practitioners.

As discussed in the Introduction, large institutions develop state simplifications to extract the specific information they want from the vast and varied local data they collect.<sup>24</sup> James C. Scott explains that "state agents have no interest—nor should they—in describing an entire

<sup>24</sup> See especially p. 4 and pp. 7-9.

social reality, any more than the scientific forester has an interest in describing the ecology of a forest in detail. Their abstractions and simplifications are disciplined by a small number of objectives.... They [need] only the techniques and understanding that [are] adequate to these tasks” (22-23). Because local practices may vary extensively across the area in question, institutional functionaries need simplifications both to locate and to parse the information that is relevant to their purposes. It’s hard to imagine a practice more “local” than mental prayer, which occurs within the individual soul. In order to assimilate each practitioner’s experiences of mental prayer to a statewide model, inquisitors need a checklist of tendencies and behaviors against which they can quickly and conclusively assess the orthodoxy and provenance of her visions.

By the mid-sixteenth century, the Inquisition had already developed several such formulas to evaluate individual devotional practices for certain forms of heresy. Perhaps the most relevant for our purposes is the 1525 edict against the *alumbrados*, which inquisitors used as a resource for the next several decades (Ahlgren 13, 24). This edict identified specific beliefs to which *alumbrados* supposedly ascribed and behaviors by which they could be recognized. As is evident from the excerpt below, the edict takes the form of a list, with the heretical propositions and their refutations neatly enumerated to facilitate consultation:

4º Que mas enteramente venia dios en el anima del hombre que estaba en la hostia si la criatura hazia lo que devia porque la hostia era un poco de massa y el hombre era a su semejanza.

esta Proposicion es herronea falssa y heretica lo uno porque en el Sacramento del altar esta dios y hombre por Union hipostática lo otro porque parece afirmar que despues de la consecracion queda la sustancia del pan.

5º Que aunque no se pronunciasen con la boca las palabras de la consagración que bastaba pronunciarlas interiormente.

esta Proposicion es falssa y errónea.

6º Que le pessaba porque no avia peccado mas e que conociendo la misericordia de dios quisiera aver peccado mas por gozar más deella y porque aquel a quien dios tenia mas que perdonar aquel amaba mas.

esta Proposicion es heretica en material moral escandalosa y contraria aell acto de la penitencia porque induze a los hombres a traspasar los mandamientos de dios y presupone que qualquier peccador deve desear aver peccado mas de lo que abia peccado.

7º Que a los que lloraban sus peccados los llamaban penitenciaros propietarios de si mesmos y lloraduelos.

esta Proposicion es loca y contumeliosa en el sacramento de la penitencia.

8º Que la confession no es de derecho dibino sino positibo.

esta Proposicion es Luterana y tiene sabor de herejía. (Márquez 275-76)

The edict contains forty-seven propositions in total, associating the *alumbrados* with such errors as denying the existence of hell, claiming that the practice of *dejamiento* excused them from fasting, and dismissing St. Augustine’s *Soliloquies* as “fantasies” (pr. 1, 11, and 47, Márquez 275-82). The edict charges its addressees—nearly every member of Spain’s ecclesiastical hierarchy, from archbishops to local priests—with identifying and correcting these heretical ideas in their constituencies: “Dimos esta nuestra carta *insertas en ella las dichas proposiciones* e la condenacion e declaracion de ellas según de susso va especificado e inviamos predicadores de letras

auctoridad y buen ejemplo para que vos las lean y notifiquen en los pulpitos de las iglesias donde soys parrochianos los domingos y fiestas de guardar cuando estuvieredes de ellas ayuntados para oír los divinos officios” (Márquez 282). With the help of these propositions, Church officials at every level can recognize and respond appropriately to *alumbradismo* when they encounter it. It’s important to note that the *alumbrados* themselves articulated neither the definition nor the key characteristics of *alumbradismo*; rather, the Inquisition imposed both upon them from above.<sup>25</sup> Teresa apparently prefers not to wait for an official edict; in the *Moradas*, she offers prefabricated propositions that make the orthodoxy of individual contemplatives easier to evaluate, thereby saving the Inquisition a great deal of work, and her co-practitioners (or so she hopes) a great deal of anguish. Drawing upon her experience not only as a contemplative, but also as a cloistered woman and a Carmelite prioress, Teresa authorizes herself to determine the provenance—divine, demonic, or imaginary—of mystical visions in other practitioners.

When it comes to mystical experiences, Teresa derives her authority not from intellect but from intuition. As a prioress, she has unique insight into female psychology and the nature of convent life; as a practitioner of mental prayer, she can speak directly to its internal effects and external manifestations: “The favors she herself has received, along with her experience as a woman and a nun, give her, she believes, the authority to guide, command, and reprimand her collaborators” (Mujica, *Woman* 142). The first chapter of the fifth *moradas* explicitly presents itself as an authoritative guide to detecting deception: “Comienza a tratar cómo en la oración se une el alma con Dios; dice en qué se conocerá no ser engaño” (*Moradas* V.1 301). In its framing and content, the chapter mirrors a state simplification—an explanation of how to determine, when confessing practitioners of mental prayer, whether their visions are divine gifts or demonic ploys. Divine visions have several clear indicators: the devotee’s soul feels strong and motivated to continue walking its spiritual path; it desires celestial things and abhors temporal ones; and its faculties are automatically suspended during prayer, with no active effort of the will (*Moradas* V.1 302-3). However, the one infallible indicator of a vision’s divine provenance is the visionary’s complete certainty of God’s presence. If the soul has truly gone to God, says Teresa, the body will remain senseless until it returns, and it will return confident in its union with God:

Tornando **a la señal que digo es la verdadera**, ya veis esta alma que la ha hecho Dios boba del todo para imprimir mejor en ella la verdadera sabiduría, que ni ve ni oye ni entiende en el tiempo que está así, que siempre es breve (y an harto más breve le parece a ella de lo que debe de ser), fija Dios a sí mismo en lo interior que aquel alma, de manera que, cuando torna en sí, en ninguna manera pueda dudar que estuvo en Dios y Dios en ella. Con tanta firmeza le queda esta verdad, que, aunque pase años sin tornarle Dios a hacer aquella merced, ni se le olvida ni puede dudar que estuvo. ... Pues diréisme: ¿cómo lo vio u cómo lo entendió, si no ve ni entiende? **No digo que lo vio entonces, sino que lo ve después claro; y no porque es visión, sino una certidumbre que queda en el alma, que sólo Dios la puede poner.** (*Moradas* V.1 306-7, my emphases)

This absolute certainty, says Teresa, can only come from God—so, to ensure the divine provenance of a vision, the confessor need only ask whether the visionary is sure that she was in God’s presence. So that confessors know what to expect (and so that practitioners know what to tell

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<sup>25</sup> As Trillia explains, “no hubo ningún grupo u organización que se auto-designara alumbrado. La Inquisición, en su deseo de controlar las ideologías heréticas, definió alumbradismo e intentó definir su doctrina” (52).



them), Teresa then performs an instance of this confidence in the divine provenance of her knowledge. She cannot explain how or why she knows it, but she is certain that she is right: “Pues, ¿cómo lo que no vimos se nos queda con esa certidumbre? Eso no lo sé yo; son obras suyas; mas sé que digo verdad, y quien no quedare con esta certidumbre, no diría yo que es unión de toda el alma con Dios, sino de alguna potencia y otras muchas maneras de mercedes que hace Dios a el alma” (*Moradas* V.1 307). Teresa offers the strength of this assertion as a standard against which confessors can judge their charges’ responses; if they affirm the divinity of their visions with the same forcefulness, then they must be speaking the truth.

In the sixth *moradas*, Teresa identifies the signs a confessor can use to determine whether a practitioner of mental prayer is actually hearing God’s voice. These signs appear in a list that resembles the edict above: to facilitate consultation, each proposition is numbered and briefly justified. First, God’s voice should carry complete power and mastery; its speeches are acts, such that whatever it pronounces, is so: “Las más ciertas señales que se pueden tener, a mi parecer, son éstas: la primera y más verdadera es el poderío y señorío que traen consigo, que es hablando y obrando” (*Moradas* VI.3 353). For example, God has only to say “No tengas pena” for a soul in pain to find consolation, or for a soul in darkness to find light. Second, God’s voice should inspire profound peace in the soul that hears it: “La segunda razón, una gran quietud que queda en el alma y recogimiento devoto y pacífico, y dispuesta para alabanzas de Dios” (*Moradas* VI.3 353). Third, the words that God speaks should remain forever etched in the soul’s memory just as they were delivered—a status that the human memory rarely grants even to the Scriptures and the Church Fathers: “La tercera señal es no pasarse estas palabras de la memoria en muy mucho tiempo, y algunas jamás, como se pasan las que por acá entendemos, digo que oímos de los hombres; que, aunque sean muy graves y letrados, no las tenemos tan esculpidas en la memoria” (*Moradas* VI.3 353-54). As with visions of mystical union, the indicators of divinity in vocal apparitions are simple, straightforward, and easy to formulate as questions. Teresa affirms that if the apparition manifests all three of these signals—its words are acts, it inspires internal peace, and it engraves itself permanently on the memory—then it’s very unlikely that the devotee is deceiving herself, or misattributing to God what in fact comes from her own imagination. However, to make completely certain that vocal apparitions are not deceptions of the Devil, she strongly recommends that individuals who experience them consult with their confessors before acting on any revelations they have received: “Del demonio hay más que temer. Mas, si hay las señales que quedan dichos, mucho se puede asegurar ser de Dios, aunque no de manera que, si es cosa grave lo que se le dice y que se ha de poner por obra, de sí u de negocios de terceras personas, jamás haga nada, ni le pase por pensamiento, sin parecer de confesor letrado y avisado y siervo de Dios” (*Moradas* VI.3 355-56). By subjecting all practitioners of mental prayer to the confessor’s superior knowledge of God’s will, Teresa ensures that they remain within the bounds of orthopraxy: Catholics should willingly submit the content of their revelations to the judgment of their superiors, rather than presuming, like Protestants or *alumbrados*, to interpret God’s word themselves.<sup>26</sup>

Teresa provides yet another checklist to clarify whether intellectual visions come from God, the Devil, or the imagination, and once again, the propositions are numbered and justified for ease of consultation. In divinely-inspired intellectual visions, the clarity of both the language

<sup>26</sup> Tellingly, Teresa explicitly declares her obedience to the Church in the prologue of the *Moradas*—a text in which she presumes to advise its officials on the assessment of orthopraxy—but not in the *Vida* (in which she does not). This gesture of submission appears only in the *Fundaciones* and the *Moradas*; in none of Teresa’s other prologues does she subject herself in this way (Ahlgren 75-6).

and the message far surpasses any idea that the imagination could create for itself: “La primera, porque debe ser diferente en la claridad de la habla, ... y en lo que se antoja por la imaginación, será no habla tan clara ni palabras tan distintas, sino como cosa medio soñada” (*Moradas* VI.3 356). Second, the vision often arrives unexpectedly, and rarely corresponds to the activities in which the visionary is currently engaged: “La segunda, porque acá no se pensaba muchas veces en lo que se entendió—digo que es a deshora y an algunas estando en conversación—unque hartas se responde a lo que pasa de presto por el pensamiento u a lo que antes se ha pensado; mas muchas es en cosa que jamás tuvo acuerdo de que habían de ser ni serían” (*Moradas* VI.3 356). Teresa helpfully notes that the content of divinely-inspired intellectual visions often lies outside the visionary’s realm of thought or experience. Third, the visionary receives the vision passively, without contributing to its development: “La tercera, porque lo uno es como quien oye, y lo de la imaginación es como quien va compuniendo lo que él mesmo quiere que le digan poco a poco” (*Moradas* VI.3 357). Fourth, the words are different from the ones humans use, and are especially revelatory; in just a few words, God can make the visionary understand things that would take humans many more to explain: “La cuarta, porque las palabras son muy diferentes, y con una se comprehende mucho lo que nuestro entendimiento no podría componer tan de presto” (*Moradas* VI.3 357). Finally, the message of the vision is communicated not only through words, but also through effects and impressions such as inner peace: “La quinta, porque, junto con las palabras, muchas veces, por un modo que yo no sabré decir, se da a entender mucho más de lo que ellas suenan sin palabras” (VI.3 357). As above, these five indicators help confessors to identify and authenticate intellectual visions, and practitioners to describe them effectively. By establishing a shared vocabulary across the hierarchy, Teresa empowers contemplatives to assert their orthodoxy and protects them from accusations of demonic deception.

Of course, not all visions are divinely inspired; Teresa concedes that women do sometimes mistake deceptions for mystical favors. Through this concession, she uses her experience to override the tendency to attribute women’s false ecstasies to diabolical seduction; in fact, she says, the source of the error is much more often physical or emotional. She incorporates false ecstasies into her state simplification by telling confessors what to look for and how to respond. In Teresa’s experience, female contemplatives sometimes mistake faints or weak spells for the trances that accompany the advanced stages of mental prayer. This error is often self-perpetuating, because the positive outcome of the “trance” inspires the contemplative to continue the behavior—usually immoderate fasting or physical austerities—that gave rise to her weakness:

He visto caer a personas de oración, en especial mujeres que, como somos más flacas, ha más lugar para lo que voy a decir; y es que algunas, de la mucha penitencia y oración y vigalias, y an sin esto, sonse flacas de complesión; en teniendo algún regalo, sujétales el natural, y, como sienten contento alguno interior y caimiento en la exterior y una flaquedá, cuando hay un sueño que llaman espiritual, que es un poco más de lo que queda dicho, paréceles que es lo uno como lo otro y déjanse embebecer. Y mientras más se dejan, se embebecen más, porque se enflaquece más el natural y en su seso les parece arrobamiento. Y llámole yo abobamiento, que no es otra cosa más de estar perdiendo tiempo allí y gastando su salud. (*Moradas* IV.3 295-96)<sup>27</sup>

<sup>27</sup> See Chapter 2, pp. 91-92: Teresa coincides with Ignatius in her belief that mistreatment of the physical body can interfere with spiritual development, and proposes similar remedies to his: increased supervision, rest, improved diet, and diminished austerities. According to Mujica, Teresa’s letters often recommend making allowances or alterations to convent policies in different parts of Spain for reasons of health; for example, she wants

Teresa here asserts her expertise (and establishes her authority around the provenance of visions) by demonstrating a subtlety of understanding that arises only from long experience. Though these kinds of errors can become dangerous, she says, prioresses and confessors can usually correct them by revising the nun's sleep schedule, diet, and habits of prayer and penitence. In her numerous dealings with false ecstasies, Teresa has found imaginative and melancholic women more likely than others to mistake fits and fancies for divinely-inspired trances.<sup>28</sup> When correcting such individuals, Teresa advises against ascribing the error to demonic influence, suggesting instead that the superiors treat it like an illness: "De estas dos maneras de personas no hay que hacer caso, a mi parecer, aunque digan que ven y oyen y entienden, ni inquietarlas con decir que es demonio, sino oírlas como a personas enfermas, diciendo la priora u confesor a quien lo dijere que no haga caso de ello, que no es la sustancia para servir a Dios, y que muchos ha engañado el demonio por allí, aunque no será quizá así a ella, por no la afligir más que tray con su humor" (*Moradas* VI.3 351-52). While their visions probably aren't demonic in origin, individuals in this condition should nevertheless desist from prayer for a while, lest the Devil try to take advantage of their weakened souls. Teresa tells confessors to undeceive devotees about their errors as early as possible so that they can continue their spiritual development unhindered, but also to avoid frightening them with unnecessary invocations of the Devil, which may impede their recovery and future progress (*Moradas* VI.3 352). By conceding women's physical and emotional weaknesses, Teresa preserves their spiritual fortitude: the error is not one of orthodoxy, but of temperance.<sup>29</sup>

Jorge Checa suggests that part of Teresa's task in the *Moradas* is to identify concretely which signs come from God, which from the imagination, and which from the Devil. More often than not, she recognizes God by his difference, by the presence of ideas and sensations foreign to the human experience. Because God is radically other, says Checa, "se comunica con el alma a través de signos diferenciados, frente a los humanos, por su origen sobrenatural, y produce así un lenguaje específico que en las *Moradas* da lugar a numerosos comentarios y aclaraciones. Santa Teresa intenta precisamente con ellos exponer los criterios para discernir cuándo es Dios el que habla, discriminando los mensajes divinos de los producidos por otros agentes" (82). Teresa presents herself as an experienced interpreter of divine messages; her roles as mystic and prioress endow her with the necessary authority to distinguish definitively between divine, demonic, and imaginative visions. By codifying her knowledge in a neatly-enumerated list of indicators, Teresa passes it on to her institutional readers, whom she hopes will arrive at a more favorable and more accurate assessment of mental prayer once armed with the right state simplifications.

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the nuns in Toledo to wear habits of worsted wool to protect them from the cold, but recommends that the nuns in Seville remove their tunics in the summer to protect them from the heat. She also discourages nuns who are sick from exerting themselves physically or mentally, because stress will only slow their recovery (Mujica, *Woman* 152).

<sup>28</sup> Alison Weber points out that Teresa only critiques nuns who misinterpret spells of weakness as mystical trances in her later works; her earlier writing does not recognize the possibility of false raptures. However, drawing upon her many foundation experiences, Teresa develops a theory that these mistaken nuns "were ill—they were suffering from melancholy, a disease whose symptoms included weeping, scruples (unrealistic remorse), hallucinated visions, locutions, and raptures" (Weber, *Rhetoric* 139-40).

<sup>29</sup> In Weber's words, "In most cases Teresa presents women's weakness as primarily physiological rather than moral or spiritual; women are physically disadvantaged in their pursuit of perfection, but they are never spiritually disqualified" (*Rhetoric* 145-6).

However, all of Teresa's simplifications depend on the practitioner's ability to articulate her interior experiences effectively to her examiner. Are the words God spoke in her vision permanently etched in her memory? Did they possess an unusual clarity? Did they come from outside her realm of experience? And what is the current state of her soul? The problem, toward which Checa gestures, is that answering these questions entails translating one's encounters with divinity—phenomena that are radically other to human experience and by definition beyond human understanding—into human language; as Américo Castro explains, “si Dios es lo absoluto y lo infinito, todo intento definitorio, toda vecindad con lo particular y nombrable será imposible” (62). In fact, Teresa complains throughout the *Moradas* that human language is insufficient to capture encounters with the divine, particularly for those who have never experienced them. She attempts repeatedly to approximate the experience of mental prayer with analogies and comparisons, but determines each time that it is impossible to communicate to readers who have not themselves achieved union with God.<sup>30</sup> As a result, the only readers who will truly understand are those who have firsthand knowledge of mental prayer.

Teresa's insistence upon the incommunicability of mystical experience reflects the attitude of the Franciscan mystics from whose texts she learned to practice mental prayer.<sup>31</sup> In the *Tercer abecedario*, Osuna suggests that contemplatives struggle to translate mystical experiences into human language because their senses and their reason—the tools they might use to articulate their ideas—are suspended during prayer. Since mystics cannot express the ineffable truth of their visions with words, experience is the only teacher: “¿Por qué las inefables aficiones nos trabajamos declarar con palabras comunes? Los no experimentados no entienden las tales cosas si no las leen más expresamente en el libro de la experiencia, a las cuales esta unción enseña; porque de otra manera la letra exterior no aprovecha cosa alguna al que las lee” (V.3 223). Osuna argues that erudition holds little significance in the absence of direct experience of union with God; the latter gives the former its meaning. In the *Subida del monte Sión*, Laredo echoes the

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<sup>30</sup> Fellow Carmelite Juan de la Cruz expresses the same idea in the prologue to his *Cántico espiritual* (1622). The knowledge that God imparts to the soul during mystical union so far surpasses human understanding that it would be foolish, he says, to expect contemplatives to express it in words: “¿Quién podrá escribir lo que a las almas amorosas, donde él mora, hace entender? Y ¿quién podrá manifestar con palabras lo que las hace sentir? Y ¿quién, finalmente, lo que las hace desear? Ciertamente, nadie lo puede; cierto, ni ellas mismas por quien pasa lo pueden. Que ésta es la causa por que con figuras, comparaciones y semejanzas antes rebosan algo de lo que sienten” (3-4). Language, a temporal and contingent form of expression, can never direct its recipients to the eternal and transcendent referents of the mystic's speech—so she must rely, as Juan suggests, upon comparisons and analogies that invariably fail to capture the entirety and intensity of the experience (Checa 70).

<sup>31</sup> As Melquíades Andrés Martín explains, “en la nueva espiritualidad española de ese siglo, a la autoridad sustituye la experiencia, propia y ajena, encuadrada en coordenadas bíblicas, patrísticas y teológicas. Esto salva la ortodoxia, ortopraxis y el realismo de nuestros místicos. Ellos se adelantan, como grupo social, a los autores profanos en la valoración de la experiencia como parte del método científico, superan la consideración quincentista de lo autobiográfico como vulgar y el método de «compilar», «recopilar», «recoleccionar», y describen su interioridad sin rebozo, a veces en primera persona, a veces por humildad, en tercera” (170). Per Andrés Martín, the mystics' insistence that direct revelation has equivalent, if not greater, authority than theological study reflects a broader epistemological trend in both secular and religious writing. Several scholars have addressed the sixteenth-century shift away from textual expertise and toward empirical experience in “autores profanos,” including Anthony Grafton (*New Worlds, Ancient Texts*, Belknap, 1992) and, more recently, Antonio Barrera-Osorio (*Experiencing Nature: The Spanish American Empire and the Early Scientific Revolution*, U of Texas Press, 2006).

idea that the “book of experience” contains truths inaccessible by other means.<sup>32</sup> Irrespective of their scholastic knowledge, he says, practitioners of mystical theology receive an interior education; they learn to read God’s own language. This fluency is impossible to obtain through study, but emerges only through direct experience of the divine: “El ánima a quien el soberano Señor se comunica por vía sobrenatural comprende tanto de él cuanto su benigna gracia le quiere comunicar, nunca pudiendo ella nada, mas poniendo su querer” (III.41 436). God communicates with the soul “supernaturally,” in divine language, and the soul comprehends this language not through reason, but through love. As a result, says Laredo, it’s extremely difficult to convey the content or the nature of divine union in words.

Throughout the *Moradas*, Teresa draws attention to the difference between experiencing mystical phenomena and explaining them; as she puts it, “Anque un poco más luz me parece tengo destas mercedes que el Señor hace a algunas almas, es diferente el saberlas decir” (VI.1 269-70). By stressing the difficulty of the task of translation, Teresa gestures toward her own incompetence as a way to disavow any pretense to “teach.” Weber argues that Teresa’s apparent frustration with her own linguistic incompetence (and with the insufficiency of language more generally) around mystical experience is in fact a rhetorical strategy that enables her to impart information to her readers without violating the Pauline injunction; by disavowing the validity of her comparisons, she can successfully explain her ideas without adopting a position of intellectual authority (*Rhetoric* 105). I’d add that Teresa’s repeated reminders of the impossibility of translating mystical experiences into language also work to diminish the authority of *letrados* critics of mental prayer, both by excluding them from an entire realm of spiritual knowledge and attributing their critiques to that lack of experience.

In negating the possibility of explaining mystical experience to the uninitiated, Teresa lays claim to a body of doctrinal knowledge in which many *letrados* lack expertise. Even as she concedes her lack of letters, she hints that critics of mental prayer lack true knowledge of God, and so tend to misunderstand his will and underestimate his power:

Siempre en cosas dificultosas, **anque me parece que lo entiendo y que digo verdad**, voy con este lenguaje de que «me parece», porque, si me engañare, estoy muy aparejada a creer lo que dijeren los que tienen letras muchas. Porque, **anque no hayan pasado por estas cosas**, tienen un no sé qué grandes letrados, que como Dios los tiene para luz de su Ilesia, cuando es una verdad, dásela para que se admita; y si no son derramados, sino siervos de Dios, nunca se espantan de sus grandezas, que tienen bien entendido que puede mucho más y más. (*Moradas* V.1 305, my emphases)

Multiple scholars read this passage as a performance of humility, wherein Teresa demonstrates her deference to the *letrados* evaluating her doctrine and invites them to judge the authenticity of her visions (Ahlgren 70; Mujica, “Skepticism” 63). Checa, however, draws attention to the distance Teresa creates between herself and those *letrados*, proposing that in this way she concedes her intellectual inferiority, but also highlights their lack of direct experience (77). I’d argue that

<sup>32</sup> Teresa also reproduces this image of the “book of experience” during her discussion of the Valdés Index in the *Vida*. To console her for the loss of her favorite devotional texts, Christ promises to grant her a “living book,” the book of her own experience of divinity: “Cuando se quitaron muchos libros de romance, que no se leyesen, yo sentí mucho, porque algunos me dava recreación leerlos y yo no podía ya, por dejarlos en latín, me dijo el Señor: «No tengas pena, que yo te daré libro vivo». ... Y ha tenido tanto amor el Señor conmigo para enseñarme de muchas maneras que muy poca o casi ninguna necesidad he tenido de libros. Su Majestad ha sido el libro verdadero adonde he visto las verdades” (*Vida* 26:5 752-53).

the passage is even more assertive: Teresa sets a test here for her *letrado* readers, ascribing doctrinal weight to their reception of her work. If they agree with her, they identify themselves as true servants of God; if they disagree, perhaps they don't understand his Word as well as they claim to.<sup>33</sup> Thus the untranslatable nature of mystical experience is not her failing, but theirs.

As she explains, Teresa's uses of phrases like "me parece" creates ambiguity in her text; it leaves her plausible deniability in debates of doctrine, but also emphasizes the insufficiency of human language to describe encounters with the divine. For example, in the first chapter of the fifth *moradas*, Teresa both purports to explain the nature of mystical union and asserts the impossibility of doing so, invoking the failure not just of her communicative abilities, but of language in general to convey the delights of the soul's union with God: "¡Oh, hermanas! ¿cómo os podría yo decir la riqueza y tesoros y deleites que hay en las quintas moradas? Creo fuera mejor no decir nada de las que faltan, pues no se ha de saber decir, ni el entendimiento lo sabe entender ni las comparaciones pueden servir de declararlo, porque son muy bajas las cosas de la tierra para este fin" (V.1 301). The pleasures of the fifth *moradas* so far exceed human understanding that Teresa wonders whether it might be better to say nothing and avoid confusing her readers (or risking accusations of heresy) than to try to translate them into words. No language can communicate the richness of this stage of prayer directly, and comparisons with base terrestrial objects or ideas invariably fail to convey the majesty of celestial favors. A similar problem arises early in the sixth *moradas*, when Teresa can find no comparison for the infinite delicacy with which God arouses desire for himself in the soul: "Comencemos ahora a tratar de la manera que se ha con [el alma] el Esposo, y cómo, antes que del todo lo sea, se lo hace bien desear, por unos medios tan delicados, que el alma mesma no los entiende, ni yo creo acertaré a decir para que lo entienda, si no fueren las que han pasado por ello, porque son unos impulsos tan delicados y sotiles, que proceden de lo muy interior del alma, que no sé comparación que poner que cuadre" (*Moradas* VI.2 345).<sup>34</sup> God inflames this desire by means so subtle that they defy the understanding even of the individual who undergoes them, and the desire itself occurs so far inside the soul that neither the reason nor the senses can be brought to bear upon it. As a result, Teresa cannot devise an appropriate analogy; only fellow practitioners of mental prayer with direct experience of this longing for God will grasp her meaning.

The insufficiency of terrestrial analogies becomes especially clear when Teresa attempts to describe the sensation of interior contentment that mental prayer confers upon the soul. This contentment has two sources, which she likens to two fountains, one fed by a complex series of conduits (prayer and meditation) and the other by a natural spring (God himself). Once tapped, the spring overflows the fountain and forms a brook that carries contentment through the entire person, both soul and body (IV.2 280). Having established this analogy, Teresa attempts to describe the sensations within the soul as the fountains begin to overflow by means of sensory analogies, like warmth and fragrance. However, she emphasizes repeatedly that these analogies neither reproduce nor even resemble what the soul actually feels:

<sup>33</sup> As Mujica explains, Teresa here "criticizes clerics who presume to understand spirituality without themselves being spiritual, simply because they have studied" ("Skepticism" 71).

<sup>34</sup> García de la Concha argues that mystical experiences remain beyond the grasp of language in part because they are affective; the mystic is not a neutral observer, but actively involved in and affected by the experience: "La razón última del fenómeno que a santa Teresa la resulta, justamente, incomprensible, se halla en el hecho de que, en la vivencia mística, el ser personal histórico queda inmerso en ese conocimiento afectivo real; no es un mero espectador al que la experiencia la adviene como algo coyuntural externo: todo él queda *afectado*, en el más amplio sentido del vocablo. ... El místico no logra, en su vivencia, deslindar las relaciones entre él, sujeto, y su objeto, el Absoluto" (135).

Como comienza a producir aquella agua celestial de este manantial que digo, de lo profundo de nosotros, parece que se va dilatando y ensanchando todo nuestro interior y produciendo unos bienes que no se pueden decir, ni an el alma sabe entender qué es lo que se le da allí. Entiende una fraganza, digamos ahora, como si en aquel hondón interior estuviese un brasero adonde se echasen olorosos perfumes; ni se ve la lumbre ni dónde está; mas el calor y humo oloroso penetra toda el alma, y an hartas veces, como he dicho, participa el cuerpo. Mirá, entendedme, que ni se siente calor ni se huele olor, que más delicada cosa es que estas cosas, sino para dároslo a entender. Y entiendan las personas que no han pasado por esto que es verdad que pasa así y que se entiende y lo entiende el alma más claro que yo lo digo ahora. (IV.2 282-83).

The water, the heat, the perfume, the light are hazy terrestrial substitutes for the infinitely clear and delicate sensations of celestial contentment, which Teresa cannot render successfully in language. She concludes that the uninitiated will just have to take her word for it; true understanding of this interior contentment—like so many other mystical phenomena associated with mental prayer—is reserved for those readers with direct experience of it.

Precisely because mystical visions are so difficult to translate into human language, it's crucial for practitioners of mental prayer to find confessors and examiners familiar with the experience. Uninitiated or insufficiently educated spiritual guides, Teresa warns, can slow contemplatives' spiritual progress, tormenting the soul with fears of self-deception and demonic manipulation. These threats of spiritual harm raise the stakes for the misidentification of heresy among practitioners of mental prayer, depicting it as a grave error that not only plunges innocent Christians into spiritual torment, but also deprives the Church of soldiers in its battle against Protestantism. In this way, Teresa creates negative externalities for confessors or examiners inclined to disbelieve the effects of mental prayer; she draws upon their lack of personal experience to undercut the validity of their critiques and corrections.

According to Teresa, one of the greatest challenges that practitioners of mental prayer face is the struggle to be believed; in the face of various criticisms, rejections, and denunciations from friends, colleagues, superiors, and even strangers, the soul despairs of its confidence. In extreme circumstances, a contemplative's peers may reject her, and confessors refuse to hear her, for fear of scandal (VI.1 336-37). Even worse than a confessor's refusal is his disbelief and mismanagement; contemplatives with distrustful confessors undergo significant interior trials, including despair, torment, scruples, and crippling self-doubt:

Comencemos por el tormento que da topar con un confesor tan cuerdo y poco esperimentado que no hay cosa que tenga por segura: todo lo teme, en todo pone duda, como ve cosas no ordinarias; en especial si en el alma que las tiene ve alguna imperfección (que les parece han de ser ángeles a quien Dios hiciere estas mercedes, y es imposible mientras estuvieren en este cuerpo) luego es todo condenado a demonio u melencolía. Y de ésta está el mundo tan lleno, que no me espanto, que hay tanta ahora en el mundo y hace el demonio tantos males por este camino, que tienen muy mucha razón de temerlo y mirarlo muy bien los confesores. Mas la pobre alma que anda con el mesmo temor y va al confesor como a juez, y ése la condena, no puede dejar de

recibir tan gran tormento y turbación, que sólo entenderá cuán gran trabajo es quien hubiere pasado por ello. (VI.1 339-40)<sup>35</sup>

Though she describes this trial as “interior” to the contemplative, Teresa lays most of the blame at the confessor’s feet. The misconception that only the most perfect souls receive divine favors—which Teresa dismisses as absurd, given that those souls reside in earthly bodies—often causes inexperienced confessors to misattribute legitimate visions to either the Devil or the imagination. Though she softens the critique by affirming that the Devil’s ubiquity certainly necessitates some skepticism, she leaves the reader with the suffering of the confessing soul, who hears its worst fears confirmed in the thoughtless condemnation of an incompetent confessor.<sup>36</sup> This suffering only intensifies if the confessor, having misidentified the visions as deceptions, orders the visionary to desist from mental prayer. His order creates a double bind: by allowing her soul to follow God’s call, the visionary disobeys his earthly proxy, the confessor; but in abandoning the path that she has been called to pursue, she disobeys God himself (VI.6 378).<sup>37</sup>

Teresa acknowledges that confessors face a difficult task in attempting to comprehend and categorize another person’s visions, insofar as they cannot directly access her internal experiences, but must instead rely on her inevitably insufficient attempts to translate those experiences into language: “Como los confesores no pueden ver esto, ni por ventura a quien Dios hace esta merced sabérselo decir, temen—y con mucha razón—y así es menester ir con aviso hasta aguardar tiempo del fruto que hacen estas apariciones.... Si el confesor tiene experiencia y ha pasado por estas cosas, poco tiempo ha menester para entenderlo” (VI.9 407). If appropriately educated and experienced, Teresa affirms, most confessors can quickly and correctly identify the provenance of a vision and can, in general, provide excellent guidance to practitioners of mental

<sup>35</sup> In this regard, too, Teresa closely follows her Franciscan predecessors. Osuna tells his readers that, unless a prospective spiritual master has extensive personal experience with the type of prayer practice that the devotee wants to cultivate, she should neither trust nor submit to his guidance: “Si buscas maestro, ten todas las maneras que lícitamente pudieres para saber si es experimentado, si han pasado por él las cosas que te ha de enseñar; y si no, que sepa todas las otras cosas y se haya dado a todos los otros ejercicios; déjalo en este caso y no les des parte de este negocio, porque mal dirá el cantar que no sabe; porque así como el que no sabe pintar no te podrá sacar pintor, así el que nunca fue recogido no te podrá dar consejo en el recogimiento, antes me puedes creer que te dañará mucho y te dirá una cosa por otra” (VII.6 299). Osuna denies the viability of uninitiated spiritual directors and threatens that they can cause contemplatives serious problems.

<sup>36</sup> Checa reads the possibility of resistance in Teresa’s continual refusal of responsibility for the imprecision of language in the representation of mystical experience: “En las vacilaciones del yo a responsabilizarse totalmente de su lenguaje apenas cabe duda de las justificadas aprensiones de Santa Teresa ante el dogmatismo de ciertos «letrados» juegan un papel importante. Aun así, la localización de la verdad en el reducto privado de la experiencia puede constituir menos un gesto de defensa que una forma velada de desafío, pues la certeza de la comunicación secreta con Dios es a veces tan fuerte que el alma iluminada «no ha menester otro maestro» (6.9:431). Fuera, entonces, de los lenguajes «magistrales» (que, como mucho, llegan a corroborar la experiencia), queda impresa una seguridad declarada superior al poder de dogmas, argumentos y razones; justo porque se basa en una evidencia inmediata, la certeza mística, si bien indemostrable, se juzga preferible a la verdad autoritariamente transmitida” (92). Through her insistence that those who have never experienced this inner torment cannot understand it, Teresa refuses legibility to the *letrados* reading her text, implying that their lack of knowledge derives from the shallowness or insufficiency of their own intimacy with God.

<sup>37</sup> Adherents of visionary theology did sometimes find themselves at odds with ecclesiastical authority over the interpretation of a visionary revelation and the theological consequences of putting it into practice. As Ahlgren explains, “the visionary might receive a revelation that she believed called her to a state of religious life or to a religious function not sanctioned by the institutional church. The revelation could have doctrinal or practical applications that challenged the prevailing orthodoxy or the perspective of her confessor” (97).



prayer. In fact, Teresa strongly recommends that new practitioners regularly consult confessors, *letrados*, or other spiritual guides to minimize the chance of errors or self-deception:

Es bien que a los principios lo comunicuéis debajo de confesión con un muy buen letrado, que son los que nos han de dar la luz, u, si hubiere, alguna persona muy espiritual; y, si no lo es, mejor es muy letrado; si le hubiere, con el uno y con el otro. Y si os dijeren que es antojo, no se os dé nada, que el antojo poco mal ni bien puede hacer a vuestra alma; encomendaos a la divina Majestad que no consienta seáis engañadas. **Si os dijeren es demonio, será más trabajo, aunque no dirá, si es buen letrado y hay los efetos dichos;** mas, cuando lo diga, yo sé que el mesmo Señor, que anda con vos, os consolará y asiguraré y a él le irá dando luz para que os la dé. Si es persona que aunque tiene oración no la ha llevado el Señor por ese camino, luego se espantará y lo condenará; por eso os aconsejo que sea muy letrado y, si se hallare, también espiritual; ... en especial si el confesor es de poca experiencia y le ve medroso, y él mesmo la hace andar comunicando, viénese a publicar lo que había de razón estar muy secreto, y a ser esta alma perseguida y atormentada. (VI.8 399-400, my emphasis)

Here we see a rhetorical maneuver similar to the one discussed above; while affirming her deference to the Church hierarchy and the importance of spiritual mediation and oversight, Teresa also undermines the critical authority of confessors and examiners unversed in mystical theology and inserts herself as a mediating authority between them (the implied “ellos” of the verb “dijeren”) and the contemplatives they intend to supervise (the addressees of the pronoun “os”). Drawing upon her superior experience and expertise, she confers upon herself the power to determine which institutional representatives her fellow practitioners of mental prayer should consult, and which they should avoid. Well-educated spiritual guides, the “buen letrados” who truly understand God’s ways, will recognize the signs of divine favor. Guides who get scared, misattribute the visions to physical or demonic influence, or publicize things that should stay under the seal of confession, Teresa implies, are not “buen letrados”—and they lose credibility as a result. With this maneuver, Teresa attempts both to steer prospective contemplatives toward confessors and examiners more likely to endorse their prayer practice as orthodox, and to discredit the objections of their more skeptical colleagues on the grounds of inexperience.

In the *Moradas*, Teresa derives her authority from their loss of credibility. As a mystic, a woman, and prioress, she knows better than the *letrados* examining her text how to distinguish a divine vision from a demonic one, which women are most susceptible to false apparitions, and how to minimize melancholy in the cloister. She also knows better than they do what the soul experiences during mystical union, and how much it hurts both the contemplative and the Church when the incommunicability of encounters with the divine leads confessors to doubt their authenticity or their origins. This incompetence is inconvenient, distressing, and sometimes dangerous, but it also provides the ground upon which Teresa builds her text; it justifies her decision to write in defense of mental prayer, to develop a state simplification by which to recognize it, and to draw attention to the soldiers for Christ that its denunciation removes from the fight.

However, reading the *Moradas* would seem to leave confessors and examiners unfamiliar with mental prayer in something of a double bind themselves. They now have signs by which to assess the provenance and ensure the orthodoxy of mystical visions, but most of those signs rely on the practitioner’s ability to translate her interior experiences accurately into human language, which Teresa considers more or less impossible. As a result, only confessors and examiners with

direct experience of mental prayer can counsel their co-practitioners; the uninitiated may bring their constituents to grave spiritual harm if they overstep the bounds of their own limited knowledge. By insinuating that only those with direct experience of mental prayer can accurately judge it in others, Teresa effectively negates the critical viability of confessors and examiners unversed in this particular form of devotion. These contradictory claims regarding the external accessibility and assessability of mental prayer beg the question: is Teresa trying to make mental prayer more legible to the Church, or is she trying to ensure that confessors and examiners already experienced in—and therefore sympathetic to—mental prayer handle the evaluation of its practitioners? In point of fact, in the Carmelite *Constitutions* of 1581, Teresa did empower prioresses to appoint the confessor of their choosing, whether from inside or outside the Carmelite order, for their convents (Mujica, *Woman* 161). Taken together with her efforts in the *Moradas* to increase the legibility of mental prayer and to discredit inexperienced confessors, this gesture starts to look like insurance: if all the institutional representatives supervising your prayer practice already have direct experience of it, then isn't it, effectively, orthopraxy?

#### LA CASADA CALLADA

In addition to her efforts to articulate her practice of mental prayer in the institutional language of state simplifications, Teresa also works to translate it into the popular language of chivalric novels. From the fifth *moradas* onward, she articulates the soul's relationship to God in terms of romantic love: he is not just Señor, but also Amado and Esposo. Her descriptions of the courtship and spiritual marriage between God and the soul draw upon the norms and vocabulary of courtly love as expressed in the *libros de caballería*, and of Christian wifehood as defined by two contemporary marriage manuals: Vives's *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana* and fray Luís's *La perfecta casada*. In borrowing from the models of courtly love and marriage, Teresa proves the orthodoxy of mental prayer and conforms closely to accepted standards of female behavior. The marriage allegory follows widely-established interpretations of Second Corinthians and the Song of Songs wherein Christ and the Church, or God and the soul, are treated as Bridegroom and Bride, respectively. However, it also presents obscure concepts of interior spirituality—increasingly reserved for a highly educated readership—in a vocabulary of words and images familiar to less-educated audiences. By drawing on the emotions and relationships commonly represented in chivalric novels, Teresa offers comprehensible instruction to the aspiring contemplatives most affected by the Valdés Index: lay and religious readers with no university education, especially women.<sup>38</sup> At the same time, her depiction of the soul as God's devoted spouse justifies her careful non-disclosure of the content of mystical revelations, characterizing the experiences of spiritual marriage in the “morada principal” of the soul as the intimate activity of the marital chamber, which good Christian wives must keep secret.

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<sup>38</sup> Weber argues that Teresa's informal language and feminine self-deprecation serve as protective measures in the *Moradas*, discouraging the close attention of male readers and thereby establishing a safer space for the transmission of her ideas (*Rhetoric* 103). Through this self-deprecation, Teresa suggests that her text is beneath the intellectual abilities of her highly-educated censors. In the prologue, she specifically orients the book toward her fellow Carmelite nuns, labeling its central ideas “cosas de mujeres” written for an unlettered, female audience. Her borrowing from the *libros de caballería* may also contribute to the “feminization” of her text; women were famously addicted to novels of chivalry, to the consternation of Church leaders and popular moralists (see, for example, Vives I.5). Teresa's own father forbade her and her mother from reading *romances*; in the *Vida*, she recounts their having to hide the books whenever he came into the room, because her reading “le pesava tanto a mi padre que se había de tener aviso a que no lo viesse” (*Vida* 2:1 599-600).

According to Otis Green, courtly love revolves around the ideas that the act of loving another can ennoble the soul, that the beloved is superior to the lover, and that the lover's desire for the beloved is never satiated and always increasing. This desire originates from the contemplation of the beloved's beauty and virtue, which strikes the lover's heart instantaneously, like an arrow or a bolt of lightning, at the moment of "enamorment" (Green, *Spain* 74-75, 104).<sup>39</sup> The lover then strives, whether by praising her name or fighting battles in her honor, to win the beloved's favor and earn her reward. This reward, the *galardón*, is any indication that the lover's love pleases the beloved: a letter, a gift, a kiss, etc. Through the exchange of service and reward, lover and beloved achieve a perfect union of minds, hearts, and wills, which forms the basis of a lasting love. The epigraph to this chapter, from Juan de Mena's 1444 *Laberinto de Fortuna*, concisely rehearses several of the central tropes of courtly love, which also appeared frequently in sixteenth-century poetry, drama, and prose fiction—in fact, the courtly understanding of romantic love saturated Spanish cultural production during Teresa's lifetime (Green, *Mind* 41, *Spain* 13). Teresa herself inherited a passion for chivalric novels from her mother, who "era aficionada a libros de cavallerías y no tan mal tomava este pasatiempo como yo le tomé para mí, ... y parecíame que no era malo, con gastar muchas horas en el día y de la noche en tan vano ejercicio, aunque ascondida de mi padre. Era tan extremo lo que esto me embeví que, si no tenía libro nuevo, no me parece tenía contento" (*Vida* 2:1 599-600). Such was Teresa's enthusiasm for these novels that, according to her biographer Francisco de Ribera, she and her brother Rodrigo attempted to write one of their own as children. This enthusiasm seems to have exercised a lasting influence over both her literary production and her understanding of love (García de la Concha 50-52, Márquez Villanueva 356).

Various scholars have argued that the *Vida* echoes the chivalric romances in both theme and structure. Chorpenning pins the *Vida* to the traditional trajectory of the chivalric novel, in which Teresa undertakes a quest to achieve martyrdom in God's service and earn eternal reward. In pursuit of these goals, she undergoes multiple spiritual trials, battling first aridity and temptation, then the diabolical attacks that follow her call to God and recommitment to mental prayer. Ultimately, she finds earthly paradise both within her soul and in the new convent of San José ("Romance" 53-59). Weber, meanwhile, reads Teresa's flight from her father's house to the convent under cover of night (see chapters 3 and 4) as a lover's trial, an obstacle that she must overcome to unite with her beloved. By choosing God over her father, she makes a sacrifice that affirms her commitment to him; her suffering is proof of her obedience (Weber, *Rhetoric* 57). The *Moradas*, too, draws upon the characteristic tropes of courtly love and chivalric romance. The text's many military metaphors reflect Teresa's desire to be a soldier for Christ in the ways available to her; the castle is as a fortress from which the Church's armies battle their Protestant enemies and a dwelling place for God that the individual soul must guard unceasingly against demonic invaders (Herrero 405). As the battle rages without, the soul proceeds to the castle's innermost chamber in search of the beloved with whom it longs to reunite, striving along the way to prove its worthiness and devotion. In the *Moradas*, the soul, like a knight, undertakes a heroic quest to protect and glorify the Church in order to win the favor of its beloved, God.

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<sup>39</sup> Pérez González suggests that Teresa aims, in part, to restore the female interiority that the poets of courtly love have "emptied": "Si los moralistas recomendaban el silencio de la mujer, los poetas petrarquistas harán algo similar al dirigirse a ella como a un objeto hermoso, idealizado, inalcanzable, pero sin vida propia, intimidad o palabra. Deslumbrante y hermosa por fuera, pero vacía por dentro, inexistente fuera del deseo del poeta" (6-7). In this light, it's possible to interpret Teresa's utilization of chivalric tropes as a vaguely feminist gesture, which makes room for women in a space from which they have traditionally been excluded (see n. 6).

Teresa's incorporation of the language, themes, and structures of chivalric romance into a religious text reflects an established practice in contemporary literature. While the troubadours' tales were originally secular, Christian writers in Spain recruited chivalry to their cause from the fourteenth century onward; knights became Christian heroes who lent their arms to the defense of the Church, the clergy, the weak, and the poor, always backing the righteous and battling the infidel. This reclamation of courtly love poems and chivalric novels reached its peak in the sixteenth century, when both authors and editors worked to recast knights and lovers as soldiers as servants of Christ (Green, *Spain* 12; Herrero 403).<sup>40</sup> Meanwhile, contemporary religious literature often employed matrimonial metaphors to describe the soul's relationship with God (García de la Concha 256). Osuna, for example, refers to Christ as "el celoso esposo de nuestras ánimas" (XII.4 384), while San Juan de la Cruz subtitles the *Cántico espiritual* "Declaración de las canciones que tratan del ejercicio de amor entre el alma y el esposo Cristo" (3). The prevalence of marital allegory is hardly surprising given that, as Luís de León reminds us, God himself orchestrated the first marriage: "Dios por su persona ... les juntó las manos a los dos primeros casados, y los bendijo, y fue juntamente, como si dijésemos, el casamentero y el sacerdote" (31-32). Marriage is also a common metaphor for the relationship between Christ and the Church, or between God and the soul. St. Paul, in a passage cited by Augustine, tells the Corinthians that the Church is espoused to Christ alone (Vives I.6 69; II Cor. 11:2-4). In addition, early-Christian and medieval exegetes including Hippolytus of Rome, Origen, Nicholas of Lyra, and St. Bernard of Clairvaux interpreted the Bridegroom and Bride in the Song of Songs both ecclesiologically, as representing the relation between Christ and the Church, and allegorically, as representing the relation between God and the individual soul (Norris xix).<sup>41</sup> Teresa's borrowing from the language of romantic love therefore has extensive precedent in both secular and religious literature.

However, the inclusion of key characteristics of chivalric romance affords Teresa advantages beyond association with an existing literary canon; it enables her to avoid accusations of teaching while also expanding her readership. Romances are both secular and vernacular, so their content hardly violates the injunction against Scriptural interpretation. They are also ubiquitous, and their popularity cuts across classes and genders. The *Amadís* and its sequels sold more copies than any other work of fiction—in fact, more than any other book except Luís de Granada's *Libro de la oración*—in sixteenth-century Spain.<sup>42</sup> Inquisition records suggest that

<sup>40</sup> Herrero cites the Christianization of both Garcilaso and *Amadís*: "Not only were the laments of Garcilaso's desolated lovers interpreted as longings of the soul for the life beyond, but Sebastián de Córdoba, in his edition of the poetical works of Boscán and Garcilaso, entitled the book .... The same spiritualization takes place in the books of chivalry. In the *Sergas de Esplandian*, we find that this descendant of *Amadís* becomes an amazingly meek fellow when he is provoked to combat by Christian knights" (403). Meanwhile, Green shows that the Christian establishment reclaimed chivalric norms so effectively that clergymen (including the Cardinal of Valencia) often wrote or commissioned courtly love poetry for women they admired (*Spain* 69).

<sup>41</sup> N.B., St. Bernard of Clairvaux—whose works were among those Cisneros had translated into Spanish—wrote eighty-six sermons explaining the Song of Songs as an allegory for God's relationship with the soul (Hamilton 26-27). Fray Luís also wrote a commentary on the Song, as did Teresa herself, probably between 1566 and 1567, though she later burned it at her confessor's request (Weber, *Rhetoric* 115; Pérez González 6).

<sup>42</sup> Herrero suggests that the *Amadís* had sufficient cultural currency to shape the conquistadores' first impressions of Tenochtitlán: "The *cronista* of the Indies, Bernal Díaz del Castillo, writes that, when the soldiers of [Cortés] came into view of the spectacular city of Mexico, they believed that they were contemplating some landscape from the most famous of the Spanish books of chivalry of all time, ... the *Amadís*; to such an extent were knightly exploits part of their psychic structure and models of courage for their own deeds" (395). See also Irving A. Leonard, *Books of the Brave: Being an Account of Books and of Men in the Spanish Conquest and Settlement of the Sixteenth-Century New World* (U of California P, 1992), pp. 38-45.

farmers, shopkeepers, and merchants were as likely as *hidalgos* to own novels of chivalry, and that they were nearly as popular among young men as young women. In addition, many people who did not read the novels themselves had heard them read aloud (Nalle, “Literacy” 80, 88-89). For these reasons, the tropes of the *libros de caballería* make an excellent vehicle for communicating abstract devotional practices to uneducated readers; they allow Teresa to sidestep the exclusionary gestures of the Valdés Index and offer laypeople and women—including her Carmelite sisters—the instruction that she believes they need.<sup>43</sup>

In keeping with the hypothesis of popular accessibility, Weber suggests that, beginning in the fifth *moradas*, the narration of the soul’s progress toward spiritual marriage closely follows the order of contemporary matchmaking practices: “As the future Bride, the soul’s spiritual progress follows the sequence of marriage arrangements in Teresa’s day: (1) the meeting between young man and woman, (2) the exchange of gifts, (3) betrothal, (4) marriage” (*Rhetoric* 112-13). By examining this sequence of events in greater detail, we can trace Teresa’s incorporation of the relational metaphors and vocabulary of both courtly romance and Christian wifedom. In its first encounters with God, the soul experiences a moment of enamorment, after which it elevates and adores him above all else. To earn God’s favor, the soul proves its obedience through trials and suffering, and manifests its adoration in actions: good works and the care of his estate and reputation. Through these efforts, like all good courtly lovers and Christian wives, the soul earns its beloved’s favor and achieves a true union of wills with him. By articulating the path to spiritual marriage in the vocabulary of courtly and martial love, Teresa at once performs the orthodoxy of mental prayer and renders it accessible to a broader readership.

The enamorment of the knight—the moment when his heart is struck by love for his lady—is crucial in all chivalric romances. The cause of enamorment is usually the beloved’s beauty, which sets the lover’s heart aflame and awakens his desire to win her favor (Green, *Spain* 104). In the *Moradas*, the moment of enamorment occurs after the matchmaker’s work is finished; the marriage between God and the soul has already been arranged, and, as Weber indicates, the prospective bride and bridegroom meet for the first time. In order to ensure that the soul is satisfied with the marriage contract, God reveals himself just for a moment:

Quiere que le entienda más, y que, como dicen, vengan a vistas y juntarla consigo. Podemos decir que es así esto, porque pasa en brevísimo tiempo. Allí no hay más dar y tomar, sino un ver el alma por una manera secreta quién es este Esposo que ha de tomar, porque por los sentidos y potencias en ninguna manera podía entender en mil años lo que aquí entiende en brevísimo tiempo. Mas, como es tal el Esposo, de sola aquella vista la deja más dina de que se vengan a dar las manos, como dicen, porque queda el alma tan enamorada, que hace de su parte lo que puede para que no se desconcierte este divino desposorio. (V.4 327)

This brief moment of contact completely overwhelms the soul; the lightning strike of God’s divinity and grandeur far outstrips the capacity of its senses and faculties. Even a glimpse is sufficient to inflame the soul with love, such that it will do whatever it can to guarantee that the

<sup>43</sup> While the use of matrimonial metaphors has substantial precedent in religious literature, Teresa extends their reach by using a lower register of language: “Toda la tradición de las versiones bíblicas y el lenguaje eclesiástico han empleado siempre, en coherencia de hieratismo con *Esposo*, los vocablos *desposorio*, *nupcias*, *bodas*. Con el término *casadas*, santa Teresa atrae el tema al terreno familiar cotidiano sobre el que, progresivamente, construye una alegoría. Ya no nos sorprenderá, de este modo, que en el capítulo siguiente diga que, en pago ‘a las muchas joyas de valor del Esposo’, la esposa ‘le dé *siquiera una sortijica*’” (García de la Concha 256).

marriage takes place. Because this experience is so abstract and so interior, Teresa takes care to translate it into a more familiar register; the repetition of the phrase “como dicen” marks her use of the matchmaking expressions “venir a vistas” and “dar las manos,” both of which refer to the first meeting between an intended bride and groom.

In the courtly love tradition, the moment of enamorment awakens such an intense passion in the lover that he effectively deifies the beloved, elevating her to a level far above not only himself, but all others as well (Green, *Spain* 95). Vives instructs the Christian wife to elevate her husband in the same way, placing him above the rest of the world, including even her parents and siblings: “Dispone y quiere el matrimonio que la mujer debe tenerse por dicho el marido ser para ella todas las cosas del mundo, y que él solo sucede a todos los nombres de caridad, es a saber, a padre, a la madre, a hermanos, y hermanas, según fue Adán a Eva” (II.4 219-20). The husband replaces or supersedes all his wife’s prior connections and obligations, even those to her family; he should be the first and only person in the world for her, as Adam was for Eve. Teresa tells her readers that the soul must also elevate God above all else, ridding itself of any other attachments: “Si esta alma se descuida a poner su afición en cosa que no sea Él, piérdelo todo, y es tan grandísima pérdida como lo son las mercedes que va haciendo, y mucho mayor que se puede encarecer. Por eso, almas cristianas a las que el Señor ha llegado a estos términos, por Él os pido que no os descuidéis, sino que os apartéis de las ocasiones” (*Moradas* V.4 327).<sup>44</sup> The soul must direct all her love toward God, at the risk of losing him entirely; if she finds her affections divided between her heavenly intended and some earthly concern, the Devil may intervene to prevent the marriage. This concern is largely unwarranted, however, because after the soul encounters God in the matchmaking meeting described above, all else in the world—itsself included—suffers by comparison: “Como va más conociendo su grandeza, tiénese ya por más miserable; como ha probado ya los gustos de Dios, ve que es una basura los del mundo” (IV.3 294). As Green stipulates, the soul considers God far superior to itself and all others; if the lover does not exactly “deify” the beloved in this case, it at least accords him the adoration befitting a deity.

However, the adoration and elevation of the beloved is not sufficient to earn his favor. God first tests the soul’s commitment and loyalty with a series of trials, to which it eagerly submits in hopes of earning another glimpse of him: “Está tan esculpida en el alma aquella vista, que todo su deseo es tornarla a gozar. ... Ya el alma bien determinada queda a no tomar otro esposo; mas el Esposo no mira a los grandes deseos que tiene de que se haga ya el desposorio, que quiere que lo desee más y que le cueste algo, bien que es el mayor de los bienes” (VI.1 335). As described above, a single glance at the beloved sparks the soul’s love; from the moment of enamorment, it commits itself fully to God as its future spouse. However, God uses that love to urge the soul on to greater virtue, fanning the flames of its desire through a series of trials that prove the strength of its devotion. Only after these trials, says Teresa, can the spiritual marriage take place. The testing of devotion tracks closely with the courtly love model; according to Green, the chivalric hero proves his obedience to his beloved by suffering for her sake, submitting unquestioningly to every trial that she imposes upon him. The beloved, in her turn, “tests him to the uttermost, forcing him upward by a series of escalations toward the perfection of courtly love” (Green, *Spain* 13).<sup>45</sup> Along similar lines, a Christian wife should suffer her husband’s insults

<sup>44</sup> Osuna also tells his readers that they must empty their hearts to reserve them for God alone: “Vaca algún tanto a Dios y huelga algún tanto en El; entra en el retrainimiento de tu ánima, lanza todas las cosas dejando a Dios en él. ... Así podrá Dios mejor caber dentro cuanto menos estuviere acompañado” (IV.5 208-9).

<sup>45</sup> Herrero identifies Amadís as the courtly lover par excellence precisely because he embodies this “frenzied surrender to the beloved’s beauty and will. ... Amadís does not understand the judgment of his beloved, but he

with the forbearance of a martyr, regarding his anger as God's punishment delivered by human means: "Piensa que es castigo que Dios te da por su mano y que es por algunos pecados tuyos y que haces por aquella vía la penitencia. Y tente por dichosa si con una poca de pena que pasas en esta vida, redimes los muchos y grandes tormentos que habrías de pasar en la otra" (Vives II.4 240-41). Vives presents the wife's trials as a kind of purgatory on earth, insofar as her suffering at her husband's hands allows her to work off some of the debt of sin she owes to God in the next life. Teresa, on the other hand, takes the trials that God sets as a welcome opportunity to demonstrate her love and obedience to him, and insists repeatedly that the soul betrothed to God suffers for him with eagerness and joy: "¡Oh, gran deleite padecer en hacer la voluntad de Dios!" (*Moradas* V.2 316).

The trials that God sets for the soul take two forms, exterior and interior. Exterior trials comprise social suffering—accusations and denouncements, the doubt and rejection of friends, the murmuring and rumors of religious brethren, and, as mentioned, the inability to find a confessor—and physical suffering, including illness and injury. Teresa regards the latter as the soul's most difficult trial because physical pain disrupts prayer and concentration: "También suele dar el Señor enfermedades grandísimas. Éste es muy mayor trabajo, ... me parece el mayor que hay en la tierra—digo exterior— aunque entren cuantos quisieren, si es de los muy recios dolores—digo—porque descompone lo interior y exterior, de manera que aprieta un alma que no sabe qué hacer de sí, y de muy buena gana tomaría cualquier martirio de presto que estos dolores" (VI.1 338-39). The painful experiences of shame, ostracism, loneliness, and ailment test the soul's resolve and commitment to God, prompting the lover to abandon his quest or to decide that the beloved's favor is not worth the trouble. Interior trials, on the other hand, cause the soul to doubt its own worth, and to worry that its failings will prevent it from ever earning God's favor. The guidance of incompetent confessors fuels the soul's fears of demonic or self-deception and installs unnecessary scruples that can slow or stop the soul's progress toward spiritual marriage. Even when the soul remains confident in the divine provenance of its visions and the authenticity of God's call, it still struggles against the double bind of obedience to Church and confessor versus obedience to God himself (VI.1 339-40, VI.6 378).<sup>46</sup>

However, these trials are well worth the *galardón* they merit. As the soul prepares to enter the seventh *moradas*, Teresa points her readers toward the reward of spiritual marriage that the beloved bestows upon the lover for its long-suffering obedience:

¡Oh, váleme Dios, Señor, cómo apretáis a vuestros amadores mas todo es poco para lo que les dais después! Bien es que lo mucho cueste mucho; cuánto más que, si es purificar esta alma para que entre en la sétima morada, como los que han de entrar en

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will not judge the justice or injustice of the mysterious decrees that, like lightening, emerge from the bosom of his lady. It is not for him to examine and judge, but to obey, and to obey unto death if necessary" (399).

<sup>46</sup> The soul shares this struggle over conflicting obligations to Church and beloved with the Christian wife. To resolve the conflict, Vives classifies wifely obedience as a form of Christian observance; by obeying her husband, the wife also obeys the Church: "No hay duda que la mujer debe obedecer al marido y tener sus mandamientos como si fuesen leyes divinas, como sea que el marido tiene el lugar de Dios en la tierra, para con la mujer. Luego después de aquella divina majestad, él sólo es único a quien ella ha de amar, acatar, y obedecer. ... Manda que visites a sus santos templos, mas después que tu marido no te haya menester en casa" (II.4 242). The wife's primary obligation is to her husband, over and above her obligations to the Church (praying, attending Mass, etc.). This passage takes on particular interest when applied to Teresa's case because it implies that, by preserving a happy and harmonious relationship with her *marido*, God, she should succeed in preserving a happy and harmonious relationship with the Church as well.

el cielo se limpian en el purgatorio, ... siente el alma que es de tanto precio esta pena, que entiende muy bien no la podía ella merecer; sino que no es este sentimiento de manera que la alivia ninguna cosa, mas con esto la sufre de muy buena gana, y sufriría toda su vida, si Dios fuese de ello servido. (VI.11 421)

Like the lady who urges her knight on to a more perfect courtly love, God purifies and prepares the soul for spiritual marriage with these trials, much as he purifies and prepares souls in purgatory for heaven. The travails and delays also teach the soul to prize its eventual reward more highly than it otherwise might. However, Teresa emphasizes that the lover actively desires and even takes pleasure in suffering on the beloved's behalf, and would willingly continue to suffer in his service, to prove its loyalty and obedience.

In addition to enduring the trials that she imposes, the lover can earn the beloved's favor through independent demonstrations of his adoration. This idea of "callando manifestar"—showing rather than proclaiming one's ardor—is central to the courtly love model; the lover must demonstrate his humility, dedication, and loyalty to his beloved through some action: "The lover, in theory, had no thought but for the will, the slightest desire of his lady" (Green, *Mind* 57). Fray Luís holds Christian wives to the same standard, requiring that they prove their devotion to their husbands through works, rather than words: "Porque la perfección del hombre, en cualquier estado suyo, consiste principalmente en el bien obrar, por eso el Espíritu Santo no pone aquí por señas de esa perfección de que habla sino solamente las obras loables a que está obligada la casada que pretende ser buena" (II.51). Proclaiming yourself a good wife, in other words, does little to make you one; you also have to fulfill the duties associated with the title. Teresa agrees that good works—in particular caring for one's neighbors, especially the sick, weak, and hungry—nourish and sustain the soul's union with its spiritual spouse:

Cuando yo veo almas muy diligentes a entender la oración que tienen y muy encapadas cuando están en ella (que parece no se osan bullir ni menear el pensamiento, porque no se les vaya un poquito de gusto y devoción que han tenido), háceme ver cuán poco entienden del camino por donde se alcanza la unión y piensan que allí está todo el negocio. Que no, hermanas, no: obras quiere el Señor, y que, si ves una enferma a quien puedes dar algún alivio, no se te dé nada de perder esa devoción y te compadezcas de ella; y, si tiene algún dolor, te duela a ti; y, si fuere menester, lo ayunes porque ella lo coma; no tanto por ella como porque sabes que tu Señor quiere aquello. Ésta es la verdadera unión con su voluntad. (*Moradas* V.3 322-23)

God does not grant souls the favor of spiritual union so that they will spend all their time pursuing their own delights in prayer; he inspires their love so that they will perform deeds in his honor and enhance his good name. Teresa's emphasis on works—and in particular on nursing the sick, a common ministry for nuns—roots the concept of spiritual marriage firmly in Catholic orthodoxy. Unlike Protestants and *alumbrados*, practitioners of mental prayer consider neither faith alone nor advanced states of prayer sufficient for salvation; good works are an integral part of proving their devotion to their beloved, God. Teresa emphasizes repeatedly that inner peace does not equal outer inactivity; the more favors the soul receives from God, the harder it works to please him and promote his glory (VII.4 455).<sup>47</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> During Teresa's lifetime, many of the Protestants' opponents represented them as "soft on good works," and some went so far as to claim that Protestants actively prohibited their commission (Strohl 160, *Confession*



Wives in particular can prove their devotion to their husbands by demonstrating care for their estates. According to fray Luís, the Christian wife can gain her husband's trust by respecting, preserving, and making efforts to increase his property; she should "no sólo abastecer su casa, sino también adelantar su hacienda; no sólo hacer que lo que está dentro de sus puertas esté bien proveído, sino hacer también que se acrecienten en número los bienes y posesiones de fuera" (VII.94). By tending and expanding her husband's estate, the Christian wife shows care for the man himself. The soul betrothed to God also feels called to protect and increase his estate, both by caring for its fellow Christians and by bringing new souls into the Church: "Se querría meter en mitad del mundo, por ver si pudiese ser parte para que un alma alabase más a Dios" (*Moradas* VI.6 378). To prove its love for God, the soul feels compelled to spread knowledge of his greatness, and thereby to expand his property.

Much like the soul praising God to others, the lover can also manifest his adoration for the beloved by defending her good name. The ideal chivalric lover gladly undertakes journeys or duels to promote his lady's reputation: "The fair name of his lady was his chief concern, and the knight-errant wandered about the country, like Don Quijote, challenging all and sundry to fight

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XX:1). In fact, the role and function of good works was a topic of rather strenuous debate among contemporary Protestant theologians: Calvin and Melancthon felt that they served an instructive purpose, showing believers how the observance of God's law worked to redeem them; Georg Majors argued that good works were necessary for salvation; and Nikolaus van Amsdorf contended that they were detrimental, because they led the soul to believe in the illusion of self-justification (Strohl 160-61; Kolb 217, 224). Luther maintained that individuals could (and should) express Christian love by caring for the needy, forgiving one's enemies, praying for others, patiently suffering earthly evils, and so on, but he clarified that "none of these orders is a means of salvation. There remains only one way above them all, viz. faith in Jesus Christ" (365). In other words, good works serve God and help to spread understanding of his promise to reward believers with everlasting life, but they do not of themselves help believers to earn that reward. The Augsburg Confession—an overview of Lutheran doctrine presented to Charles V at the Diet of Augsburg in 1530—draws on St. Paul (Eph. 2:8), St. Augustine, and St. Ambrose to support the claim that "our works cannot reconcile God or merit forgiveness of sins, grace, and justification, but that we obtain this only by faith when we believe that we are received into favor for Christ's sake.... Whoever, therefore, trusts that by works he merits grace, despises the merit and grace of Christ, and seeks a way to God without Christ, by human strength" (*Confession* XX:3). For Luther, the belief that we can bargain with God, or win him to our cause by our earthly acts, is nothing but a distraction: the promise of salvation through good works fills the space in our hearts that we should reserve for love of God with either love of self or preoccupation with self-preservation (Strohl 160-61). This doctrine of *sola fide* (justification by faith alone) contradicted the Catholic dogma that souls earn salvation through the combination of faith and good works (*Confession* XX:1). Teresa's repeated emphasis on works in the later *moradas* suggests that she relies upon this combination of works with prayer to set her apart, at least superficially, from the *luteranos*. Her utilization of the courtly love model, wherein the lover strives to win his beloved's favor through heroic acts in her service, underscores that that soul earns God's grace not only through prayer, but also through works. In the seventh *moradas*, she stipulates that souls in spiritual marriage continually seek ways to show God their love, most often through works for his honor and glory: "Toda le memoria se le va en cómo más contentarle y en qué u por dónde **mostrará** el amor que le tiene. **Para esto es la oración, hijas mías; de esto sirve este matrimonio espiritual: de que nazcan siempre obras, obras.** Ésta es la verdadera muestra de ser cosa y merced hecha de Dios, como ya os he dicho, porque poco me aprovecha estarme muy recogida a solas, haciendo atos con Nuestro Señor, propuniendo y prometiendo de hacer maravillas por su servicio si, en saliendo de allí, que se ofrece la ocasión, lo hago todo al revés" (*Moradas* VII.4 453, my emphases). Teresa takes care to ensure that no one can call her "soft on good works": in this passage, even more clearly than in the one cited above, she affirms her commitment to the Catholic doctrine of salvation by faith *and* works by declaring the latter the ultimate aim of mental prayer. The practice of interior spirituality may resemble Luther's solitary Bible study in that it affords an unmediated relationship with God, but it yields the same result as any other form of Catholic devotion: works in God's service.

or to admit that his particular lady was the fairest, gentlest, noblest, and most accomplished in the world” (Green, *Spain* 13). Vives exhorts the Christian wife to guard her husband’s reputation with similar vigor, since in promoting his honor she also augments her own: “¡Oh locas de las mujeres que no ven que toda su honra mana de la honra de su marido! Y no conocen cuán deshonradas están en tener maridos deshonorados ... Resulta la mayor honra que pueda tener la mujer, que es ser mujer de marido honrado y estimado” (Vives II.4 228). Her husband’s honor and esteem, rather than her own, should be the wife’s first concern, and she should protect it by every means available to her. By the same token, Teresa asserts that the soul in the state of spiritual marriage labors much more intently for God’s glory and honor than for its own:

No se conoce ni se acuerda que para ella ha de haber cielo ni vida ni honra, porque toda está empleada en procurar la de Dios, que parece que las palabras que le dijo Su Majestad hicieron efeto de obra, que fue que mirase por sus cosas, que Él miraría por las suyas. ... Parece ya no es ni querría ser en nada nada, si no es para cuando entiende que puede haber por su parte algo en que acreciente un punto la gloria y honra de Dios, que por esto pornía muy de buena gana su vida. (*Moradas* VII.3 443)

The soul has elevated God’s honor and glory so far above its own that it forgets to labor for its own salvation; all its efforts aim only to promote the name and reputation of its beloved. According to Teresa, this utter lack of self-regard reflects the marriage vows that God and the soul have exchanged; each takes on the other’s burdens, and concerns itself with the other’s wellbeing.<sup>48</sup> By showing its devotion through works—by “callando manifestar”—the soul earns the same consideration from God in return.

Having earned the beloved’s favor through trials and works, the lover joins with her in a union of hearts and wills.<sup>49</sup> Green explains that this union, which constitutes the essence of courtly love, is less a state of Platonic perfection than a bond of mutual desire and esteem, and often ends in matrimony (*Mind* 53-4, 74; *Spain* 79-80). Vives, meanwhile, depicts marriage as a literal union of the parties involved, wherein they merge into a single being:

Hase de entender que los dos se harán una misma cosa, porque según la propiedad de la lengua hebraica, tanto es decir carne como decir hombre; por donde los que antes del matrimonio eran dos, después de él se hacen uno, siendo amasados, unidos, y ametalados con este divino sacramento. Este es un admirable y milagroso misterio:

<sup>48</sup> Laredo also describes Christ’s love for the soul with a metaphor of shared burdens: “Es de notar el piadosísimo intento del que tanto cuidado tiene de regalarnos, el cual, habiéndonos dicho que para poder seguirle nos carguemos nuestra cruz, vuélvenoslo a amonestar, y llámala *yugo suyo*; para darnos a entender que nuestra cruz es su yugo, y que su yugo es lo que él llama *nuestra cruz*, la cual, si como nuestra tomamos con entrañable afición, como suya la llevamos con su ayuda y su favor. Porque el yugo es para dos, él lo lleva con nosotros, y nos le hace muy suave y ya no pesado” (I.Pro 39).

<sup>49</sup> The union of hearts is only possible if the beloved bestows her favor upon the lover of her own volition. The norms of courtly love demand “that the reward be freely given by the lady, and ... that the relationship contain no element of obligation or compulsion” (Green, *Mind* 65). Vives concurs, informing his readers that the love of one’s spouse is not bought or forced, but earned: “Hágote saber que el amor no se saca por fuerza, sino que se gana” (I.18 198). This point is crucial for Teresa, too: only God decides whom to reward with his favor, and no amount of prayer, study, obedience, or apostolic activity can compel him to choose you: “Quiero decir que, aunque más meditación tengamos y aunque más nos estrujemos y tengamos lágrimas, no viene esta agua por aquí; sólo se da a quien Dios quiere y cuando más descuidada está muchas veces el alma” (*Moradas* IV.2 284). God grants revelations as he sees fit, regardless of the soul’s efforts or desires.

encorporar, heñir, y amasar en tal manera dos casados, que los dos se hagan uno, lo cual hubo lugar entre Nuestro Salvador Jesucristo y la iglesia. (II.2 208)

The verbs that Vives uses here—*amasar* and *heñir*, to mix or knead together, as bread; *ametalar*, to alloy together, as metal; and *incorporar*, to take into the body—all evoke the same image of two heterogeneous component parts combining to form a single, indistinguishable whole. Teresa's explanation of the difference between spiritual union and spiritual marriage turns upon the same question of permanence; while in the first instance the united beings can return to their original, pre-union states, in the second they remain permanently and inextricably joined:

Anque unión es juntarse dos cosas en una, en fin, se pueden apartar y quedar cada cosa por sí, como vemos ordinariamente que pasa de presto esta merced del Señor, y después se queda el alma sin aquella compañía, digo de manera que lo entienda. En estotra merced del Señor [el matrimonio espiritual], no; porque siempre queda el alma con su Dios en aquel centro. Digamos que sea la unión como si dos velas de cera se juntasen tan en extremo, que toda la luz fuese una, u que el pabulo y la luz y la cera es todo uno; mas después bien se puede apartar la una vela de la otra, y quedan en dos velas, u el pabulo de la cera. Acá es como si cayendo agua del cielo en un río u fuente, adonde queda hecho todo agua, que no podrán ya dividir ni apartar cuál es el agua del río u lo que cayó del cielo; o como si un arroíco pequeño entra en la mar, no habrá remedio de apartarse; u como si en una pieza estuviesen dos ventanas por donde entrase gran luz; anque entra dividida, se hace todo una luz. (*Moradas* VII.2 437-38)<sup>50</sup>

The contrast that Teresa draws here between countable and uncountable objects clarifies the permanence of their bond. In spiritual union, although the two candles can be brought together such that their flames merge, their wicks burn together, and their wax mingles, they nevertheless remain two discrete objects; after any amount of time, they can still be separated into individual candles. In spiritual marriage, however, two iterations of the same uncountable element—raindrops and riverwater, a brook and an ocean, light streaming in through two windows—commingle indistinguishably. The smaller (the soul) dissolves into the larger (God) such that it can never be extracted; they are permanently joined in a union of hearts and wills.

The path that Teresa lays out for spiritual marriage closely follows the norms for both courtly love and Christian wifhood. After suffering the lightning strike of enamorment in its first meeting with its intended, the soul elevates God above all else, and undertakes to win his favor and guarantee their marriage. It gladly submits to trials both interior and exterior to prove its obedience to its beloved, and makes its devotion manifest in both words and works—most notably the care and expansion of God's estate and the glorification of his name. In these ways, the soul eventually earns God's favor, and with it the reward of spiritual marriage: an unbreakable union of wills and sharing of responsibilities. Through this extended metaphor, Teresa makes the abstract and incorporeal experiences of mystical union more concrete and more familiar for her uneducated readers, and emphasizes the Catholic orthodoxy and social conformity of mental prayer for her *letrado* audience.

<sup>50</sup> N.B., Osuna explains that mystical theology “llámase también unión, porque, llegándose el hombre de esta manera a Dios, se hace un espíritu con él por un intercambio de voluntades que ni el hombre quiere otra cosa de lo que Dios quiere, ni Dios se aparta de la voluntad del hombre, mas en todo son a una, como las cosas que perfectamente están unidas, que casi se niegan de sí y se conforman totalmente en un tercio” (VI.2 238-39).

However, if Teresa presents the soul as God's lover or spouse, then the castle's innermost *morada*—"la más principal, que es adonde pasan las cosas de mucho secreto entre Dios y el alma"—becomes a marital chamber, and the events that take place therein are the intimate exchanges between husband and wife (I.1 213).<sup>51</sup> It's telling that various scholars have noted the intimate quality of Teresa's descriptions of mystical experience; Américo Castro labels the prevailing rhetorical posture of her writing an "intimidad sorprendida," claiming that her texts resemble the "desborde íntimo de un alma, segura en su retiro de amor; fueron confesión susurrada para edificar en silencio a sus hijas espirituales. ... Teresa pone al desnudo sus vivencias, en lo esencial de carácter erótico" (67-68). Castro interprets Teresa's spiritual writings as an almost accidental exposure of her most intimate secrets, the publication of boudoir stories meant only for the ears of her closest chums. This undressing of her soul entails a certain lack of modesty, an idea that García de la Concha echoes in his assessment of the central gesture of the *Vida*: "Es el desnudar el alma sin pudor y con el mayor pudor, haciéndolo por necesidad y suplicando, desde la obediencia, respeto a la intimidad. Pero, a la vez, aceptando, martirialmente, el que la intimidad pueda trascender, si ello sirve para poner de manifiesto la grandeza misericorde de Dios" (196-97). What Castro perceives as wantonness becomes, in García de la Concha, heroism; Teresa bravely sacrifices her modesty to the higher cause of publicizing God's great mercies, particularly as rendered through mental prayer.

But does Teresa really bare her soul, so to speak, in the *Moradas*? Does she actually reveal the details of the events that occur in the innermost *morada*, the chamber in which God and the soul enter into spiritual marriage? I contend that she does not: while providing characteristically profuse accounts of the form, circumstances, themes, and effects of the revelations granted to the soul in spiritual marriage, she avoids disclosing their content. The allegory of spiritual marriage permits and in fact requires her non-disclosure, insofar as contemporary social mores forbid wives from discussing their intimate interactions with their husbands. If, in keeping with her thematization of courtly and marital love in the last three *moradas*, the innermost *morada* becomes the chamber of the soul's conjugal union with God, then any soul in the state of spiritual marriage—including Teresa herself—must necessarily keep the events of that chamber private.<sup>52</sup> Thus, building on Weber's claim that Teresa leans into contemporary feminine stereotypes about intellectual inferiority and physical weakness to protect herself from censorship and prosecution (see *Rhetoric* 39-40), I'd argue that in this instance she deploys her femininity as the reason that she cannot fully disclose her mystical experiences to her readers: as a good Christian wife, she must keep her husband's secrets.<sup>53</sup>

<sup>51</sup> In the *Cántico espiritual*, San Juan also cloaks the soul's betrothal to the Amado (God) in the secrecy of the "interior chamber": "En la interior bodega, / de mi Amado bebí ... / Allí me dio su pecho, / allí me enseñó ciencia muy sabrosa, / y yo le di de hecho / a mí, sin dejar cosa; / allí le prometí de ser su esposa" (XVII-XVIII, pp. 23-24). Tellingly, San Juan suggests that this *desposorio espiritual* entails the revelation of divine secrets ("me enseñó ciencia muy sabrosa"), but does not share the content of that revelation with his readers.

<sup>52</sup> To borrow from Josefina López, "una vez en la unión mística el alma, Dios la hace muda y Teresa deja de comunicar(se). De esta manera, Teresa ha cumplido con su misión y sumisión y el alma también, y ambas se han entregado a las 'mercedes' de Dios" (9).

<sup>53</sup> Checa, following Michel de Certeau, argues that the "secret" serves a primarily rhetorical purpose in the mystical text. Because language invariably fails to capture the fullness of their experience, mystic writers guarantee its reality by claiming to conceal its content as a "secret" from God: "La «realidad» originadora del discurso místico (y su referente final) es en sí misma innombrable o indescriptible en toda su riqueza: no es posible reproducirla verbalmente, sino a lo sumo insinuarla o anunciarla como *secreto*. Ante la audiencia, el discurso *produce*, por tanto, el *secreto* de la experiencia mística, mientras que, simultáneamente, afirma derivar

Courtly love demands secrecy from all parties involved; the implication of carnal desire in letters or communications between the lovers can dishonor them both, but especially the lady, if made public. This secrecy is particularly crucial when the *galardón* awarded to the dutiful lover surpasses the mere union of “hearts” or “wills” (Green, *Mind* 53-5). By the same token, Vives enjoins Christian wives never to speak about anything, whether word or deed, that takes place between husband and wife alone. The secrecy of these intimate exchanges is of paramount importance to a harmonious marriage:

Ninguna cosa de las que en dicho o en hecho pasares en secreto con tu marido en tu cámara, que no la descubras ni des parte a persona viva. ... Fidia, escultor antiguo y muy señalado en aquel oficio de cortar o entallar piedras, hizo una estatua de la diosa Venus a los Elienses pueblos de Grecia en esta forma, que ella era toda desnuda, sino que estaba cubierta de un velo muy delgado, y debajo sus pies tenía una tortuga. En lo cual se enseñaba la honestidad y silencio que debe tener la mujer en las cosas que pasan entre ella y su marido. Como, ¿y no ves cuán gran desvarío es descubrir unas cosas tan secretas y tan escondidas? ... Los secretos de los casados son sacrosantos y no es lícito divulgarse ni venir a noticia de otros. (Vives II.6 266)<sup>54</sup>

The combination of Venus, the goddess of love, with the tortoise, which remains mute in the privacy of its shell, neatly reinforces Vives’s insistence upon the importance of keeping one’s own counsel with regards to conjugal activities. Whatever husbands and wives do or say in the privacy of their chamber must stay between them; those secrets are sacrosanct, and wives have a duty to their husbands to keep them. The same duty holds for spiritual spouses; as Juan de Ávila advises the preacher García Arias, “lo que en su corazón pasa con Dios, cállelo con grande aviso, como debe callar la mujer casada lo que con su marido pasa” (197).<sup>55</sup>

In the context of the allegory of spiritual marriage, Teresa’s characterization of the innermost *morada* as the place in which God desires to be alone with the soul evokes the mandate of conjugal privacy. When conferring the favors of spiritual marriage, God carries the soul into this chamber, closing and locking all the castle’s doors to guarantee that they are completely alone: “Manda el Esposo cerrar las puertas de las moradas y an las del castillo y cerca; que, en quiriendo arrebatarse esta alma, se le quita el huelgo de manera que, aunque duren un poquito más

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de él. La postulación de un cierto grado de autoridad *constantiva* (surgida de que el discurso depende de un referente extraverbal, sin llegar nunca a abarcarlo) pasa entonces por el ejercicio *performativo* de crear un «efecto de realidad» (84). Checa suggests that the mystical text does not follow from the secret, but rather produces and performs it as something that the mystic must not (but in fact, cannot) convey. Each time the text identifies an experience that it then refuses to describe, it produces the truth effect of a privileged but private relationship with God. While I don’t disagree with Checa, I think that in this case Teresa invokes the “secret” not to make her mystical experiences more believable, but to avoid disclosing them in any detail. If the effect of “el desnudar el alma sin pudor” in the *Vida* was inquisitorial censorship and confiscation, then Teresa must avoid any such self-exposure in the *Moradas* to maximize the text’s chances of unrestricted circulation.

<sup>54</sup> Fray Luís also cites Phidias’ sculpture of Venus standing on a tortoise as an example of the importance of women’s silence and discretion, though he does not associate it quite so explicitly with the intimate encounters between husband and wife: “Cuenta Plutarco que Fidias, escultor ilustre, hizo a los Elienses una imagen de Venus que afirmaba los pies sobre una tortuga, que es animal mudo y que nunca desampara su concha; dando a entender que las mujeres, por la misma manera, han de guardar siempre la casa y el silencio” (XV.140).

<sup>55</sup> Márquez Villanueva’s reproduction of this quotation suggestively includes three additional words, “en la cama,” after the final “pasa.” However, he acknowledges that “las versiones conocidas de este texto omiten las palabras finales ‘en la cama’” (n. 376). Castro uses the same version cited above (see pp. 55-56).

algunas veces los otros sentidos, en ninguna manera puede hablar” (*Moradas* VI.4 366).<sup>56</sup> By locating these visions in the innermost *morada*, where the soul is alone with God, Teresa invokes the privileged confidence of the marital chamber: out of respect and obedience to its spouse, the soul may not reveal what transpires between them. In addition, by locking the castle doors and suspending the soul’s senses and faculties, Teresa recalls the fundamental incommunicability of mystical experience; when revelations are delivered in a state of suspension, the soul lacks the means to translate them into language. Teresa also confirms that, because the soul experiences these revelations in a way that it cannot express in words, the events that transpire between God and the soul within the locked castle are known only to them:

[Dios] la junta consigo, sin entender aquí naide sino ellos dos, ni an la mesma alma entiende de manera que lo pueda después decir, aunque no está sin sentido interior; porque no es como a quien toma un desmayo u parajismo, que ninguna cosa interior ni exterior entiende. Lo que yo entiendo en este caso es que el alma nunca estuvo tan despierta para las cosas de Dios ni con tan gran luz y conocimiento de Su Majestad. Parecerá imposible, porque si las potencias están tan absortas, ¿cómo se puede entender que entiende este secreto? Yo no lo sé, ni quizá ninguna criatura, sino el mesmo Criador. (VI.4 361)

Given that the soul itself does not fully understand what has happened, it cannot possibly render this experience into language. The means by which God imparts knowledge to the soul without the use of its senses or faculties is a divine mystery that only he understands.<sup>57</sup>

However, not all revelations lie beyond language. While intellectual visions—flashes of understanding and clarity with regards to divine truths—cannot be translated, individuals can sometimes put the content of imaginary visions into words because they are image-based. After receiving a glimpse of heaven or a picture of Christ in a particular posture, the individual may be able to explain, or at least approximate, what she saw: “Cuando, estando el alma en esta suspensión, el Señor tiene por bien demostrarle algunos secretos, como de cosas del cielo y visiones imaginarias, esto sábelo después decir, y de tal manera queda imprimido en la memoria, que nunca jamás se olvida” (VI.4 361-62). Even when the contents of these revelations can be rendered successfully into language, Teresa declines to translate them. The syntax here suggests clarification by example—she tells her readers that God shows the soul certain secrets “*como cosas de cielo y visiones imaginarias*”—but the examples that she gives don’t clarify the nature of those secrets at all: “heavenly things” and “imaginary visions” are categories far too vague to be illuminating. Teresa employs this tactic with some frequency in the later *moradas*, explaining in

<sup>56</sup> Teresa clarifies that these trances mostly happen when the devotee is alone; if they occur in front of others, they can cause shame and embarrassment, which diminishes the profit of the experience. Teresa suspects that this shame is a punishment for the devotee’s lack of humility, but also wonders whether public trances are God’s way of claiming the soul for his own, like the protective gestures a husband might make toward his wife: “Parece que quiere Nuestro Señor que todos entiendan que aquel alma es ya suya, que no ha de tocar naide en ella” (VI.4 367-68).

<sup>57</sup> Teresa discourages her readers from questioning these mysteries of God’s love, suggesting that he doesn’t necessarily mean for humans to understand them: “Las cosas ocultas de Dios no hemos de buscar razones para entenderlas, sino que, como creemos que es poderoso, está claro que hemos de creer que un gusano de tan limitado poder como nosotros, que no ha de entender sus grandezas” (VI.4 363). This kind of preventative rhetoric attaches a negative moral imperative to the attempt to understand in more detail the material she presents under its banner; if you question her, you’re questioning God himself.

detail the circumstances, challenges, or advantages of a certain form of revelation but concealing its content behind vague words like “secretos” or “palabras.” For example, though she specifies that God sometimes imparts “great secrets” in a particularly sudden and “occult” manner to minimize the possibility of demonic interference, she offers only a generic explanation of the secrets themselves: “Le da el Señor a entender grandes secretos, que parece los ve en el mesmo Dios; que éstas no son visiones de la sacratísima Humanidad, ni, aunque digo que ve, no ve nada, porque no es visión imaginaria, sino muy intelectual, adonde se le descubre cómo en Dios se ven todas las cosas y las tiene todas en Sí mismo” (VI.10 413). The “secret” Teresa reveals here is hardly a secret—the idea that God is and contains all things within himself is a commonplace of Catholic theology. The implication, of course, is that God enables the soul to see or understand this truth in a new and deeper way, but what exactly it sees and the deeper truth it comes to understand are secrets that Teresa apparently prefers to keep.

Nowhere is this bait-and-switch more pronounced than in Teresa’s account of the principal favor of spiritual marriage, the revelation of the Trinity that God grants his new bride as a wedding gift:

Quiere ya nuestro buen Dios quitarla las escamas de las ojos, y que vea y entienda algo de la merced que le hace, aunque es por una manera estraña; y metida en aquella morada por visión intelectual, por cierta manera de presentación de la verdad, se le muestra la Santísima Trinidad, todas Tres Personas, con una inflamación que primero viene a su espíritu a manera de una nube de grandísima claridad, y estas Personas distintas, y por una noticia admirable que se da a el alma, entiende con grandísima verdad ser todas Tres Personas una sustancia y un poder y un saber y un solo Dios; de manera que lo que tenemos por fe allí lo entiende el alma, podemos decir, por vista, aunque no es vista con los ojos del cuerpo ni del alma, porque no es visión imaginaria. Aquí se le comunican todas Tres Personas y la hablan y la dan a entender aquellas palabras que dice el Evangelio que dijo el Señor: que vernía Él y el Padre y el Espíritu Santo a morar con el alma que le ama y guarda sus mandamientos. ¡Oh, váleme Dios! ¡Cuán diferente cosa es oír estas palabras y creerlas, a entender por esta manera cuán verdaderas son! Y cada día se espanta más esta alma, porque nunca más le parece se fueron de con ella, sino que notoriamente ve, de la manera que queda dicho, que están en lo interior de su alma, en lo muy muy interior, en una cosa muy honda, que no sabe decir cómo es, porque no tiene letras, siente en sí esta divina compañía. (VII.1 430-31)

Here again, although Teresa tells us a great deal about the purpose, theme, and miraculous effects of the revelation, she gives us no information about the new knowledge that it contains. The fact that the Trinity is comprised of three persons in one is another Christian commonplace, and any reader who so desires can easily find the topic of their discourse with the soul in the Gospel of John: “If a man loue mee, he will keepe my wordes: and my Father will loue him, and wee will come vnto him, and make our abode with him” (John 14:23). The content of the revelation itself, however, remains obscure. The Three Persons of the Trinity show the soul how they can be both three and one, but Teresa does not explain what they show. They speak to the soul—“la hablan”—but Teresa does not tell us what they say. During their conversation, they bring the soul to a deeper understanding—“la dan a entender”—of how Jesus “makes his abode” within those who love him, but Teresa describes neither their methods of instruction nor the content of their lesson. Though at first glance she seems to lay bare the most intimate exchanges of the

soul's spiritual marriage to God, in fact she reveals none of its secrets. The door to the innermost *morada* remains firmly closed, and Teresa's obligation to her Esposo intact.

Teresa borrows extensively from the models of courtly love and Christian wifery in developing the extended allegory of spiritual marriage that dominates the fifth, sixth, and seventh *moradas*. Her elucidation of the soul's relationship with God in terms of contemporary norms of romantic love reflects her primary apostolic goals: to fill the void in Spanish-language devotional literature left by the Valdés Index, and to make the practice of mental prayer accessible to many readers, regardless of their level of theological education. Through the incorporation of key exterior markers of courtly devotion and wifely obedience, the “callando manifestar” and care of the husband's name and estate, Teresa ties the practice of mental prayer firmly to the Catholic obligation to good works, distinguishing her doctrine from both the Protestants' and the *alumbra-dos*'. At the same time, the allegory of spiritual marriage justifies her unwillingness to describe the content of mystical experiences and revelations in any significant detail. By locating the favors (visions, ecstasies, revelations) of spiritual marriage in the “morada principal,” the castle's innermost chamber reserved for God and the soul alone, Teresa subjects them to the requirements of conjugal privacy. As a good Christian wife, she cannot reveal the details of her intimate encounters with her husband; both obedience and respect obligate her to keep his secrets. Thus, as with the institutional language of expertise and state simplifications, this translation of the principles of mental prayer into the popular language of courtly love and Christian marriage allows Teresa both to extend and to limit the legibility of her doctrine.

★   ★   ★

In the last chapter of *La perfecta casada*, fray Luís promises that good Christian wives will receive not only the gifts of the Holy Spirit (which are already gifts in themselves), but also honor and praise both earthly and divine, public and private (XX.173-74). This praise will spread far and wide, because each person who encounters the perfect wife will find his own favorite virtue to praise in her—her purity, piety, honesty, discretion, love for her husband, care for his estate, and so on—and will share it with his friends, neighbors, and children:

Los vecinos dicen esto a los ajenos, y los padres dan con ella doctrina a sus hijos; y de los hijos pasa a los nietos, y extiéndese la fama por todas partes creciendo; y pasa con clara y eterna voz su memoria de unas generaciones en otras, y no le hacen injuria los años, ni con el tiempo envejece, antes con los días florece más, porque tiene su raíz junto a las aguas; y así no es posible que descaezca, ni menos puede ser que con la edad caiga el edificio que está fundado en el cielo. Ni, en manera alguna, es posible que muera el elogio de la que todo cuanto vivió no fue sino una perpetua alabanza de la bondad y grandeza de Dios, a quien sólo se debe eternamente el ensalzamiento y la gloria. (XX.175)

In Teresa's case, at least, fray Luís seems to have been right: she received honor and praise in great measure for her virtues as God's devoted spouse. In 1588, fray Luís himself oversaw the publication of the first editions of the *Vida*, the *Moradas*, and the *Camino de perfección*. Although a handful of theologians denounced Teresa's writings as *alumbradismo* in the years that followed (see n. 22), the Holy Office refused to issue an edict of condemnation—in the time that it took the Inquisition to process these posthumous accusations against Teresa, her fame as a possible saint had grown enormously. Rumors had spread about the incorruptibility of her body and



the sanctity of her visions. Rather than render a definitive verdict, the Consejo simply dismissed the accusations without commentary (Llamas Martínez 145). In 1614, the Church beatified Teresa, and in 1622, just forty years after her death, she was canonized. “Santa Teresa” enjoyed a cultic popularity and prestige that scrubbed away much of the real Teresa’s passion and vivacity, and whitewashed her tense and complicated relationship with the institutional Church. As Jodi Bilinkoff explains, seventeenth-century “biographers and propagandists of the faith constructed a new Teresa, one that conformed to the agenda of the Counter-Reformation Church and the roles it assigned to women. Thus emerged the Saint Teresa of Bernini, the ecstatic mystic, the miraculous healer, the humble proponent of absolute orthodoxy and absolute obedience” (“Reform” 177). However, one important aspect of Teresa’s personality remained unchanged: her identity as a writer. Much of the Catholic iconography of the seventeenth century—including portraits by Ribera, Zurbarán, and Velázquez—shows Teresa with a pen in one hand, and a dove of divine inspiration floating overhead (Weber, *Rhetoric* 164).

What these portraits don’t show, of course, is the shadow of the Inquisition darkening the desk. As Ahlgren reminds us, “Teresa’s interaction with the Inquisition—both direct and indirect—was the most significant influence on her career as a writer” (33). The Valdés Index’s prohibition of the devotional texts that she needed for the Carmelite reform launched her literary vocation, and her many experiences of censorship and denunciation shaped her particular form of self-expression: a mixture of humility and authority, obedience and assertion, legibility and illegibility. In the *Moradas*, she proffers and denies legibility at the same time. She offers state simplifications to help confessors unfamiliar with mental prayer monitor those who practice it, but also contends that only spiritual guides experienced in mystical theology can supervise and correct contemplatives effectively. She develops the allegory of spiritual marriage to help uneducated readers understand the complexities of interior spirituality, but declines to disclose the details of the resulting revelations under the banner of conjugal privacy. Through her emphasis on the intimacy and incommunicability of each individual’s interior experience of God, she works to establish, for herself and her co-practitioners of mental prayer, “espacios de autonomía subjetiva parcialmente opacos a la vigilancia de la institución eclesiástica” (Checa 111). In other words, she writes lines for them to trace over, so that they can learn to do the same.

## Chapter 2

### Making mystic texts: Jesuit subject formation in the *Spiritual Exercises*

Si monumentum requiris, circumspice.

Epitaph of Sir Christopher Wren, St. Paul's Cathedral, London

In Book III of his *Discourses on Livy*, Machiavelli argues that the longest-lasting institutions are those that frequently take steps to restore internal order: “All the things of this world have a limit to their existence; but those only run the entire course ordained for them by Heaven that do not allow their body to become disorganized” (III.1:1). No institution is permanent, but those that build in processes of self-renewal, laws or norms that periodically “bring them back to their original principles,” can endure for a surprisingly long time (III.1:1). Continual self-restoration, through the incorporation of good members and the promulgation of good laws, helps any human association preserve and expand its power and reputation over time (III.1:7). Some would argue that the Society of Jesus incarnates, to some degree, Machiavelli’s model of the self-perpetuating association.<sup>1</sup> For instance, the Society has institutionalized a regular return to its original principles in the form of the *Spiritual Exercises*, a thirty-day spiritual retreat authored by its founder, Ignatius of Loyola (1491-1556), and mandatory for all members. The *Exercises*, written in the early 1520s shortly after Ignatius’s conversion to religious life and revised continuously to reflect his own spiritual experiences and those of the individuals whom he guided through the retreat, were finalized in 1540 and published, with papal approval, in 1548 (O’Malley, *First Jesuits* 37, *Saints* 104). They served as a recruitment tool and training program for the Society, whose members administered the retreat both to attract good men and to reinforce good laws, thereby preserving and expanding their institution. J. Michelle Molina argues that the *Exercises* simultaneously fostered cohesion and growth through their codification of “a form of interior piety that resolved the tension between contemplation and action precisely because the Exercises offered a method for ministering to both ‘self’ and many ‘others’” (31). The Society’s original principle was the deeply personal relationship that each member forged with God during the retreat; in other words, Jesuit institutional cohesion was predicated upon an interior and highly individualized spiritual experience.

The strategy seems to have worked. Officially founded in 1540 with a membership of just twenty, the Jesuits numbered over a thousand by 1556, and five thousand by 1580 (O’Malley,

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<sup>1</sup> See, for example, Chris Lowney, *Heroic Leadership: Best Practices from a 450-year-old Company that Changed the World* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2005).

*First Jesuits* 36; Pavone 25-26). By the century's end, they had established residences, schools, and missions across Western Europe, Ibero-America, India, Ethiopia, China, and Japan; had developed friendly relationships with multiple monarchs; had been requested as court confessors in several kingdoms; and had received papal support, both financial and political, to found their first university in Rome (O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 3, *Popes* 38-39; Pavone 78-79, 83-85). Their power and influence continued to expand so dramatically that by the 1760s it frightened the royal houses of Europe, many of whom expelled the Society from their territories. The Holy See, under their pressure, followed suit in 1773 with a global order of suppression (Murphy 85; Pavone 139-42). The Jesuits complied, ceding all their material resources and abandoning their missions, but they did not disappear. Catherine II of Russia, because she herself was not Catholic, refused to enforce the order of suppression in her territory. She ordered the few hundred Jesuits under her sovereignty to continue normal operations, and even authorized the founding of a new novitiate to support the recruitment and training of new members. These few glowing embers eventually managed to rekindle the Jesuit flame: Pius VII formally restored the Society worldwide in 1814, and within just two centuries the Jesuits have rebounded sufficiently to elevate one of their number to the papacy (O'Malley, *Popes* 87-89, 93, 107).

The Society's story of self-renewal is all the more remarkable in light of the fact that the institution is founded upon a contradiction. On the one hand, the *Exercises* leads each individual Jesuit to forge his own immediate relationship with God, and to base his decisions upon his own understanding of the divine will. This ability to discern God's will affords each Jesuit considerable spiritual autonomy; he chooses his path through divine inspiration, and has no need of the Society's mediation. On the other hand, all of the Society's operations are governed by a strict hierarchy, which obligates subordinates to submit blindly to their superiors. The Jesuit model of obedience entails total abnegation of the will. Carrying out a command is not enough; the subordinate must also align his judgment with his superior's such that he actively desires its fulfillment.<sup>2</sup> This same contradiction between autonomy and obedience reproduces itself at the institutional level. Just as Jesuits emerge from the *Exercises* as autonomous spiritual subjects, capable of discerning God's will immediately and individually, so the Society as a whole has the capacity to choose how best to place its resources in God's service without ecclesiastical oversight or direction. However, the Society explicitly declares its subjection to the Holy See with its famous Fourth Vow, which places its members entirely at the Pope's disposal, obligating them to accept any mission that he assigns them, anywhere in the world (*Const.* VII.1:1).

This contradiction originates with Ignatius's attempts to reconcile his own conversion experiences with the needs of the fledgling Society. Born a Basque nobleman, Ignatius spent his early life preparing for a career as a courtier, but his ambitions changed abruptly in 1521, when a

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<sup>2</sup> The Jesuits' relationship to spiritual mediation evinces a similar contradiction. Ignatius's insistence on the importance of direct contact between creature and Creator undermines the traditional hierarchy of mediation, through which God acts mediately upon believers through the intercession of his earthly representatives in the Church. His explicit goal in the *Exercises* was to "dex[ar] inmediate obrar al Criador con la criatura, y a la criatura con su Criador y Señor," and he forbade retreat directors from exercising undue influence over the exercitant's will, whether by urging him to undertake physical penance or by attempting to dispose him toward religious life (*Exx.* 15)—fittingly, Jesuit legend held that Ignatius acquired the wisdom he recorded in the *Exercises* not from books, but rather from his immediate experience of the Holy Spirit (Endean 63). At the same time, directors were responsible for instructing exercitants in the discernment of spirits, helping them to interpret their experiences, and correcting their errors. In O'Malley's words, "they sought to be mediators of an immediate experience of God that would lead to an inner change of heart or a deepening of religious sensibilities already present" (*First Jesuits* 18).

cannonball shattered his legs during the French siege of Pamplona. During the year that it took him to recover from his injuries, he underwent a profound spiritual transformation, but didn't fully commit to a change of life until he received a vision of the Madonna and Child, which he understood as a confirmation of his religious vocation (Émonet 10, 15). Over the next several years, largely through trial and error, Ignatius refined his understanding of how exactly God wanted him to realize this vocation. He gave away all his belongings; he undertook extreme austerities; he offered spiritual counsel to others; he made a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Through all these experiences, he felt God guiding him gently, like a teacher with a wayward pupil: “En este tiempo le trataba Dios de la misma manera que trata un maestro de escuela a un niño, enseñándole” (*Acta* III:27). Over time, his ability to understand these lessons improved; he learned to discern God's will not only through the visions and revelations he received, but also through the feelings of inner peace and contentment that God sent to confirm his choices, and through the feelings of aridity and dissatisfaction that the Devil sent to distract or dissuade him. As he progressed toward a full understanding of his vocation—to found a community of ministers and missionaries bound by their dedication to help souls—he codified this skill of discernment in the *Exercises*, to help others recognize and realize their vocations (O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 18).

Ignatius's goal in the *Exercises* is to reproduce in others the direct encounters that guided him to his own vocation, and to show them how to use those encounters to decipher God's will. The retreat, in his words, seeks to “[dexar] inmediate obrar al Criador con la criatura, y a la criatura con su Criador y Señor” (*Exx.* 15). To facilitate this immediate interaction, Ignatius teaches the exercitant how to solicit and interpret divine input about how to realize his vocation: he first offers God a choice between two options, and then deciphers God's will from the affective responses that he subsequently feels toward each one (*Exx.* 175-77).<sup>3</sup> These affective responses reflect the preferences of the two spirits striving for control of the exercitant's soul: God indicates his choice with feelings of peace and contentment, while the Devil tries to dissuade the exercitant from that choice with feelings of aridity or dissatisfaction. Ignatius lays out a series of rules for discerning the movements of these two spirits based on his own experiences, which he shares with exercitants early in the retreat. By recruiting their affective responses as messages from the two spirits, Ignatius fostered in them a direct encounter with God—or, in other words, a mystical experience. In his essay “Mystic Speech” (1986), Michel de Certeau argues that mysticism is defined “by the establishment of a place (the ‘I’) and by transactions (*spirit*); that is, by the necessary relation between the subject and messages. The term ‘experience’ connotes this relation” (89). In Ignatius's framework, the spirit transacts with the “I” in the familiar currency of affect. Rather than appearing *to* the “I”, the spirit sends messages *through* it, in the form of particular emotions. Through this framework, Ignatius invests exercitants with the power to make their own mystical experience: they need only present God with an alternative and assess their affective responses to it to discern his will whenever and about whatever they choose. Ignatius made the *Exercises* a requirement for entry into the Society of Jesus to ensure that all members joined under divine inspiration, but in so doing, he also conferred this power to make mystical experience upon each and every Jesuit.

Empowering each member of the organization to discern God's will immediately and independently from every other member creates problems of institutional cohesion: if everyone has equal access to God, and equal capacity to determine divine preferences as communicated through his own interiority, then how can the various members of the Society come to a shared

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<sup>3</sup> “Exercitant” is the standard term for a person currently making the *Spiritual Exercises*, though some scholars prefer the less specific “retreatant.”

understanding of what God wills for their institute? In *Missionary Tropics* (2005), Ines Županov argues that Ignatius and the other founding members of the Society install the imperative to a specifically Jesuit form of obedience as a corrective against the threats of autarky and extreme individuation that radically equal access to divine will across the institutional hierarchy might generate. This self-abnegating obedience goes beyond the mere fulfillment of a superior's order to the internal alignment of one's own will with his, a joyful submission to his judgment as standing for Christ's: "One has to sacrifice one's own will and intelligence in order to execute the commands of the superior, who was to be considered as being 'in the place of Christ,' and thus achieve a unity of will and sentiments with the superior" (Županov 165). What Županov doesn't address, however, is how exactly Jesuit superiors and subordinates negotiate this unity of will and sentiments.

Rather than demanding that subordinates simply relinquish their own interpretations of the divine will in favor of a superior's, the Jesuit *Constitutions* require members to explain those interpretations and the process by which they arrived at them—to externalize their innermost interactions with God in language (*Const.* III.1-2). To borrow again from de Certeau, they must translate their mystical experiences into mystic texts (to be clear, while de Certeau refers to literal texts like Teresa's *Libro de la vida* and San Juan's *Cántico espiritual*, I adapt his term to denote any rendering of mystical experience into language). De Certeau argues that mystical experience constitutes a mystic space "outside the fields of knowledge. It is there that the labor of writing which is given birth through the animation of language by the desire of the other takes place" ("Mystic Speech" 89). Because Jesuit obedience compels the subordinate to regard his superiors as standing in Christ's place, it is his desire for the divine other—the desire to serve him, to obey him—that animates him to language. His labor of "writing"—the oral self-externalization of his inner experiences, usually in conference or confession, to his superior—grows out of his self-abnegation before God.

The *Exercises* predispose future Jesuits to this task of self-externalization by incentivizing it throughout the retreat with rewards like personalized guidance, faster progress, and relief from spiritual suffering. The lesson is that sharing one's consolations, inspirations, doubts, temptations, and fears with one's director always serves one's best interest. To ensure that these accounts of their interiority are comprehensible not only to their directors, but also to their future superiors, the *Exercises* also teaches exercitants to externalize their experiences in a standard language.<sup>4</sup> This language, drawn from the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits, aims to temper the fundamental particularity of individual mystical encounters by compelling each Jesuit to assimilate his local experience to a standard, Society-wide set of linguistic categories. The retreat serves as an immersion program during which exercitants learn to articulate their interior movements using the shared vocabulary. Linguistic standardization helps to reconcile Jesuit autonomy with Jesuit obedience, facilitating the alignment of wills between subordinate and superior by guaranteeing that the mystic text any Jesuit creates through the self-externalization of his mystical experience will be legible to any other Jesuit.

The individual Jesuit's ability to make mystical experiences, as developed during the *Exercises*, is the Society's lifeblood. The power to secure divine confirmation of their choices at will makes Jesuits committed members, decisive superiors, and effective missionaries. The Society has no desire to suppress this power (nor could it, since mystical experiences require no authorization besides themselves): it is, in Wolfgang Reinhard's words, the "precondition for an unrestricted activity of the Jesuits in the world" (388). However, the Society does need to

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<sup>4</sup> In *Sade, Fourier, Loyola*, Roland Barthes calls Ignatius a "logothete"—a founder of language (3).

counteract the autonomy it provides to ensure the continued functioning of the institution. The mutual legibility of Jesuit superiors and subordinates through the creation of mystic texts fosters the organizational cohesion and hierarchical stability that each individual Jesuit's power to make mystical experience puts at risk. By teaching them to make mystical experiences and to translate those experiences into mystic texts, the *Spiritual Exercises* enables individual Jesuits to be simultaneously autonomous from and obedient to the Society.<sup>5</sup>

MAKING MYSTICAL EXPERIENCE:  
AUTONOMY AND THE DISCERNMENT OF SPIRITS

Ignatius's religious conversion entailed a significant change of life: he abandoned his courtly ambitions, forswore carnal pleasures, detached himself emotionally and financially from his family, and gave himself over to pilgrimage, asceticism, and pious conversation (Émonet 16-21, Ribadeneyra V.5:71). Ignatius made these drastic changes because he heard God's call in the inner peace that he felt when thinking or talking about suffering for his faith. While recovering from his injuries, he passed long hours alternately daydreaming about the knightly deeds he'd like to perform for a woman he admired, and reading the lives of Christ and the saints (*Acta* I:5-6). Over time, Ignatius found that worldly thoughts left his spirit dry and discontented, while imagining himself as a religious ascetic left him happy and content: "Quando pensaba en aquello del mundo, se deleitaba mucho; mas quando después de cansado lo dexaba, hallábase seco y descontento; y quando en ir a Jerusalem descalço, y en no comer sino yerbas, y en hacer todos los demás rigores que veía haber hecho los santos; no solamente se consolaba quando estaba en los tales pensamientos, mas aun después de dexado, quedaba contento y alegre" (*Acta* I:8). He realized that these contrasting affective responses, which he called consolation and desolation, reflected the operations of two different spirits upon his soul.<sup>6</sup> When he thought of holy things, as God desired him to, he felt the lingering joy of consolation; when he thought of worldly things, as the Devil desired him to, his pleasure quickly gave way to the aridity of desolation (*Acta* I:8). By scrutinizing his affective responses to different ideas and activities, Ignatius learned to use consolation and desolation to distinguish between divine guidance and demonic temptation; he "discovered, little by little, that the will of God was not hidden somewhere up in the sky but was inscribed within him" (Émonet 29). After many years—and many false starts—Ignatius managed

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<sup>5</sup> Like Teresa, Ignatius uses an institutional discourse—in this case linguistic standardization rather than the appropriation of a state simplification—to render immediate interior encounters with divinity legible to others. For both writers, translating mystic experience into language entails the careful categorization of the sources of that experience (divine, demonic, imaginative) and the ways to recognize them. While individual imagination poses less of a threat for Ignatius than for Teresa, he makes indifference to the outcome a prerequisite for the process of election, to ensure that the exercitant's affective responses to his two choices reflect God's preferences rather than his own. Both writers also temper their insistence upon the primacy of immediate experience of God by emphasizing the value of spiritual guidance; they acknowledge the grave risks of misattributing signs of divine favor and commend novice contemplatives to the care of a confessor or director. In this way, they promote and protect their orders' dedication to interior spirituality while also affirming their subordination to the institutional Church and its representatives.

<sup>6</sup> These terms are not specific to Ignatius; "consolation" in particular is a widely-used Christian devotional term, which denotes the positive emotions that arise in conjunction with "knowing God's will or having experienced some glimpse of God's presence" (Molina 77). Molina traces its origins to Augustine, and it appears in medieval devotional texts like Ludolph of Saxony's *Vita Christi* and Thomas à Kempis' *Imitatio Christi* (two of Ignatius's favorites) and in the writings of many Spanish devotional authors of the sixteenth century, including Teresa de Jesús, Juan de Ávila, and fray Luis de Granada (Molina 67-68; O'Rourke Boyle, "Angels" 245).

to learn how to recognize Satan's attempts to mimic God's effects on the soul, and to determine whether feelings of consolation came "from the good spirit or from the evil spirit masquerading as an angel of light" (Polanco 8:85 139-40). As his ability to "discern spirits" grew subtler, his gestures of devotion grew milder: he gave up his extreme austerities and fantasies of living in Jerusalem and began university studies, worked in hospitals, engaged people in pious conversation, and sought companions eager to share his lifestyle (*Acta* III:25-29; V:49-53).

Ignatius codified his conversion experience and his rules for the discernment of spirits in the *Exercises* to help other devotees obtain a clearer understanding of God's will for them. According to John O'Malley, the text is "a road map based on his own interior journey from the conventional religious practice to a wholehearted commitment to follow the 'way' of Christ, a way culminated in total surrender to God's love and will" (*Saints* 104).<sup>7</sup> Ignatius hoped that by teaching exercitants to discern spirits, he could empower them to reorder their lives according to divine preference; while anyone can benefit from making the *Exercises*, Ignatius designed them specifically for someone trying to decide whether to make a major life change—to get married, to enter a new profession, to join a religious order, and so on (O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 38). The retreat helps exercitants to elect the state of life that best enacts God's will for them by teaching them how to request God's input and discern his response (fittingly enough, anyone who wishes to join the Society of Jesus must make the *Exercises* to confirm that God wills him to do so).<sup>8</sup> For the sake of clarity, the election is always between two options: to marry or not, to take holy orders or not, to join the Jesuits or the Carmelites. The exercitant solicits God's feedback through a technique that Ignatius calls the "times of election": he meditates upon each option and then examines the interior movements—flashes of illumination, feelings of consolation or desolation, or rational insights, depending on which time he uses—that the meditations inspire.<sup>9</sup> These interior movements are God's response; rather than giving a verbal sign, he marks his preference for one option or the other through the individual's own affective state (Županov 45-46). The exercitant has only to apply Ignatius's rules for the discernment of spirits to identify conclusively which state of life God intends for him. Through the election, he accomplishes the *Exercises'* ultimate goal—"para buscar y hallar la voluntad diuina en la disposición de su vida" (*Exx.* 1).

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<sup>7</sup> While the genesis and historical origins of Ignatius's *Exercises* lie beyond the scope of this chapter, many of the scholars cited here do discuss the text's literary and methodological influences (see, for example, Conrod 27-28, Émonet 29, and O'Rourke Boyle's "Angels Black and White"). That said, it is impossible to link the *Exercises* conclusively to most of its purported influences because, as Philip Endean observes, "the gestation of the text is ... hidden from us" (63). More or less everyone agrees that the *devotio moderna*, a late-medieval spiritual practice that Ignatius encountered in Thomas à Kempis's *Imitatio Christi*, contributed significantly to his conceptualization of the individual's relationship with God. O'Malley suggests that Ignatius drew upon the *devotio moderna* for "elements for the methods of 'contemplation' and application of the senses that we find in the *Exercises*, and in promoted daily examination of conscience. Thus, we see that it promoted method or procedure in the spiritual life, descending to concrete details of 'how-to.' ... Although the *Devotio* emphasized external discipline and tended to an arid and almost stoic moralism at times, as did some of the Jesuits, it more basically tried to foster what is known as 'inwardness.' That often meant valuing the movements of the heart over the thoughts of the head" (*Saints* 170).

<sup>8</sup> Barthes suggests that, while the *devotio moderna* and other medieval prayer methods teach their practitioners to carry out God's will, the *Exercises* aim to identify and understand it. In keeping with the oracles of the ancient Greeks, Ignatius encourages his exercitants to develop the mantic art—the art of consulting divinities, both by formulating and posing questions and by identifying and deciphering the responses (Barthes 45-46).

<sup>9</sup> The Directory of 1599 explains that he uses this term "because when the soul experiences movements described in them, it is then the right and proper time for making the election" (26:187).

To seek and find the divine will presupposes an immediate encounter with God. The procedure that Ignatius lays out for the election—offering one’s options, soliciting God’s input, parsing his response—exactly mirrors the standard mystical experience as de Certeau describes it: “Address to God (*tratar con Dios*) the statements that concern Him; be in inter-course (*conversar*), from *thee* to *me*, with the Other or with others; hear and understand (*Audi, filia*) those statements considered inspired” (“Mystic Speech” 89).<sup>10</sup> The problem, of course, is that not everyone is a mystic. Founding the process of election upon a divine favor reserved for a chosen few drastically limits the number of people who can draw benefit from the *Exercises*. To sidestep this problem, Ignatius creates a new category of mystical experience. While God sometimes communicates through intellectual or imaginary visions (as he regularly did with Ignatius), more often his spirit manifests affectively, through joy, warmth, and peace. Moreover, while visions and trances manifest only sporadically and can easily lead their recipients into error, consolation and desolation can be solicited at will and encourage the development of an intimate personal relationship with God (Ribadeneyra V.1:23). By reconstituting God’s response as affective, rather than visual or verbal, Ignatius claims emotional experience as a mystical encounter—as what de Certeau calls a “fixed referent” (“Mystic Speech” 81). The fixed referent is the “fundamental experience or reality” that underlies every mystic text, the mystic’s lived encounter with divinity that provides her immediate knowledge of God and authorizes her to speak about, and possibly act upon, that knowledge. The consolation that the exercitant feels during the election, because it comes from the good spirit, also constitutes a lived encounter with divinity, provides immediate knowledge of God’s will, and authorizes the exercitant to act on that knowledge. The only difference is that in visions “the ‘I’ speaks the language of the *other*,” whereas in consolation the Other speaks the language of the I: God communicates not to the exercitant, but through him, using the familiar tongue of human affect (de Certeau, “Mystic Speech” 93).<sup>11</sup>

In the *Exercises*, Ignatius seeks to recreate for others the immediacy of his conversion experience, the irresistible sense that God was teaching him how to serve (*Acta* III:27). He considers this immediacy essential to choosing a state of life: for a person to commit himself wholeheartedly to a given path, he has to feel God choose it for him. No one else’s opinion should matter, not even that of his retreat director: “Mucho mejor es, buscando la diuina voluntad, que el mismo Criador y Señor se communique a la su ánima deuota, abraçándola en su amor y alabanza y disponiéndola por la vía que mejor podrá seruirle adelante. De manera que el que los da no se decante ny se incline a la vna parte ny a la otra; mas estando en medio, como vn peso, dexe inmediate obrar al Criador con la criatura, y a la criatura con su Criador y Señor” (*Exx.* 15). The *Exercises* seek to give exercitants the tools they need to interact directly with God, to facilitate the mystical encounter that will inspire lasting change. The social and sensory isolation of the retreat simulates the mystic’s inward turn; the dialogic prayers allow the exercitant to address to God the questions that concern him; the stimulation of affective response brings him into

<sup>10</sup> The *Exercises* treat conversion and election as collaborative projects between God and the exercitant, in which both grace and free will play a part. This collaborative vision of personal growth stems from Ignatius’s own conversion experiences. In narrating his convalescence, Ignatius attributes part of his desire to imitate the saints to God, who turned his thoughts toward the hagiographies he was reading, and part of it to the exercise of his own imagination: “Todavía nuestro Señor le socorría, haciendo que suciediesen a estos pensamientos otros, que nacían de las cosas que leía. Porque, leyendo la vida de nuestro Señor y de los santos, se paraba a pensar, razonando consigo: ¿qué sería, si yo hiciese esto que hizo S. Francisco, y esto que hizo S. Domingo? Y así discurría por muchas cosas que hallaba buenas, proponiéndose siempre a sí mismo cosas dificultosas y graves, las quales quando proponía, le parecía hallar en sí facilidad de ponerlas en obra” (*Acta* I:7).

<sup>11</sup> Or, as Barthes pithily puts it, “the Ignatian image is not a vision, it is a view” (55).



intercourse with divine others; and the discernment of spirits allows him to hear and understand the inspired reply. The *Exercises* teaches exercitants to make their own mystical experience, imbuing them with the power to decipher God's will immediately, decisively, and autonomously.

The simplest way to predispose the creature to a direct encounter with his Creator is to leave them alone together. The *Exercises* recommends that, for about thirty days, exercitants leave their homes and their lives and find a quiet room in which to be alone with God.<sup>12</sup> This retreat from one's habits and duties provides a place "where one can 'hear' [*entendre*] and where one can 'come to an understanding with' others [*s'entendre*]" (de Certeau, "Mystic Speech" 91). Once freed from the distractions of daily life—ambitions, desires, social obligations, sensory input, physical appetites—the exercitant can dedicate all his energy to the sustained prayer and meditation that will prepare his soul for a divine encounter. The more completely he detaches himself from his accustomed way of life, the greater the spiritual benefit he will obtain: "Quanto más nuestra ánima se halla sola y apartada, se haze más apta para se açercar y llegar a su Criador y Señor; y quanto más así se allega, más se dispone para rescibir gracias y dones de la su diuina y summa bondad" (*Exx.* 20). Ignatius's verbs of approximation—*acercarse*, *allegarse*—reiterate that the retreat's ultimate goal is the encounter between creature and Creator, as do the living conditions that the *Exercises* recommend: solitude, silence, and darkness. The exercitant should stay in a quiet, isolated place, avoid speaking with anyone but his director, and limit his sight by closing the shutters or wearing a blindfold ("Autograph Directory" [2, 6]; *Exx.* 80-81). These restrictions help him to focus on God and to "enter a state of total inward recollection. During the whole time of deliberation he should close the doors of his senses and mind to everything else, desiring to see and hear nothing which is not from above" (*Directory* 23:173). The use of the word "recollection"—a mystical term that describes a state of "effortless receptivity to God's will" in which the senses and faculties are completely suspended—indicates that the *Exercises* uses sensory deprivation to simulate mystical experience (Weber, "Administration" 124). This sealing-off of the senses helps the exercitant to devote his full attention to his meditations and the reactions they awaken in him. The withdrawal that the *Exercises* require from daily life, social interaction, and sensory stimulation aims to prepare the exercitant's soul for a mystic encounter.

Once prepared, the exercitant attempts to initiate the encounter through dialogic forms of prayer. Each exercise creates multiple opportunities for dialogue by opening with a petition and closing with a colloquy, in an effort to "obtain the conditions allowing one to 'speak to' [*parler à*] or 'speak with' [*se parler*]. ... A multiplication of 'methods' produces and guarantees certain kinds of exchange" (de Certeau, "Mystic Speech" 91). The exercitant reaches out to God through these dialogic prayers, hoping to elicit a response (O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 41). Before each meditation, the exercitant asks for help achieving new insight into the Gospels: "Demandar a Dios nuestro Señor lo que quiero y deseo. La demanda a de ser según subiecta materia; es a saber, si la contemplación es de resurrección, demandar gozo con Xpo goçoso; si es de pasión, demandar pena, lágrimas y tormento con Xpo atormentado" (*Exx.* 48). This "demand," though it may sound presumptuous, aims at dialogue: by issuing a petition, the exercitant creates the rhetorical imperative for God to respond.<sup>13</sup> The subsequent meditation becomes the site of that response—either

<sup>12</sup> The Jesuits often hosted exercitants in their own residences for the duration of their retreats; they had rooms set aside in their professed houses for that purpose, and lay brothers on call to tend to the needs of those making the *Exercises*. In areas where the Jesuits had no established house or no space to spare, they sometimes arranged for exercitants to stay in nearby convents (O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 129-30).

<sup>13</sup> Ignatius's rhetorical strategy of human petition and divine response bears some resemblance what de Certeau calls the *invocatio* and *auditio fidei*, the invocation of God as a divine speaker and the claim to hear his

the exercitant achieves the requested insight, or he doesn't. Both outcomes generate the need for additional discussion: the exercitant must either express his gratitude for God's help, or ask why he saw fit to withhold it. Ignatius calls this follow-up conversation a "colloquy." Immediately after meditating on the assigned points of the exercise, the exercitant imagines himself discussing the results with the divine interlocutor of his choosing—God, Christ, or Mary:

*Colloquio.* Ymaginando a Xpo nuestro Señor de lante y puesto en cruz, hazer vn colloquio; cómo de Criador es venido a hazerse hombre, y de vida eterna a muerte temporal, y así a morir por mis pecados. Otro tanto, mirando a mí mismo, lo que he hecho por Xpo, lo que hago por Xpo, lo que deuo hazer por Xpo; y así viéndole tal, y así colgado en la cruz, discurrir por lo que se offresciere.

El colloquio se haze propriamente hablando, así como vn amigo habla a otro, o vn sieruo a su señor; cuándo pidiendo alguna gracia, cuándo culpándose por algún mal hecho, cuándo comunicando sus cosas, y queriendo consejo en ellas. (*Exx.* 53-54)

The acceptable modes of conversation that Ignatius names here converge, as above, upon petition. The exercitant can model his attitude after any dialogic scenario he likes—asking a favor, asking forgiveness, asking advice—so long as he asks for something. Each exercise both opens and closes with a request: the exercitant asks for what he wants, seeks it in the meditation, and then either asks God why he did not receive it, or thanks him and asks for something else. This re-petition gives the exercitant as many chances as possible to elicit a reply from God; as Barthes argues, "the model of the task of prayer here is much less mystical than rhetorical, ... disposed of rules (of selection and succession) for finding, assembling, and constructing arguments designed to reach the interlocutor and obtain from him a response" (44-45).

These re-petitions are trial runs for the *Exercises'* central question: the election of a state of life. The election is a request for insight about the exercitant's life rather than Christ's; he asks God to direct him toward service either outside the Church, as dictated by the commandments, or inside the Church, as dictated by Christ's counsels: "If thou wilt be perfect, goe and sell that thou hast, and giue to the poore, and thou shalt haue treasure in heauen: and come and follow me" (Matt. 19:21). If the former, he asks how best to keep the commandments (marriage, a benefice, etc.); if the latter, he asks whether to join a religious order or not, and if so, which one (*Exx.* 135, 169; Autograph Directory [22]). Ignatius's binary framing of the election—*either* the commandments *or* the counsels—reflects the norm of bimodal communication described above. God responds to all petitions *either* one way *or* the other: in the exercises, he either does or does not grant the exercitant the insight he seeks; in the election, he either does or does not respond to the request for guidance. The exercitant must frame his decision bimodally—the commandments or the counsels, holy orders or none, the Jesuits or the Carmelites—so that God can direct him toward one option or the other. As Županov puts it, Ignatian choice "is always constructed as an alternative. Therefore, the question is not *what to do* but *to do this or to do that*" (45-46). Like the petitions, this restriction of possible outcomes is a rhetorical strategy designed to maximize the likelihood of divine response: rather than laying out a personalized plan of action, God need

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speech through faith, which served as the first step toward knowledge of God during the medieval period. De Certeau claims that early modern Christian theology starts to leave this strategy to one side, theorizing it either logically (like the scholastics) or historically (like the positivists) ("Mystic Speech" 89).

only indicate a preference.<sup>14</sup> Ignatius suggests that the election consists of nothing more than placing both options before God and taking careful note of which one he seems to prefer: “Se podría usar de presentar un día a Dios nuestro Señor una parte, otro día otra, como sería un día los consejos y otro los preceptos, y observar adónde le dá más señal Dios nuestro Señor de su divina voluntad, como quien presenta diversos manjares a un príncipe y observa cuál dellos le agrada” (“Autograph Directory” [21]).<sup>15</sup> The analogy of serving a prince evokes both solicitousness and impassivity; the server does not attempt to predispose the prince to one dish or the other, but merely observes his choice with equanimity.

Here again the *Exercises* simulate the conditions of mystical experience. De Certeau suggests that the abnegation of the individual will, or its disappearance into God’s, constitutes the formative act of the mystical subject: “The ‘I’ is ‘formed’—by its act of willing *nothing* or by (forever) *being incapable of doing* what it wills—as a ‘desire’ bound only to the supposed desire of a Deity. It is created by the state of being nothing but the affirmation of a will” (“Mystic Speech” 92). Hence the exercitant’s need to achieve indifference toward the two terms of his election. If he wants God to choose his state of life, he must eliminate any preference toward one option or the other, both because it might impede his ability to understand God’s response and because it might lead him into error: “If in such an important matter we choose to be guided by our own judgment and will, we shall easily fall into great and extremely harmful errors. But if we have followed the will of God, he, as our Father and Creator, will ordain nothing for us except what is good and salutary” (*Directory* 22:166). Indifference to the outcome of the election is therefore a prerequisite for beginning the process. To protect himself from the inevitable flaws in his own judgment, the exercitant must empty his will of all desires except saving his soul and realizing God’s plan for him. He must also be ready to act upon either of his two options, even if the one that God chooses is less attractive to him (*Exx.* 169, *Directory* 2:23). By remaining entirely neutral, he ensures that the decision is God’s and not his own: “The exercitant must strive not to choose; the aim of his discourse is to bring the two terms of the alternative to a homogeneous state so pure that he cannot humanly extricate himself from it; the more equal the dilemma the more rigorous its closure, and . . . the more certain it will be that the mark is of divine origin” (Barthes 72-73). Indifference makes the exercitant’s inner experience a viable fixed referent: it guarantees that his affective response to each option reflects the movements of the two spirits, rather than his own preference.

To elicit God’s response, the exercitant uses the three times of election, which draw upon illumination, affect, and reason, respectively. In the first time, which occurs very rarely, God illuminates the soul, calling it so strongly toward one of the options that he leaves the exercitant with no doubt of his decision (*Exx.* 175). In the second time, which is the most common, the exercitant bases his decision on the affective responses that he feels toward each of his alternatives (*Directory* 26:188). Juan Alfonso de Polanco, Ignatius’s personal secretary, explains the procedure of the second time in his directory:

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<sup>14</sup> Barthes observes that “this choice can undoubtedly be given theological generality (How [to] unite on all occasions my freedom with the will of the Eternal?); however, the *Exercises* is very material, imbued with a spirit of contingency (which gives it its force and flavor); the choice it prepares and sanctions is truly practical. Ignatius has himself given a sample of the matters upon which an election is called for: priesthood, marriage, benefices, the way to direct a religious house, how much to give to the poor, etc.” (47).

<sup>15</sup> N.B., the “Short Directory” identifies this person as a “butler” ([77]).

During his meditations and colloquies, without any reasonings on his own part, he should place himself in God's presence, and there set before his mind's eye the way of the counsels. Then he should watch to see if he feels in his soul any movements of consolation or desolation regarding this way. He should do the same while setting before himself the way of the precepts. No specific exercise is required for this; in the course of his usual meditations and prayers, as we have just stated, he should bring this matter up before God, utterly renouncing his own will and yearning to experience interiorly what the will of God is. (8:82)

As discussed above, God communicates bimodally; when the exercitant places one of the alternatives of the election before him, either he indicates his preference with feelings of consolation, or he remains silent. God does not send feelings of desolation—rather, these indicate that the evil spirit is trying to dissuade the exercitant from the choice that will best serve God. As a result, either response can indicate divine preference for a given option.<sup>16</sup>

If neither choice inspires an affective response, or if the responses are inconclusive, the exercitant turns to the third time, in which he brings his faculties to bear upon his two alternatives. Ignatius describes the third time as “tranquillo, quando el ánima no es agitada de varios spíritus, y vsa de sus potencias naturales líbera y tranquilamente” (*Exx.* 177). It consists of two methods that, in the absence of divine response, can reproduce the illuminative or affective insights of the first and second times within the exercitant's soul. The first method simulates the illumination of the first time through a rational analysis of the alternatives that is designed to eliminate all doubt. Having petitioned God to incline his intellect toward the better option, the exercitant examines the advantages and disadvantages of each alternative and determines “dónde más la razón se inclina”: reason points him decisively in one direction or the other, much as God's inspiration might (*Exx.* 182). The second method simulates the affective response of the second time by testing the emotional resonance of each alternative in different scenarios. The exercitant decides which of the options he would prefer when advising a stranger facing the same decision, when at the point of death, and when reflecting upon his life on Judgment Day; “y la regla, que entonces querría auer tenido, tomarla agora, porque entonces me halle con entero plazer y gozo” (*Exx.* 187).<sup>17</sup> Ideally, the exercitant should use both methods in succession to confirm his election, and should repeat the process several times to ensure a consistent result.

Repeating the third time may also open a path to the second time. In February and March of 1544, Ignatius recorded an election he made about fixed rents—would the Society accept donations for the upkeep of their professed houses, or not?—in his *Spiritual Diary*. As he proceeds through the two methods of the third time—“pasando por las elecciones por hora y media o más, y presentando lo que más me pareçía por razones, y por mayor moçión de voluntád, es a saver: no tener renta alguna”—he remains attentive to any emotional signs that might reveal God's will (*Diary* ll. 40-42). He begins, as the first method stipulates, with a petition for God's help in selecting the better alternative, and during his meditation God responds to his request: “Sentí en mí vn yr o lleuarme delante del Padre, y en este andar vn lebantárseme los cabellos, y moçión como

<sup>16</sup> The Directory of 1599 explains these dynamics with greater clarity than do the *Exercises* themselves. See especially 27:192-94.

<sup>17</sup> Intriguingly, the Directory of 1599 notes that the third time of election, though less common than the second, is nevertheless frequently used—which would suggest that a significant proportion of exercitants make their election, which should derive exclusively from God's will regarding how they can best spend their lives in his service, without ever receiving a direct response from God himself (26:189).

ardor notabilíssimo en todo el cuerpo, y conseqüente a esto lágrimas y deuoción intensíssima †” (*Diary* ll. 46-50). The cross at the end of the sentence indicates that Ignatius has received a vision of God, whose presence manifests internally in the sentiments of ardor and devotion, and externally in tears and his hair standing on end. A few hours later, he re-reads the reasons that he recorded during this deliberation and has nearly identical internal and external responses (a vision, a wave of devotion, tears), and when he repeats the third time again at the end of the day, he arrives at the same result (*Diary* ll. 50-58).<sup>18</sup>

Having successfully elicited an affective response from God, exercitants attempt to identify his preference using the discernment of spirits. The basic premise of this method is that God directs exercitants toward his preferred states of life, spiritual practices, habits, and behaviors with the affective state of consolation, while the evil spirit attempts to undermine his guidance with the state of desolation.<sup>19</sup> Exercitants learn what these states entail and how to recognize them during the first week of the retreat. Both states can take many forms, but broadly speaking consolation comprises joy, love for God, impulses to virtuous behavior, and elevation of the mind and spirit, while desolation comprises agitation, apathy, attraction to low or worldly things, and dryness or darkness of spirit:

Llamo consolación, quando en el ánima se causa alguna moción interior, con la qual viene la ánima a inflamarse en amor de su Criador y Señor; y conseqüenter, quando ninguna cosa criada sobre la haz de la tierra, puede amar en sí, sino en el Criador de todas ellas. Assimismo, quando lança lágrimas motiuas a amor de su Señor, agora sea por el dolor de sus peccados, o de la pasión de Xpo nuestro Señor, o de otras cosas derechamente ordenandas en su seruicio y alavanza. Finalmente, llamo consolación todo ahumento de esperanza, fee y charidad, y toda letiçia interna, que llama y atrahe a las cosas çelestiales y a la propria salud de su ánima, quietándola y paçificándola, en su Criador y Señor. ...

Llamo desolaçión todo el contrario ..., así como escuridad del ánima, turbación en ella, moción a las cosas baxas y terrenas, inquietud de varias agitaciones y tentaciones, mouiendo a infidencia, sin esperanza, sin amor, hallándose toda perezosa, tibia, triste, y como separada de su Criador y Señor. Porque así como la consolación es contraria a la desolaçión, de la misma manera los pensamientos que salen de la consolación, son contrarios a los pensamientos que salen de la desolaçión. (*Exx.* 316-17)

The sensations of consolation and desolation may last just a few moments or endure for several days; they may arise through prayer or meditation or in response to some passing thought; and they may be vague feelings or overwhelming waves of sensation. In his *Spiritual Diary*, Ignatius

<sup>18</sup> Various directories recommend that exercitants use the third time to confirm an election made in the second time, especially if they have reason to doubt the provenance of their feelings of consolation (Polanco 8:84-85).

<sup>19</sup> Ignatius believes that the Devil actively seeks to prevent exercitants from giving their hearts to God: “Underlying the ‘Discernment of Spirits’ is the basic assumption that a battle for the heart is being waged by forces of good and evil—by God and the Devil, who is the enemy of human nature. The heart registers the battle in its experience of consolation and desolation, and one’s task is to discern in any given situation the origins of the movements the heart feels by trying to see where those movements are leading. The purpose of the *Exercises* and the precondition for their successful outcome at every stage is to find oneself under the inspiration of God, the ‘good spirit’” (O’Malley, *First Jesuits* 42-3). The Meditation of the Two Standards, which exercitants must perform before entering the times of election, depicts Christ and Satan as generals rousing their armies before a great battle, and invites the exercitant to choose a side (*Exx.* 136-47).

records four distinct experiences of “special consolation” in a single a twenty-four hour period: when thinking about the three Divine Persons, he feels consolation “abraçándose con interior regozijo en el ánima”; when forming a plan to fast until he feels the grace of the Trinity, he “sentía nuevo calor y deuoción a lacrimar, vestiéndome con pensamiento de abstenerme en tres días por hallar lo que deseaua, viniendo vn conoçimiento, que avn el tal pensamiento era de Dios”; when contemplating the Saints interceding for him with Christ and Mary, “con mucha deuoción y intensión me cubrí de lágrimas”; and when perceiving the Divine Persons’ confirmation of his election, he is overcome “con muy grande efusión de lágrimas, moçiones y solloços interiores” (*Diary* ll. 298-99; 309-12; 317; 324-26). On another day, desolation takes hold; he feels removed from the Divine Persons, struggles to finish his prayers, and finds himself “todo desierto de socorro alguno, sin poder tener gusto alguno de los mediadores ni de las personas diuinas, mas tanto remoto y tanto separado como si nunca huviere sentido cosa suya, o nunca hubiese de sentir adelante, antes veniéndome pensamientos quando contra Jesú, quando contra otro, hallándome así confuso con varios pensamientos” (*Diary* ll. 1020-29). His frequent use of the verb *venir*—understanding, warmth, devotion, and conflicting thoughts all “come” to him—shows how limited Ignatius perceives his own role to be. Having rendered himself indifferent to the outcome, he presents his two alternatives and then allows the good and evil spirits to respond to and through him. Ignatius considers the affective states of consolation and desolation equivalent to visions, visitations, or any other interior manifestation of a spirit’s presence; the individual does not generate them actively, but rather receives them passively from God or Satan.<sup>20</sup> Thus, the exercitant should regard their emergence in conjunction with the consideration of one of the alternatives as a positive sign of either the divine or the demonic will.

The greatest challenge of discernment is the absence of divine response. In some cases, God’s silence indicates a failed election, but in others it is a positive sign of his will. According to Lu Ann Homza, early modern Castilians often interpreted divine silence as an indication of favor: God “communicated his displeasure through natural disasters such as hail, pestilence, lightning, floods, and fires. At the same time, the *absence* of hail or lightning when it was expected could be read as a sign of God’s benignity” (“Milieu” 20-21). Likewise, God’s silence regarding the two alternatives of an election can indicate his support for the option toward which exercitant feels more inclined. In an election about whether to do something (i.e., take holy orders, go on a mission, accept a benefice) or not, God’s choice not to reply may signify that he endorses the option not to act. The *Spiritual Diary* shows that Ignatius struggled with divine silence during his election about fixed rents for Jesuit residences. During the six weeks that he spent on the question, he experienced (as we saw) many instances of consolation and desolation, but

none of these ‘motions’ is, directly, decisive. Thus we see Ignatius ... wait, watch the motions, note them, account for them, persist in eliciting them, and even become impatient when they do not succeed in constituting an indubitable mark. There is but one outcome to this dialogue in which the Divinity speaks (for the motions are

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<sup>20</sup> O’Rourke Boyle observes that Ignatius “habitually described affective states not as welling from within the self, ... but as invading it from without. During [his] convalescence desires to imitate the saints are ‘offered’ to him. The more common verb is that various states ‘come’ (*venir*) to him. Accusatory stirrings about failure of duty ‘come’ to him; the temptation of sloth ‘comes’ to him, its relief ‘comes’ to him; even the assent of his own will to resume eating meat ‘comes’ to him; a temptation concerning righteousness ‘comes’ to him; a great impulse to protest an attempted rape ‘comes’ to him” (*Acts* 40).

numerous) but does not mark: it is to make the withholding of the mark itself into an ultimate sign. (Barthes 74-75)

Ignatius makes the transition from seeking a consolatory sign to extracting a positive sign from its absence occurs during the last week of the election. After a month of inconclusive affective responses, he makes a heroic effort to silence his doubts and think calmly about “qué quería hazer la Sanctísima Trinidad de mí, es a saver, por qué vía llevarme, y yo razonando cómo o por dónde quería que fuese, tratando conmigo coniectava y pensava que por ventura sin visitaciones de lágrimas me quería hazer contento, sin seer ávido o desordenado a ellas” (*Diary* ll. 832-6). While he normally treats tears as proof of God’s approval, Ignatius here interprets their absence as an equivalent sign: by withholding tears, the Trinity tells him to remain calm—that is, to return to the state in which he made the third time of election. The absence of tears thus becomes a positive sign of God’s endorsement of the conclusion he reached by reason. Just as early modern Castilians take the absence of an expected storm as a sign of God’s benignity, so Ignatius takes the absence of his habitual tears as a sign of God’s presence: “Con pocos mouimientos o moçiones a lacrimar, tamen sin ellas más contento que algunas vezes habiendo en buena parte; y parecíame no sintiendo intelligençias, visiones ni lágrimas, en alguna manera que Dios nuestro Señor me quería mostrar alguna vía o modo de proçeder” (*Diary* ll. 967-72). Since he feels no other symptoms of desolation, the inability to cry becomes a divine signal; God uses this departure from the norm to attract Ignatius’s attention and direct him toward something significant.

Through this resignification of divine silence, Ignatius finally manages to conclude the election. Having decided that his lack of tears constitutes a sign from God, he actively resists weeping and finds himself rewarded with feelings of reverence and *acatamiento*—acceptance:

Era en mí vn pensamiento que me penetraua dentro del ánima, con quanta reuerençia y acatamiento yendo a la misa debía nombrar a Dios nuestro Señor etc. y no buscar lágrimas, mas este acatamiento y reuerençia, a tanto que freqüentándome en este acatamiento, antes de la misa, en cámara, en capilla y en la misa y veniéndome lágrimas, las refutaua de presto, por aduertir al acatamiento, y no pareçiendo que era yo o mío, se me representaua el acatamiento, el qual siempre me aumentaua en deuoción y en lágrimas; a tanto que me persuadía que esta era la vía que el Señor me quería mostrar. (*Diary* ll. 1110-20)

The frequent recurrence of the word “*acatamiento*” in this passage—five times in ten lines—conveys Ignatius’s joy and relief at reaching a conclusion after weeks of indecision. His feelings of acceptance and the desire for obedience resolve the doubts that have plagued him throughout the election; his affective state improves as soon as he relinquishes his longing for a consolatory response, confirming the decision he reached through the third time of election: no fixed rents. In the end, God’s silence marks the negative option as the right one. In Županov’s words, “a vacant sign is taken as a decisive sign, and the decision between *to have* (possessions) and *not to have* was *not to have*. Starting with nothing, Loyola’s discernment led him to nothing” (46-47).

Ignatius’s struggle over this election shows just how difficult it is to discern spirits. Even for an expert, a simple question like whether or not to accept fixed rents might take six weeks and a great deal of anguish to resolve. The discernment of spirits can be perilous, especially in the context of electing a state of life: in such a high-stakes situation, the exercitant’s emotional state is the only source of information. While he may solicit guidance from others, he remains the fixed referent and the authority—and it’s possible for him to make mistakes. The Directory

of 1599 suggests that the exercitant and his director are more vulnerable to error during the election than during any other part of the retreat: “In the whole of the Exercises no subject is more difficult or demands greater skill and spiritual discretion than the election. This phase of the Exercises is exposed to a variety of spiritual movements, and often to errors as well, in which a person may be not only overcome by evil, but quite often deceived by what appears to be good and right” (22:162). Satan’s interference accounts for many of these errors; he can harness exercitants’ pious desires as means to his own evil ends. Ignatius himself falls into this kind of error early in his time in Manresa, when he finds consolation in a recurring vision of a glittering, many-eyed serpent during a period of extreme asceticism (*Acta* III:19). However, after receiving a revelation on the banks of the Cardoner River, Ignatius realizes that his beautiful visitor is a manifestation of the Devil: “Mas bien vió, estando delante de la cruz, que no tenía aquella cosa tan hermosa color como solía; y tuvo un muy claro conocimiento, con grande asenso de la voluntad, que aquel era el demonio” (*Acta* III:31). The Devil had capitalized on Ignatius’s desire for sanctity to encourage his habits of extreme asceticism, which destroyed his health, caused him to develop paralyzing scruples, and arrested his spiritual progress for months (*Acta* III:25).

However, Satan’s is not the only voice that can impersonate God’s: the process of discernment is also subject to interference from the exercitant’s own will.<sup>21</sup> As Županov puts it, in some circumstances “the divine word is ... inaudible, and the spiritual fortune seeker is doomed to actually hear his or her own voice” (67-68). Because God communicates through affective states, which necessarily occur within the exercitant and from his perspective, it may be difficult to determine which “I”—the human or the divine—generates the feelings in question. Can the exercitant ever be certain that the consolation he feels actually “flows from a unique and divine *will to speak*? How can this desire in search of a *thou* cross through a language that betrays it by sending the addressee a different message, or by replacing the statement of an idea with utterance by an ‘I’?” (de Certeau, “Mystic Speech” 88). Ignatius’s reliance on affective signs means that messages from the divine You are always conveyed through and conditioned by the human I—the I who feels, who receives, and who inclines.

Perhaps the most catastrophic error that the discernment of spirits can cause is the espousal of heterodox or heretical propositions. The exercitant’s affective state, vulnerable as it is to misinterpretation and misattribution, is the fixed referent of the election; it is its own authority, and requires no outside validation. This fact on its own presents no problem: if, as the Directory of 1599 has it, God comes forth to meet those who seek him wholeheartedly, then the exercitant’s understanding of God’s will should always align with the Church’s, since both come from God himself. Even though the exercitant encounters God immediately, without the meditation of the Church, his conclusions should always already fall within the bounds of orthodoxy:

The mystic text does not rely on statements authorized elsewhere, which it might repeat/comment in the name of the very institution that ‘uttered’ them. ... The truth value of the discourse does not depend on the truth value of its propositions, but on the fact of its being in the very place at which the Speaker speaks (the Spirit, ‘el que habla’). The texts always define themselves as being entirely a product of inspiration, though that inspiration may operate in very different modes. In every case, though, divine utterance is both what founds the text, and what it must make manifest. That is why the text is destabilized; it is at the same time *beside* the authorized institution,

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<sup>21</sup> Teresa raises similar concerns about self-deception in her discussion of *arrobamiento* and *abobamiento* in the *Moradas* (IV.3).



but outside it and *in* what authorizes that institution, i.e., the Word of God. In such a discourse, which claims to speak on behalf of the Holy Spirit and attempts to impose that convention on the addressee, a particular assertion is at work, affirming that what is said in this *place*, different from the one of magisterium language, is the *same* as what is said in the tradition, or else that these two places amount to the same. (de Certeau, “Mystic Speech” 92-93)

The discernment of spirits, like the mystic text, occurs alongside rather than inside the institutional Church, but it also derives its authority and its claim to truth from the same source: God’s communication of his will. Ignatius’s account of the revelations he received in Manresa demonstrates this kind of preexisting alignment between the mystic and the institution. In the *Acta*, he explains that the surpassing clarity of his visions affirmed his faith in Christianity such that he would have staked his life on its truth even if there were no Scriptures to confirm it: “Estas cosas que ha visto le confirmaron entonces, y le dieron tanta confirmación siempre de la fe, que muchas veces ha pensado consigo: si no hubiese Escritura que nos enseñase estas cosas de la fe, él se determinaría a morir por ellas, solamente por lo que ha visto” (*Acta* III:29).<sup>22</sup> This counterfactual has two important implications. First, Ignatius’s revelations exactly mirror the content of the Scriptures—or, to repeat de Certeau, they say the same as what is said in the tradition. As a result, their orthodoxy is beyond doubt. Second, the revelations carry equal weight to the Scriptures: Ignatius would believe the former even in the absence of the latter because they both come directly from God—and so, to borrow again from de Certeau, the two places amount to the same. The problem is that it’s impossible to guarantee that everyone making an election will achieve this result. Because the *Exercises*’ overarching goal is free interplay between Creator and creature, there always remains “at least the logical possibility that what the individual discovers in this way may go beyond what is ecclesiastically sanctioned” (Endean 62). Ignatius tries to foreclose upon this possibility by stipulating that both alternatives of the election must fall within the bounds of Catholic orthodoxy: “Es necesario que todas cosas, de las cuales queremos hazer elección, sean indiferentes o buenas en sí, y que militen dentro de la sancta madre Yglesia hierárchica, y no malas ny repugnantes a ella” (*Exx.* 170). This restriction, however, represented the Society’s only solution to the threat of theological error, which they tended to handle on a case-by-case basis, and as privately as possible (Endean 62).

The *Exercises*’ crash-course in the discernment of spirits seems to leave the exercitant more or less spiritually self-sufficient. At the retreat’s end, he knows how to quiet his faculties, petition God for help, decipher God’s response, and guard against interpretative errors—with nothing but his own soul. Emonet suggests that exercitants leave the *Exercises* having learned that “there is no longer any need to go out from one’s self to meet God. . . . When he succeeds in liberating himself from everything including himself, he will become capable of finding God in every situation” (30). The Society of Jesus depends on this self-sufficiency to enact its apostolic

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<sup>22</sup> In his biography of Ignatius, Pedro de Ribadeneyra rearticulates his willingness to die for his visions over and against Scripture: “Con estas visitaciones y regalos divinos quedava su ánima tan esclarecida de celestial lumbre y con tanto conocimiento y seguridad de las cosas de la fe, y su espíritu tan confirmado y robusto, que pensando después estas cosas muchas vezes consigo mismo, le parecía y de veras se persuadía que si los misterios de nuestra santa fe no estuvieran escritos en las letras sagradas, o si (lo que no puede ser) la Escritura divina se huviera pedido, con todo esso serían para él tan ciertos y los tendría tan fixos y escritos en las entrañas, que solamente por lo que avía visto, no dudaría de entenderlos, ni de enseñarlos, ni de morir por ellos” (I.7:32). Ribadeneyra intensifies the degree of certainty and conviction that Ignatius’s revelations confer upon him, adding that he would willingly explain and teach them to others as gospel were there no Scriptures for the task.

agenda; because Jesuits in the mission field may not always have access to a superior or counselor when making important or time-sensitive decisions, they need to know how to reach the right conclusions on their own:

Deliberating and making an election on undertakings and actions is not confined to the Exercises and can be done apart from them at any time and on any occasion. Hence, our men need to be carefully trained in making good use of the rules of election for ascertaining the will and good pleasure of God—such as when superiors need to decide some difficult matter, especially if they are unable to get the advice of their consultors (see rule 16 of the provincial). In any matter which needs to be settled and determined in the presence of God, the method of election ... will always prove most helpful. In it our men can find the resource they need for knowing what is the will of God in all such questions of various kinds. (*Directory* 10:96)

The times of election ensure the Society's alignment with God's will by affording any Jesuit access to divine guidance on any matter at any time. As the *Spiritual Diary* suggests, Ignatius himself employed the times regularly during his generalship; he consulted God on all major decisions regarding his own spiritual life and the Society's before taking action (Ribadneyra V.1:4).

At the same time, each individual's ability to decipher God's will may undermine the cohesion of the institution as a whole. The fact that any Jesuit can request God's help with difficult decisions destabilizes the Society's chain of command, especially if the results of those decisions differ from person to person. As de Certeau explains, because the fixed referent exists within the mystic's soul, it is "its own authority and depends on no outside guarantee" ("Mystic Speech" 81). The same holds true for the exercitant's experience of the election; while others can advise him, he is the ultimate authority on what takes place within his soul. As a result, the times of election render him essentially autonomous: the only things an exercitant needs to understand God's will in any given circumstance are two viable options, knowledge of the three times, and himself. The very power to generate mystical experience that makes him a member of the Society also, paradoxically, makes him independent from it.

#### MYSTIC TEXTS: OBEDIENCE AND THE IMPERATIVE TO LEGIBILITY

The individual Jesuit's ability to make his own mystical experiences grants him a degree of autonomy that threatens the Society's cohesion and continued functioning. Autonomy quickly becomes autarky when one of the organization's founding principles is that each member is equally capable of deciphering the divine will, and, moreover, should deal directly with God. This premise, rooted in Ignatius's self-guided pilgrimage from the naïve imitation of great saints toward a dependable method of interpreting and codifying mystical experiences, elevates individual spiritual volition above the authority of religious superiors. Ignatius himself continually defied religious authorities in pursuit of his own spiritual agenda: he ignored the Franciscans in Jerusalem who ordered him to visit the holy sites with a guide, and sidestepped both the Spanish and Venetian Inquisitions by relocating after all three of his trials (*Acta* VI:63, VII:70, X:92). Ignatius's personal sanctity notwithstanding, his model of spirituality, rooted in individual fervor and personal charisma, hardly lends itself to organizational cohesion. Individuals with direct knowledge of God's will have no reason to defer to mediating spiritual authorities—neither the Church, nor one another. Rather than fostering a collective will, or what the Jesuits often called a

“union of hearts”—a shared understanding of God’s will for the organization and how best to implement it—their ability to discern spirits at the individual level will result in either the perfect harmony of interpretive agreement or the unsustainable cacophony of autarky:

The tension built into this system originated from the muddled definition of the nature of the higher/highest authority. The ultimate sanction for one’s action had to come from the divine will. ... However, the discernment of the will, or the process of knowing and feeling the will of the other as one’s own, described and prescribed by Loyola’s spiritual exercises, led to extreme psychological individuation that could in turn lead to blind discipline, on the one hand, and to dispersion of political authority, on the other. (Županov 164-65)

The powerful charisma of the first generation of Jesuits, several of whom (Ignatius, Francis Xavier, Francisco de Borja) later became saints, inspired in the second generation an excessive, almost anarchic zeal. In their eagerness to imitate the Society’s founders, many younger Jesuits pursued mystic revelation through extreme austerities or sought martyrdom on dangerous overseas missions (Županov 149, 165). To counteract the dissociative force of their fervor, which was generating crises of insubordination by the early 1550s, Ignatius expanded the scope and significance of one of the Society’s core virtues: obedience.<sup>23</sup> In his correspondence and in the *Constitutions* that he was currently drafting, Ignatius laid out a peculiarly Jesuit version of obedience that required not only external submission to, but also internal alignment with, the will of one’s temporal superior. The fact that each Jesuit can discern spirits, and does not need his superior’s mediation to decipher the divine will, makes his obedience all the more perfect—like asceticism or martyrdom, it becomes a form of self-denial in God’s service:

One has to sacrifice one’s own will and intelligence in order to execute the commands of the superior, who was to be considered as being ‘in the place of Christ,’ and thus achieve a unity of will and sentiments with the superior. In the *Constitutions*, which [Ignatius] was composing at that time, the old man’s staff in the hands of the superior or a corpse are metaphors closely designating the state of perfect obedience. The ideal Jesuit missionary had to solicit and then conquer his own interior redoubling. After discovering and discerning his own volition and emotions with the help of the spiritual exercises, he had to make a choice between following his free will or willingly subjugating it to the burden of obedience to the superior. (Županov 165)

In one fell swoop, Ignatius solidifies the Jesuit hierarchy of command and diverts the zealous desires of would-be mystics and martyrs into the safer channel of self-abnegation. The subordinate’s submission to his superior’s judgment benefits both individual and organization: it fulfills the former’s desire to suffer for Christ while also fortifying the order and cohesion of the latter.

To promote the alignment of wills between superior and subordinate, to ensure that Jesuits throughout the hierarchy use their skills most effectively in God’s (and the Society’s) service, and to check errors of discernment before they dictate policy, Jesuit obedience takes the form of self-externalization. The *Constitutions* require subordinates to demonstrate their submission to

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<sup>23</sup> As Županov puts it, “in a well-known process of institutionalization of charisma, described prominently in Weberian sociology, the same fervent practices by the prophetic founders are branded dangerous surplus energy and denied to the founders’ immediate followers” (164).

their superior by keeping him apprised of their interior experiences and any factors that might contribute to them: “Todos vsen grande reuerentia, specialmente en lo interior, con los superiores suyos, ... Y assí proçedan en todo en espíritu de charidad, ninguna cosa les tubiendo encubierta exterior ni interior, desseando que estén al cabo de todo, para que puedan mejor en todo endereçarnos en la vía de nuestra salud y perfección” (*Const.* VI.3:18). The obligation to “uncover” one’s experiences to one’s superior encompasses the entire constellation of experiences around one’s mystical encounters with God: instances of consolation and desolation, temptations, inclinations, and inspirations; sins, faults, and doubts; weaknesses, illnesses, and indispositions; and habits of prayer and penitence. The Society can only access and control the mystical encounters that give each member his autonomy by compelling him to externalize them in language—to make his mystical experiences into mystic texts. De Certeau explains that obedience is the ground for the mystic text’s emergence; it is always written in response to a command. While the mystic arrives at the text’s content independent of the commanding institution, his translation of the content into text reflects his submission to that institution: “The mystic text does not rely on statements authorized elsewhere, which it might repeat/comment in the name of the very institution that ‘uttered’ them. It does, however, presuppose a ‘command’ (like the one St. Teresa obeys by writing the *Libro de la Vida*), [or] a request (for example, Anne of Jesus’ to St. John of the Cross to write his commentary, the *Cántico*)” (“Mystic Speech” 92). In the same way, each Jesuit arrives at his own understanding of God’s will through the private practice of the discernment of spirits, but his disclosure of that understanding to his superior demonstrates his continued obedience to the Society.

In the *Exercises*, Ignatius lays the groundwork for the creation of Jesuit mystic texts both by compelling exercitants to externalize their inner experiences and by standardizing the language with which they do so. He incentivizes self-externalization by tying it to the exercitant’s self-interest: disclosing his inner movements to his director earns him all kinds of perks, including personalized spiritual direction, faster progress, relief from doubts and temptations, and protection from errors. Because the utility of self-externalization hinges upon mutual understanding, the *Exercises* also promote the adoption of a shared vocabulary of interior experience. The language of consolation and desolation in which exercitants are immersed during the retreat is also the standard tongue in which they will be expected, as Jesuits, to express the movements of their souls. By teaching its future members to assimilate their interior experiences to this shared language, the Society assures the mutual legibility of all Jesuits.

#### *Jesuit obedience: a primer*

To counteract the autonomy that the discernment of spirits confers, the Society maintains an organizational imperative to total obedience. Building upon the practice of self-abnegation cultivated in the times of election, Ignatius makes the Jesuit ideal a “joyful submission” to the superior’s will. Indifference to his state of life is also the Jesuit way of being.<sup>24</sup> Like all members of religious orders, the Jesuits took vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience upon their formal entrance into the Society. However, Ignatius “wanted obedience of ‘execution, will, and understanding’ to be a hallmark of the Jesuit” (O’Malley, *First Jesuits* 351). For the Society,

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<sup>24</sup> The *Exercises* also teach this kind of self-abnegating obedience through the form of the guided retreat. Eandean clarifies that the *Exercises* “is not a book to be read; Ignatius is quite explicit that the person making the Exercises should not have the full text to hand, and not know what is coming (*Exx.* 11)” (53). The structure of the retreat—the fact that the exercitant depends on the director for the content of each meditation—places him in a subordinate mode. It is a meta-exercise in obedience and submission to spiritual guidance.

abnegation of the individual will through obedience to one's superiors replaced the self-denial that other Christians practiced through abstinence, physical austerities, or extended prayer; it became their form of asceticism, their way of living God's will (O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 352-53; Höpfl 28-29). The original ten companions decided to elect a superior to preserve order and unity among the Society's members, but also to afford them the opportunity to imitate Christ in his total submission to God's plan for him: "Los movía el desseo vivo que tenían de imitar (quanto sus flacas fuerças bastassen) a su cabeça, Christo Jesús Señor nuestro, el qual, por no perder la obediencia dio la vida, obedeciendo hasta la muerte y muerte de cruz" (Ribadeneyra II.13:56).

If, in this analogy with Christ's obedience to God even unto death, the subordinate imitates the Son, then his superior represents the Father. Both the *Examen* and the *Constitutions* instruct all Jesuits to regard their superiors as standing in the place of Christ, and to treat his voice as the divine voice regardless of his talent, intelligence, or nobility. Subordinates owe obedience to their superior not because of the particular gifts God has bestowed upon him, but because, for them, he possesses God's authority (Pavone 21-22). During the period of probation, Jesuit novices internalize this habit of blind submission to all superiors by performing the lowliest chores in the professed house. They learn to treat every order, whether from the cook or the superior general, with the same reverence:

Quando alguno entrare a hazer la cozina o para ayudar al que la haze, ha de obedecer con mucha humildad al mismo cozinero en todas cosas de su officio, guardándole siempre entera obediencia; porque si así no hiziese, tanpoco pareze la guardaría a superior alguno, como la vera obediencia no mire a quién se haze, mas por quién se haze; y si se haze por solo Nro. Criador y Sor., el mismo Señor de todos se obedece: por donde ninguna cosa se deue mirar, si es cozinero de casa o superior della, o si es vno o si es otro el que manda; pues a ellos ni por ellos (tomando con sana inteligencia) no se haze obediencia alguna, mas a solo Dios y por solo Dios N. Criador y Señor. ... Y así la persona que obedece, deue considerar y ponderar la voz que del cozinero o de otro que le sea superior, sale, como si de Christo Nro. Sor. saliese, para ser enteramente agradable a la su diuina magestad. (*Examen* 4:28-30)<sup>25</sup>

This inversion of the social hierarchy strips novices of their existing prejudices and teaches them to obey orders without regard to the status of the person who issues them: every commanding voice is Christ's voice, and every task an opportunity to serve him. A superior's orders should take precedence over all other responsibilities, even those in which a subordinate is currently engaged. Ignatius told the inhabitants of the Casa Professa in Rome that if a superior called, they should drop whatever they were doing, whether hearing confessions or tending the sick, and respond immediately: "Obedience to the superior had priority over any other task. ... The author of the order was Christ, the superior, simply his lieutenant; what was at stake was the Kingdom of

<sup>25</sup> See also *Const.* VI.3:17. Ribaneyra mirrors this language closely in the prologue to the *Vida*: "El averla [la carga de escribir] yo tomado no por mi voluntad de quien me puede mandar y a quien tengo obligación de obedecer y respetar en todas las cosas. Este es el muy reverendo padre Francisco de Borja, nuestro prepósito general, que me ha mandado escriviesse lo que aquí pienso escribir; cuya boz es para mí boz de Dios, y sus mandamientos mandamientos de Dios, en cuyo lugar le tengo, y como a tal le devo mirar y con religioso acatamiento reverenciar y obedecer" (Pro:1). This invocation of the *Constitutions* might suggest that the precept had sufficient currency within the Society to be familiar to his Jesuit readers, and/or that Ribadeneyra considered it a defining characteristic of the order about which non-Jesuit readers should know.

God. Such imperatives left no room for delay” (Émonet 100). Subordinates should show their superiors the same eagerness to obey that they would show Christ himself, were he the one asking.

Eagerness to obey entails both external compliance and internal alignment of the will. To revere his superior as Christ, the subordinate must revere his judgments as right and good. Ignatius urged his fellow Jesuits not to be satisfied “with a voluntarist submission, with pure execution, but [to] try to make the judgment of the superior their own” (Émonet 101). As in the election, where the exercitant strives to will only what God wills for him, the subordinate relinquishes his own judgments in favor of his superior’s. The obedient Jesuit does not merely fulfill his superior’s request, but also desires its fulfillment as much as his superior does:<sup>26</sup>

Es bien que se den todos mucho a la entera obediencia, reconociendo al superior, qualquiera que sea, en lugar de Christo N. S., y teniéndole interiormente reuerentia y amor; y no solamente en la exterior ejecución de lo que manda, obedezcan entera y prontamente con la fortaleza y humildad debida, sin excusaciones ni murmuraciones, aunque se manden cosas difficiles y según la sensualidad repugnantes; pero se esfuerzen en lo interior de tener la resignación y abnegación verdadera de sus propias voluntades y juicios, conformando totalmente el querer y sentir suyo con lo que su superior quiere y siente, en todas cosas donde no se viese pecado, teniendo la voluntad y juicio de su superior por regla del proprio, para más al justo conformarse con la prima y suma regla de toda buena voluntad y juicio, que es la eterna bondad y sapientia. (*Const.* III.3:10)

The subordinate should model his will entirely upon his superior’s, because willing with him means willing with Christ. To achieve this degree of self-abnegation, he must suppress his objections to the orders he receives, accepting with equanimity even the assignments he finds difficult or distasteful. Ignatius’s companion and protégé Pedro de Ribadeneyra recalls that he habitually likened Jesuits in this state to corpses, small crucifixes, and walking sticks—objects devoid of inclination and able to be manipulated in whatever way their masters choose: “Yo devo hallarme como un cuerpo muerto, que no tiene querer ni entender; segundo, como un pequeño crucifixo, que se dexa bolver a una parte a otra sin dificultad alguna; tercero, devo assimilar y hazerme como un báculo en mano de un viejo, para que me ponga donde quisiere y donde más le pudiere ayudar; assí yo devo estar aparejado para que de mí la religión se ayude y se sirva en todo lo que me fuere ordenado” (V.4:64).<sup>27</sup> Blind obedience means not only making oneself a tool for the

<sup>26</sup> The Jesuits held their members to a higher standard of adherence than the Church did Catholics at large, particularly in the context of heresy, which was essentially understood as theological disobedience: “The defining attribute of the heretic and heresy is refusing to submit to the verdict of the Church once it had spoken authoritatively. The reason why Jesuits and hard-line Romanists generally attributed such profoundly damaging consequences to heresy was not its doctrinal falsity but the heretical disposition, the conscious, deliberate denial of the Church’s authority to define doctrine concerning faith or morals, by someone subject to the Church. All the definitions explicitly include stubbornness or obstinacy. It had of course to be *public* obstinacy. For practical purposes, orthodoxy of profession made a person one of the faithful. As for interior belief in the depth of the soul, *de occultis non iudicat Ecclesia*; and even a hypocritical, coerced orthodoxy was better than that people should drag others down with them into the pit by propagating heresies” (Höpfl 68).

<sup>27</sup> The necrology of the Jesuit brother Lorenzo Tristano (1586), one of the architects of the original Casa Professa in Rome, shows Ignatius enforcing this principle: “Master Lorenzo used to say that Our Blessed Father [Ignatius] taught him how to obey, and he did it in this way. With his walking stick Our Blessed Father drew a window that he was to make in a large old wall: —and make it neither too large nor too small.— In the meantime the Father Procurator of the Casa passed by and said to him: —Master Lorenzo this window is too

Society's use, but also deferring to one's superior about what that use looks like. Like a cadaver, one must harbor neither preferences nor opinions; like a crucifix, one must move from place to place without resistance; like a staff, one must assist the old man's progress in whatever direction he chooses. Above all, one must want to do these things not because they are agreeable, or because they make sense, but because they constitute obedience (Ribadeneyra V.4:60).

To clarify, the imperative to blind obedience does not disqualify subordinates from forming opinions about how best to proceed. As capable discerners of spirits, subordinates retain the right to advance their own interpretations of God's will, so long as they are prepared to relinquish those interpretations in favor of their superior's if and when they differ: "Obedience presupposed a dialogue rooted in trust between the superior and his subject, an authentic opening of the conscience. On the part of the subject, this implied an obligation to represent his point of view and his arguments in favor of his resolution, as long as the final decision remained the prerogative of the superior" (Émonet 101).<sup>28</sup> The realization of perfect alignment between superiors and subordinates presupposes continual dialogue: the superior must understand his subordinate's position in order to endorse or amend it, and the subordinate must understand his superior's position in order to internalize it effectively. This expectation of ongoing exchange harnesses the utility of each individual's skill in the discernment of spirits even as the imperative to blind obedience neutralizes its autarkic threat to the Society's cohesion.

*The imperative to self-externalization*

If the dialogue between superior and subordinate is the only way to ensure their alignment of wills, then the latter's willingness to present his point of view accurately to the former represents the condition of possibility for Jesuit obedience. So long as every Jesuit exposes his discernment process and its results to his immediate superior, the Society can protect itself from

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small, make it a little larger.— He simply enlarged it. When he was done, Our Blessed Father returned and saw that it was larger than the window he designed. He said: —Brother, what have you done? It's larger than the one that I designed for you.— He responded: —Father, the Father Procurator told me to make it larger. He made him redo it and make it small. When he was done Our Blessed Father returned and said. —Brother, undo it again and make it as you had it before.— And he redid it in this way, without saying a word. And from then on he obeyed blindly" (quoted in Levy 72; original in Pietro Pirri, *Giovanni Tristano e i promordi della architettura gesuitica* [Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1955], doc. XLV, p. 258).

<sup>28</sup> At least during his own generalate, Ignatius tempered the demand for total submission with deference to his subordinates' judgment. Many of Ignatius's companions testified that he held a high opinion of his brothers, and made assignments or judgments based on the specific needs and circumstances of each individual, while also preserving some flexibility should doubts or problems arise (Émonet 95). Höpfl adds that "despite Ignatius's extravagances about 'blind' and 'corpse-like' obedience, the Society from the beginning emphasised deliberate choice and commitment, and demanded the exercise of prudence and judgement from its members" (34-35). Such prudence and judgment were especially important for Jesuit missionaries, whose physical distance from their superiors impeded the transmission of orders, leaving them to make their own decisions. As a result, Ignatius and his successors very rarely demanded the kind of blind submission that the Society's founding documents described; in fact, Ignatius had such confidence in his subordinates that he "sometimes sent Jesuits blank sheets of paper with only his signature, to be filled in as they thought best in a given situation" (O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 354). This confidence arose in part from the Society's careful delegation of tasks and ministries to the members most apparently suited for them. Cristiano Casalini shows in "Discerning Skills" that, as compared to other religious orders, the early Jesuits evinced a unique sensitivity "to the question of human talents, beginning with the Society's concern about recruitment and organization" (191). To ensure that each individual Jesuit occupies the role most appropriate to his abilities and preferences, the Jesuit *Constitutions* require superiors to keep detailed notes about the mental gifts and talents of each of their subordinates, and to submit those notes to Rome at regular intervals (Casalini 193).

extreme individuation, diabolical malfeasance, and the emergence of dissenting factions, while also promoting continued obedience and a unified agenda across the hierarchy. The *Exercises* predispose future Jesuits to this habit by compelling exercitants to keep superiors apprised of their inner experiences and affective states, as well as any physical or mental tendencies that might affect their spiritual progress. Ignatius incentivizes this behavior throughout the retreat by aligning self-externalization with personal spiritual advantage: exposing one's interiority to one's superior results in better guidance, faster progress, and less suffering.<sup>29</sup>

Exercitants who share their inner experience with their superiors reap all the benefits of personalized spiritual direction: comfort and advice, the resolution of doubts, protection against illusion and heresy, and help discerning spirits (O'Malley, *Saints* 141).<sup>30</sup> Ignatius underscores that the exercitant's quickest means to spiritual transformation is total transparency with his director about his experiences during the retreat. The best outcomes arise when the exercitant keeps his director "informado fielmente de las varias agitaciones y pensamientos que los varios spiritus le traen; porque, segun el mayor o menor prouecho, le puede dar algunos spirituales exercicios conuenientes y conformes a la necesidad de la tal ánima así agitada" (*Exx.* 17). The directorial relationship incentivizes self-externalization; if you tell your director honestly how things are going, he can make adjustments to improve your experience—and the more detail you give him, the more effective those adjustments will be.<sup>31</sup>

Ignatius's *Acta* reinforces the value of spiritual direction by depicting the grievous spiritual and physical harm that can result from attempting to go it alone: Ignatius hurts and endangers himself on many occasions because he refuses guidance for so long (O'Rourke Boyle, *Acts* 153).<sup>32</sup> The salvational power of self-externalization appears most clearly in the months-long crisis of scruples that Ignatius suffers in Manresa. In his desire for holiness, he undertakes extreme austerities: fasting, begging for alms, letting his hair and nails grow. He spends long hours in

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<sup>29</sup> Höpfl suggests that using self-interest to incentivize behaviors that benefitted others was common Jesuit practice: "Nowhere is there any attempt to separate the service of God from the 'self-love' involved in being concerned about where one will spend eternity. The latter is regarded as so obviously natural and legitimate that the entire *Exercises* consistently appeal to it. So did the Society, in always coupling its objective of saving the souls of others with that of saving the souls of its own members" (31-32).

<sup>30</sup> Though it antedated the birth of the Society of Jesus by centuries, spiritual direction enjoyed a renewed vogue in Catholic Europe in the sixteenth century. Both the *Exercises* and the *Directory* played a crucial role in this development more broadly, and the *Constitutions* cemented its normalization within the Society of Jesus in particular. General Claudio Aquaviva published two texts on the question of spiritual direction in 1599 and 1600, reflecting the extent to which it had "become an essential component of Jesuit doctrine and practice" (O'Malley, *Saints* 141). Because the discernment of spirits played such a large role in their spiritual formation, Jesuits prized direction especially highly— Domènec counseled exercitants to regard the director "as an angel come down from heaven, impelled by compassion to communicate to you what pertains to the salvation of your soul" ("Counsels" [3]).

<sup>31</sup> In his directory, Polanco acknowledges that exercitants may need time to adjust to the practice of externalizing their most private feelings, and exhorts directors to show patience and to accommodate their circumstances and personalities. For example, with regards to physical penance during the *Exercises*, "if the exercitant himself requests a hairshirt or a discipline, it should be given to him. If, even when the value of penance is explained to him, he makes no such request, and is obviously not doing anything by way of external chastisement of the body in matters of food, bed, etc., then he should be asked if he wants to do any. There are persons who are willing but too shy to ask. One of the first fathers used to leave a discipline in the exercitant's room as if he had accidentally dropped it, by way of inviting the exercitant to use it of his own accord" (Polanco [54]).

<sup>32</sup> The many mistakes that Ignatius recounts in the *Acta* also remind future Jesuits that the charismatic model of spirituality doesn't pay, and that obedience is ultimately in their best interest.



prayer and performs corporal penitence three times a day (*Acta* III:19, Émonet 25). After four months of this brutal regimen, he begins to suffer from desolation, but the glittering serpent that regularly appears to him seems to confirm his choices: “No devisaba bien la especie de qué cosa era, mas en alguna manera le parecía que tenía forma de serpiente, y ... quanto más veces la veía, tanto más crecía la consolación” (*Acta* III:19). Ignatius’s inability to discern the serpent clearly is telling; as we know, this vision is a manifestation of Satan using his pious desires to lead him away from God. Ignatius’s error of discernment has grave consequences: his austerities cause him to develop obsessive scruples about the completeness of his confessions, and to become depressed (*Acta* III:22-23). Finally, he decides to fast for an entire week. However, when he tells his confessor why he is fasting, the latter orders him to stop: “Le mandó que rompiese aquella abstinencia; y aunque él se hallaba con fuerças todavía obedesció al confessor, y se halló aquel día y el otro libre de los escrúpulos” (III:25). After months of piling austerity upon austerity without success, Ignatius finds immediate relief from his scruples by sharing his struggles with a spiritual guide and submitting to his guidance. Left to his own devices, he opts for forms of devotion poorly suited to his physical and spiritual circumstances, whereas his confessor prescribes devotional strategies more appropriate for him. In other words, self-externalization to a spiritual superior earns him more personalized spiritual direction.

Better spiritual direction means faster spiritual progress, which also means faster progress through the *Exercises*. To move from one meditation to the next, the exercitant must report his experiences to his director and submit to his guidance. Prospective Jesuits need to prove their willingness to externalize their spiritual experiences just to gain admission to a retreat: they must give satisfactory answers to a battery of personal questions before existing members will agree to administer the *Exercises*. Jesuit hopefuls have to disclose, among other things, their habits of prayer, meditation, Mass attendance, and pious conversation; any religious ideas that differ from those commonly held by the Church; and any scruples or spiritual difficulties they’ve undergone:

Sea demandado si ha tenido o tiene algunas opiniones o conceptos diferentes de los que se tienen comúnmente en la Yglesia y doctores aprobados della, y si está aparejado, quando algún tiempo los tubiese, para remittirse a lo que en la Compañía se determinare que deba sentirse de tales cosas.

Sea demandado si en qualesquiera scrúpulos o 89stucias89des espirituales o de otras qualesquiera que tenga o por tiempo 89stucia, se dexará juzgar y seguirá el parecer de otros de la Compañía, personas de letras y bondad. (*Examen* 3:10-12)

These questions assess a man’s fitness for membership in their form as well as their content; they comprise a kind of self-externalization test to reveal how readily he will expose his inner experiences to a superior. Although a history of heterodox inclinations or recurrent scruples poses a risk for the Society, the man’s willingness to share them may nevertheless mark him as a good candidate for membership, particularly if he seems open to correction. Dishonesty or reluctance to describe one’s experiences give greater cause for concern; the *Examen* obligates prospective members to respond honestly to the superior’s questions on pain of sin, “porque se euite el engaño que podría auer de no se 89stucias puramente con su superior, donde pueden nacer inconuenientes en daño notable de toda la 89stucias” (3:1 n. A).<sup>33</sup>

<sup>33</sup> Theoretically this exhortation also applied to local and provincial superiors, since they were somebody’s subordinates as well. However, the incentive structure to honesty did not function quite as well at the higher levels of the hierarchy; according to Casalini, superiors sometimes used the catalogues as political instruments,

The *Exercises* also reward prospective Jesuits for self-externalization, hanging the possibility of forward progress upon the exercitant's willingness to communicate his experiences to the director. Because Ignatius denies exercitants direct access to the text of the *Exercises* during the retreat, they depend on their directors for each new meditation: "Al que toma ejercicios en la primera semana, aprouecha que no sepa cosa alguna de lo que ha de hazer en la segunda semana; mas que así trabaje en la primera, para alcançar la cosa que busca" (*Exx.* 11). By keeping exercitants in the dark about the exercises to come, Ignatius encourages them to give their full attention to the one at hand, but he also gives the director total control over their rate of progress. This gatekeeping incentivizes self-externalization: the director grants exercitants access to the next exercise only once he receives a satisfactory account of their experiences of the current one.<sup>34</sup> The exercises themselves also prepare exercitants to give a thorough account of what they experienced during each meditation. For instance, the second preamble, in which the exercitant must "90stucias a Dios nuestro Señor lo que quiero y deseo," requires him to identify his desires, to articulate them in words, and to address them (mentally, in this context) to a listening superior (*Exx.* 48). The second meditation on sins achieves the same goal; the exercitant identifies and articulates his sins and their contexts in order to explain them to a superior—in this case, to his confessor during the general confession at the end of the First Week (*Exx.* 56-57).<sup>35</sup> Repeating the first two exercises of each week also aims at this end: because the exercitant is already familiar with the content and structure of the exercises, he can pay closer attention to his inner movements—"notando y haziendo pausa en los puntos que he sentido mayor consolación o desolación o mayor sentimiento spiritual"—and, as a result, can describe them more effectively to his director (*Exx.* 62). As Endean observes, "the whole process is aimed at the clarification of desire" not for God, who knows what each petitioner wants before his first genuflection, but for the exercitant himself (56). These (re)petitions teach him to translate his inner experiences effectively into words for his superiors' benefit.<sup>36</sup>

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over- or underestimating certain members of the Society in order to advance or impede their careers. Among other things, labelling a Jesuit "melancholic" was a tactic "sometimes used to hide a conflict with the superior, thus revealing the superior's desire to denigrate or mar that particular Jesuit. Such was the case of José de Acosta (1539-1600), who was at odds with the general Claudio Acquaviva and had been accused of being depressed on a number of occasions" (203).

<sup>34</sup> Peter Canisius, another first-generation Jesuit, tells directors to encourage the exercitant to explain his inner experiences by asking him "how he is doing—first in the corporal aspects of the method of meditation; second, in his colloquies with God and the saints; third, in his own quest for contrition, sorrow, and tears for sins; fourth, in his resolve to offer himself wholly to his Creator; fifth, whether he experiences spiritual movements and thoughts produced by diverse spirits" ([7]).

<sup>35</sup> The general confession is another instance of self-externalization to a superior; though not mandatory, it is strongly recommended to all candidates for membership (*Exx.* 44, *Examen* 4:10). N.B., anyone who plans to profess final vows to the Society make regular general confessions of his sins throughout his formation. Most candidates for membership make their first general confession—an account of all the sins they have committed in their lives—during the *Exercises*, at the end of the First Week (*Exx.* 44). Throughout the novitiate, they repeat the general confession every six months, reporting every sin committed in the interval. They must make their last general confession roughly thirty days before they profess their final vows; no Jesuit can formally enter the Society without performing this final act of self-externalization (*Examen* 4:37-41). Full professed members make general confessions to their superiors once a year (*Const.* VI.3:18). On the role of the general confession among lay Catholics, see Chapter 3, p. 188.

<sup>36</sup> The colloquies also give the exercitant regular opportunities to articulate his experience to a superior, in this case his divine interlocutor: "En los colloquios deuemos de rrazonar y pedir, según la subiecta materia, es a saber según que me hallo tentado o consolado, y según que deseo aver vna virtud o otra, según que quiero

The Fifth Addition to the First Week sets time aside specifically for self-assessment, with an eye toward self-reporting. The exercitant should briefly review his inner movements after each exercise to determine how it went and why: “Después de acabado el ejercicio, por espacio de vn quarto de hora, quier asentado, quier paseándome, miraré cómo me a ydo en la contemplación o meditación; y si mal, miraré la causa donde procede y, así mirada, arrepentirme, para me enmendar adelante; y si bien, dando gracias a Dios nuestro Señor” (*Exx.* 77). Future general Everard Mercurian recommends in his directory that exercitants make notes on these reflections, so that their directors receive a thorough and accurate record of their experiences: “He also notes what he experienced: his affections, trains of thought, consolations, etc., so that he can briefly report them to the director and afterwards write them up in a very brief form to keep them in mind. He gives a brief report to the director on how it went, what he did and experienced. The latter guides him, and in this way they move through the succeeding exercises” ([86-89]). Mercurian’s recommendations reflect the dependent relationship between self-externalization and forward progress discussed above; moving through the succeeding exercises is contingent upon reporting one’s experiences to one’s director and accepting his guidance.<sup>37</sup> Advancement through the *Exercises* hinges upon the exercitant’s willingness to expose his inner experience: only by self-externalization to his director can he progress to the next step.

The *Exercises* also incentivize self-externalization as a form of self-care, a way to heal and protect the body, mind, and soul. By informing directors about their internal state and all the factors that contribute to it, exercitants can find the appropriate balance between rigor and mildness to minimize desolation and maximize consolation—the latter of which, Molina reminds us, naturally seeks its own replication (88). As novice meditators, exercitants need to discuss their prayer habits with their directors. The *Exercises* prescribe five hour-long meditations each day, made at regular intervals from midnight until suppertime (*Exx.* 72). The alternation of intense concentration with total rest gives exercitants as many chances to stimulate an encounter with God as they can sustain for the four weeks of the retreat. Unfocused or insufficient prayer will generate fewer experiences of consolation or desolation, while excessive prayer can cause mental strain and exhaustion, deplete the exercitants’ stamina, and leave them vulnerable to errors (*Exx.* 6). Regular conferences with their directors will help them to arrive at “a manner and method for thinking gently about divine realities” that balances endurance with results (*Directory* 8:65). Ignatius also encourages temperance in all forms of physical penance, and provides detailed guidelines for fasting and self-mortification (*Exx.* 82-7, 210-7). Because excessive asperities can cause permanent harm, exercitants must be transparent with their directors about how penitential exercises affect them physically and spiritually, and must respect any limits their directors impose. The primary goal is to avoid illness: when fasting, the exercitant must take care “que no cayga en

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disponer de my a vna parte o a otra, según que quiero dolerme o gozarme de la cosa que contemplo, finalmente pidiendo aquello que más efficazmente cerca algunas cosas particulares desseo” (*Exx.* 199). The exercitant can use the colloquies to do the work of self-reflection required above, and to express to the divine other what brings him consolation or desolation and what grace or help he wants. Even in these imagined conversations, Ignatius incentivizes more detailed self-revelation: if exercitants tell God exactly how they feel, they’re more likely to get the help they need.

<sup>37</sup> The *Directory* of 1599 suggests that directors who make their exercitants feel confident in their spiritual progress are more likely to receive thorough accounts of their inner movements during each exercise: “**Give no occasion for suspicion.**—Above all, the director should take care never to give the exercitant any cause to suspect that he has a poor opinion of him, even when he has not behaved as well as he might. He should always show that he has good hope for him, and by his own hope instill hope and courage in his pupil” (7:62).

enfermedad,” and when self-mortifying, “que el dolor sea sensible en las carnes, y que no entre dentro de los huesos; de manera que dé dolor y no enfermedad” (*Exx.* 213, 86).

Self-externalization also helps to prevent spiritual indisposition; superiors can cure most spiritual ailments if given enough information.<sup>38</sup> Retreat directors, for example, know many remedies for desolation, and can alter the exercitant’s spiritual program—which exercises to perform, the length and timing of each day’s meditations, the number of repetitions, the frequency of confession or communion, and so on—to accommodate the nature and severity of his suffering (*Exx.* 6-7). The more detailed the exercitant’s descriptions of his desolation, the more targeted the director’s remedies. For instance, in cases of negative temptation (when the exercitant feels tempted *not* to do something spiritually beneficial), the director should not share the Rules for the Discernment of Spirits, because unnecessary invocations of the Devil might frighten the exercitant. However, in cases of positive temptation, the director should share these rules as a way of illuminating the Devil’s tactics (*Exx.* 8-10). As in his policy of punishing Jesuits who fail to disclose physical and mental illness, Ignatius installs an additional incentive to ensure that exercitants perceive self-externalization to be in their best interest: he states that the most effective way to relieve desolation, better even than the director’s targeted interventions, is to expose it to a representative of the good spirit. Because the Devil works best in secret, shedding light on his machinations makes him easier to dispel from the soul: “Quando el enemigo de natura humana trae sus 92stucias y suasionas a la ánima iusta, quiere y desea que sean reçibidas y tenidas en secreto; mas quando las descubre a su buen confessor, o a otra persona spiritual que conosca sus engaños y malicias, mucho le pesa; porque collige que no podrá salir con su malicia comenzada, en ser descubiertos sus engaños manifiestos” (*Exx.* 326).<sup>39</sup> Exposure in itself is enough to thwart the Devil’s plans. By making the disclosure of desolation to his superior a positive step toward its resolution, Ignatius incentivizes self-externalization as a form of self-care. The more the director knows about his exercitants’ interior movements, the more effectively he can protect and heal their bodies, minds, and souls.

Throughout the *Exercises*, Ignatius finds ways to incentivize self-externalization so that exercitants find it in their best interest to maintain a dialogue with their directors. These incentives to dialogue—tailored spiritual guidance, faster progress, efficacious self-care—compel exercitants to share their inner experiences with their superiors on a regular basis. The exchanges of self-externalization and guidance or correction that recur throughout the *Exercises* prepare exercitants for a lifetime of Jesuit obedience: by the retreat’s end, they know how to submit to their superiors’ judgment while also exercising their own capacity to discern spirits.

*From self-externalization to legibility*

That said, the subordinate’s externalization of his interior experiences isn’t terribly useful unless the superior understands the particular divine encounters and affective states to which he refers. For this reason, the *Exercises* install a standard language for inner experience that persists

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<sup>38</sup> Ribadeneyra emphasizes this curative capacity in the *Vida*, writing that the first thing Ignatius did upon his arrival in Montserrat was to find a good confessor, “como enfermo que busca el mejor medico para curarse” (I.4:17). For more on confession as spiritual medicine, see Chapter 3, p. 191.

<sup>39</sup> Ribadeneyra reinforces this precept in the *Vida*, reiterating that self-externalization is the best response to the Devil’s attacks: “Tenía por cosa muy provechosa que, quando el hombre es gravemente tentado, tenga cabe sí quien le ayude y sustente con buenos avisos y consejos, para que no falten al alma defensores donde ay muchedumbre de demonios que le acometen y procuran derribar, y para que, como un clavo se saca con otro clavo, assí con un buen esfuerço de los amigos se vença el mal esfuerço de los enemigos” (V.10:152).

through all the Jesuits founding documents: the vocabulary of consolation and desolation becomes the discursive matrix to which all members of the Society have to assimilate their individual experiences—or, in other words, a state simplification. As we know, knowledge generated at the local level (like an interpretation of God’s will derived from an individual’s interior experience) is too complex and too diverse to be legible to a supervising institution. The state simplification provides a shorthand, a set of essential criteria, by which the institution can assimilate these local variations in knowledge to a universal standard (Scott 3, 22-24). These shorthands can take many forms: maps, standard units of measurement, questionnaires (as in the Introduction) lists of propositions by which to recognize the members of a specific population (as in Chapter 1), or standard languages.<sup>40</sup> The imposition of a standard language renders speakers of local dialects accessible to institutional assessment, fosters homogenous institutional expansion, and facilitates the assimilation of new institutional subjects. Through linguistic standardization, the opacity of local experience gives way to organizational transparency (Scott 77-78).<sup>41</sup>

For the Society, whose subject population has as many local variations in spiritual practice as it has members, and for whom organizational transparency is the only antidote to autarkic collapse, legibility through linguistic standardization offers obvious advantages.<sup>42</sup> Ignatius creates the possibility of mutual legibility through the shared experience of the *Exercises*, which roots all Jesuits in the same tradition and provides them with the same discursive categories. The standard language that derives from this common experience enables Jesuits to render the most hyper-local of practices—the interior experience of divine preference, made manifest in the individual affect—legible to any other member of the Society. The ability to express one’s process of discernment of spirits in standard language facilitates the alignment of wills, thereby protecting the institution (in theory, anyway) against extreme individuation.

Ignatius’s standard language of discernment is founded upon a shared point of reference, an experience that all Jesuits share: the *Exercises*. Ignatius required everyone that wished to join to Society to make the month-long retreat—even the original nine companions did so under his direction—to reproduce in and for them the mystical encounters and methods of discernment that inspired his own conversion, but also to tie those experiences to a referent that all Jesuits would hold in common (O’Malley, *Saints* 122). The fact that the Jesuit conversion experience is rooted in a facilitated mystical encounter makes it especially difficult to express in words. According to de Certeau, any attempt to translate mystical experience into language confronts “the necessity of reconciling a central contradiction: between the *particularity* of the place it delimits (the subject) and the *universality* it strives for (the absolute)” (“Mystic Speech” 88). Both terms of mystical experience resist linguistic transmission—the divine presence because its universality exceeds linguistic categories, and the mystic’s encounter with that presence because its particularity defies them. To reconcile this contradiction, Ignatius makes the external circumstances of each Jesuit’s mystical encounter as similar as possible. All Jesuits do the same things during the *Exercises*: they isolate themselves in the same ways, they follow the same instructions, they perform the same meditations, and they undergo the same physical restrictions. Barthes suggests that

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<sup>40</sup> For a more detailed discussion of linguistic standardization, see the Introduction, pp. 8-9.

<sup>41</sup> Scott cites the example of early modern France, where provincial adopters of Parisian French were rewarded with greater mobility, expanded career options, access to a national education system, and political patronage, while speakers of local languages suffered a decline in economic, political, and social opportunities (73).

<sup>42</sup> Though it lies outside the scope of this chapter, the Jesuits also had a Society-specific vocabulary around their ministries, and in particular their mission activities. O’Malley discusses the meanings of “mission” peculiar to the Jesuits in *Saints or Devils Incarnate?* (see chapters 6, 8 and 9).

these standardized circumstances aim “at achieving the homogeneity of the language to be constructed, in a word, its pertinence; they correspond to that *speech situation* which is not interior to the code . . . , but without which the constitutive ambiguity of the language would reach an intolerable threshold” (51-52). While the mystical encounters that the *Exercises* facilitate cannot be “interior to the code” because they remain insurmountably particular to each individual, the circumstances that generate them provide a shared point of reference standard enough to keep the Jesuit language of discernment from becoming intolerably ambiguous.

The language itself turns upon the binary of consolation and desolation and the attribution of all interior motions to the good or the evil spirit. The general examination of conscience that exercitants perform daily during the retreat reinforces this partitioning of their will between divine and demonic influences: “Presupongo ser tres pensamientos en mí, es a saber, vno proprio mío, el qual sale de my mera libertad y querer; y otros dos, que vienen de fuera: el vno que viene del buen espíritu, y el otro del malo” (*Exx.* 32). The general examination teaches exercitants to articulate all their thoughts and desires in terms of these exterior sources. As we saw in the *Spiritual Diary*, Ignatius believes that interior motions do not arise spontaneously within the soul, but rather come to it from without, through the intercession of either spirit. For this reason, the interior motions themselves reflect the same partitioning: the evil spirit engenders desolation, the good spirit consolation (with the exceptions described above). Ignatius’s examples of the ways in which these affective states manifest themselves—tears, joy, eagerness; dryness, sadness, apathy—are descriptive rather than prescriptive: the terms adhere to the spiritual valence of each particular manifestation, rather than to the manifestation itself (for example, tears of despair reflect desolation, while feelings of apathy toward a former object of temptation might bring consolation) (*Exx.* 316-17). By assimilating all his interior motions to these two categories, the exercitant renders himself legible to his director (and all other Jesuits). When he expresses his affective state in the Society’s standard language, he creates a strategically-restricted view of his inner experience that enables his director to track trends, identify risk factors, and make targeted interventions in his spiritual program.

That said, most exercitants don’t automatically adopt Ignatian terminology; as Scott suggests, institutions have to compel their subjects to give up their local dialects in favor of the standard language. The *Exercises* compel exercitants to abandon their preexisting vocabulary for spiritual and affective experience by immersing them completely in the language of discernment. They are isolated from their accustomed manner of thinking and speaking, and for thirty days all their linguistic encounters—with the director, with the confessor, with divine interlocutors during the colloquies, with written instructions for the meditations—take place in their new tongue. Barthes suggests that the immersive character of the retreat creates a “field of exclusion,” a space from which “worldly, idle, physical, natural language, in short *other* languages,” are eliminated (48, 51). The intense sensory and social isolation of the Exercises—the solitude, the unfamiliarity of one’s space and schedule, the alienation from one’s body, the total occupation of one’s time—destabilizes their existing habits and cuts them off from their linguistic communities. The continual introduction of new topics of meditation, overlaid by a never-ending series of instructions, annotations, additions, and rules, “deconditions the habitual, separates the exercitant from his anterior (different) gestures, removes the interference from the worldly tongues he spoke before entering the retreat (what Ignatius calls ‘indolent words’). All these protocols have the function of creating in the exercitant a kind of linguistic vacuum necessary for the elaboration and for the triumph of the new language” (Barthes 48-49). The unfamiliarity of the retreat environment

decreases the utility of the exercitant's habitual language, manufacturing the need for a new form of spiritual expression.

The *Exercises* encourages exercitants to adopt this new form of spiritual expression by reframing their physical, emotional, and spiritual experiences in Ignatian terms. For instance, the various additions, annotations, and rules overwrite the familiar vocabulary of bodily sensations and appetites with the new vocabulary of consolation and desolation. The *Exercises* articulates all physical phenomena—postures, sleep schedules, warmth and cold, hunger and thirst, abstinence, mortification—in terms of the spiritual effects and affective states that they produce. Closing the shutters, wearing a blindfold, and trying not to smile or laugh will help the exercitant to achieve the requisite feelings of shame and contrition during the First Week, whereas opening the windows, seeking pleasant temperatures, and thinking cheerful thoughts will stimulate the joy appropriate to the Fourth Week (*Exx.* 78-81; 229b-c). By abstaining from his favorite foods, the exercitant “muchas veces sentirá más las internas noticias, consolaciones y divinas inspiraciones” (*Exx.* 213). It's possible to adjust almost any aspect of the exercitant's physical experience to achieve the desired spiritual results: “Quando la persona que se exercita aún no halla lo que desea, así como lágrimas, consolaciones, etc., muchas veces aprouecha hazer mudanza en el comer, en el dormir, y en otros modos de hazer penitencia” (*Exx.* 89). The language of discernment overwrites the exercitant's accustomed ways of talking and thinking about his body, reconceptualizing it as a means to his spiritual ends.

The retreat director helps the exercitant to reconceptualize his emotional experience by rearticulating it for him in terms of affective states. As the only person with whom the exercitant has regular contact during the retreat, the director serves as a kind of conversation partner, encouraging him to speak his new language and modeling its proper use. Early in the retreat, he teaches by translating between the exercitant's habitual language of emotional experience and the Ignatian language of discernment; one of his principal responsibilities is to

observe and later reflect back upon what the exercitant tells him about the course and end of his meditation, so as to learn the movements of the good angel, good desires, holy inspirations, and spiritual consolations which he has experienced; or, on the other hand, the temptations, maneuvers, and wiles of the devil, dejection, etc.; so that by studying these he can better guide himself and his novice and provide opportune assistance where needed. (“Short Directory” [16])

The director's reflection upon and repetition of the exercitant's experiences during meditation accomplishes two pedagogical goals: it teaches the exercitant how to discern the movements of the good and evil spirits within his soul, and also how to describe them. When the director rearticulates the exercitant's own emotions in terms of consolation and desolation to illuminate the sources of these movements, he substitutes the Jesuits' standard language for the exercitant's existing vocabulary.

To isolate the exercitant completely from his old language and immerse him in the new one, the *Exercises* rearticulates even the Word of God in Ignatian terms. Although several of the exercises focus on events recounted in the Gospels, Ignatius does not reproduce the original passages of Scripture, but instead summarizes them in his own words. His summaries include the major characters and events in each passage, along with three points for meditation, and in some cases narrative embellishments (for instance, he develops the Virgin Mary's character in more

detail than do the Four Evangelists) (Conrod 48, *Exx.* 299-301).<sup>43</sup> In this way, he disrupts the exercitant's entrenched habits of thinking and speaking about the Gospels, prompting him to approach them from a specific perspective and with a specific objective. For example, Ignatius's rendering of Christ summoning the Apostles directs the exercitant—who is presumably considering a commitment to religious life—toward both the nature of their vocations and the reasons for which Christ called them:

DEL LLAMAMIENTO DE LOS APÓSTOLES.

Primero. Tres vezes parece que son llamados San Pedro y Sant Andrés: 1º, a çierta noticia. Esto consta por Sant Johán en el primero capítulo; secundariamente, a seguir en alguna manera a Xpo con propósito de tornar a poseer lo que habían dexando, como dize S. Lucas en el capítulo quinto; terçiamente, para seguir para siempre a Xpo nuestro Señor: Sant Matheo en el 4º capítulo y S. Marco en el primero.

2º. Llamó a Philipo, como está en el primero capítulo de S. Johán, y a Matheo dize en el nono capítulo.

3º. Llamó a los otros apóstoles, de cuya especial vocación no haze mención el euan-gelio.

Y también tres otras cosas se an de considerar: la primera, cómo los apóstoles eran de ruda y baixa condición; la 2ª, la dignidad a la qual fueron tan suauemente llamados; la 3ª, los dones y gracias, por las quales fueron eleuados sobre todos los padres del nuevo y viejo testamento. (*Exx.* 275a-b)

Ignatius's editorializing is apparent even from this sparse description of events. His syntheses of Christ's calls to Peter and Andrew—to follow him “forever” and to reclaim something they have lost, none of which the Evangelists actually say—subtly remind exercitants that religious life offers a path to grace and eternal salvation, and his points for meditation emphasize that anyone, regardless of his station, can be worthy to walk it.<sup>44</sup> This rearticulation of the Gospels overwrites the exercitant's existing scriptural knowledge and encourages him to reconceptualize the text in Ignatian terms. The abridgements themselves constitute a kind of state simplification; they scrub the Scriptures of their local detail, distilling only the schematic information necessary to complete the assigned exercise. The three subpoints for meditation guarantee that all Jesuits extract the same messages from each passage, generating a shared understanding of the Gospels across the Society that can serve, like the *Exercises* themselves, as an anchor point for its standard language. The retreat obliges full immersion in the new language, translating all the exercitant's existing habits of articulating physical, emotional, and spiritual experiences into Jesuit terms to ensure their legibility to other members of the Society going forward.

This linguistic standardization aims to render every interior movement legible to any member of the Society. Through the shared vocabulary of discernment and the shared point of

<sup>43</sup> Conrod explains this choice as Baroque artifice: “Loyola initiates here a tradition ... of implementing the original story with narrative ornaments. When confronted with the minimalist style of Scriptures, his own style turns into an artifice, a fictional decoration, and consequently a deviation from the original message” (48).

<sup>44</sup> While Matthew and Mark agree that Peter and Andrew left their boats “straightaway” to follow Christ, neither assigns a temporal extension to the decision; the “para siempre” comes from Ignatius (Matt 4:18-20; Mark 1:16-18). By the same token, Luke does not show Peter and Andrew reclaiming something they have left, but rather obtaining something they never had: by his account, they have just brought in their boats after an unsuccessful night of fishing when Christ arrives to deliver a sermon, and they decide to follow him after he performs the miracle of filling their empty nets with fish (Luke 5:1-11).



reference of the Exercises, Ignatius aspires to total coverage of individual experience: any Jesuit should be able to give any other Jesuit a comprehensible account of any divine encounter or affective state. The fact that the *Exercises* frames the mystical encounters it facilitates in the Jesuits' standard language supports this goal by shaping the exercitant's inner experience according to the categories in which he will later need to externalize it.<sup>45</sup> In theory, this linguistic pre-framing of the mystical encounter sidesteps the violence that language usually does to inner experience—as Georges Bataille explains, forcing such a particular truth to conform to the inescapably general categories of language necessarily changes the content of the experience itself:

Experience is questioning (testing), in fever and anguish, what man knows of the facts of being. That in this fever, he has some apprehension, of whatever kind, he cannot say: 'I have seen this, what I have seen is this'; he cannot say: 'I have seen God, the absolute in the depths of the world'; he can only say, 'what I have seen escapes understanding,' and God, the absolute, the depths of the world are nothing if they are not categories of understanding. If I said decisively: 'I have seen God,' that which I have seen would change. In place of the inconceivable unknown—wildly free before me, leaving me wild and free before it—there would be a dead object and the thing of the theologian—to which the unknown would be subjugated. (9-10)

Ignatius, it would seem, avoids (or attempts to avoid) this dilemma by giving the exercitant the language necessary to articulate his inner experience before it even occurs. If all Jesuits' inner experience, because it is framed in Ignatius's standard language, unfolds within and therefore always already conforms to the Society's preexisting categories of knowledge, then it is always already legible, no matter its content.

Even still, as Ignatius himself finds on occasion, some divine encounters may slip through the cracks.<sup>46</sup> In the *Acta*, he struggles to articulate the content of certain visions, like one of Christ's humanity that he frequently experienced at Manresa: "Muchas veces ... veía con los ojos interiores la humanidad de Cristo, y la figura, que le parecía era como un cuerpo blanco, no muy grande ni muy pequeño, más no veía ninguna distinción de miembros" (III:29). O'Rourke Boyle takes the undifferentiated whiteness of Christ's body in this recurring vision as evidence of its opacity to Ignatius's understanding—or, in our terms, to his preexisting categories of discourse (*Acts* 93-94). Because this experience predates the *Exercises* and the Rules for Discernment, it does not unfold within the categories Ignatius introduced there; hence his continued inability, thirty years later, to describe the vision in detail. However, even in the *Spiritual Diary*, which postdates Ignatius's final revisions to the *Exercises* by four years, he twice finds that

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<sup>45</sup> This framing of the exercitant's experience from the top down is what Scott would call an institutional "project of legibility"; see the Introduction, pp. 10-11.

<sup>46</sup> Bataille draws attention to the combative relationship between inner experience and language: "Even though words drain almost all of our life from us—of this life there almost isn't a single twig that hasn't been seized, dragged, piled up by this restless, busy crowd of ants (the words)—it remains in us a silent, elusive, ungraspable part. In the region of words, of discourse, this part is unknown. It also usually eludes us. Only under certain conditions can we attain it or use it. These are vague inner movements, which do not depend on any object and have no purpose, states that, similar to others linked to the purity of the sky, to the fragrance of a room, are not motivated by anything definable, such that the language that, with respect to the others, has the sky, the room, to which it can refer—and which in this case directs attention toward what it grasps—is dispossessed, cannot say anything, limits itself to stealing these states away from attention (profiting from their lack of precision, it draws attention elsewhere right away)" (21).

sensations of divine proximity during prayer exceed his spiritual vocabulary. While the divine presence also inspires more familiar forms of consolation—tears, joy, warmth, speechlessness—the words of the prayers inspire a feeling of togetherness for which he has no words:

En las oraçiones al Padre me parecía que Jesú las presentaua o las aconpañava las que yo dezía, delante del Padre, con vn sentir o veer que no se puede así explicar.

Me parecía en cada palabra de nombrar a Dios, Dominus, etc., me penetraua tanto dentro, con vn acatamiento y humildad reuerençial admirable, que explicar pareçe que no se puede. (*Diary* ll.542-5, 1167-70)

Ignatius's use of the phrase "no se puede explicar" in what purports to be a private diary—he himself had the experience; to whom does he need to explain it?—suggests that his failure to render these visitations into language troubles him. Perhaps he is marking the need for additional vocabulary; perhaps he cannot tell how to interpret these sensations as expressions of God's will; or perhaps he is acknowledging, as much for himself as for anyone who might read these pages, that he attempted, albeit unsuccessfully, to fulfill the Jesuit imperative—his own imperative—to assimilate all his interior experiences to the standard language of the Society.<sup>47</sup> The fact of his effort is enough to reflect his submission to the institution that commands him to externalize his encounter with God; the mere existence of this mystic text is a testament to his obedience.

The *Exercises* immerse future Jesuits in the Society's standard language of discernment to prepare them for a career of externalizing their inner experiences to their confreres. Linguistic standardization and regular self-externalization grant Jesuit superiors access to the interior motions by which their subordinates reach their individual interpretations of God's will. The *Exercises*, along with the Society's other founding documents, incentivize the habit of self-externalization by linking it to the individual Jesuit's self-interest: he receives personal guidance, makes faster progress, and experiences greater consolation, and the continual correction of his faults helps him to espouse the virtue of obedience ever more perfectly and give ever-greater glory to God (*Examen* 4:8). Every time that he externalizes the inner experiences by which he discerns God's will, he grants himself the opportunity either to practice the abnegation of his own judgment in favor of his superior's, or to benefit the Society by what he has discerned.

The founding documents also remind Jesuits that individual self-externalization supports the good of the entire Society—and, by extension, the good of each member. The obligation to exteriorize one's inner experience holds for all levels of the Jesuit hierarchy. To ensure organizational unity and the health of the institute, each member should update his immediate superior on

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<sup>47</sup> Ribadeneyra observes in the *Vida* that many saints have publicized or written about "los regalos secretísimos de su espíritu y las dulçuras de sus almas y los favores admirables y divinos con que el Señor los alentava, sustentava y transformava en sí; los quales no pudiéramos saber, si ellos mismos no los huvieran publicado; y si el Señor que era liberal para con ellos, comunicándoseles con tanto secreto y suavidad, no lo hubiera sido para con nosotros, moviéndolos a publicar ellos mismos lo que de su poderosa mano, para bien suyo y nuestro, avían recebido" (Pro:7). Ribadeneyra suggests that God inspired these saints to externalize their experiences so that others might benefit from them. However, Ignatius's humility was such that, unlike other saints, he never publicized or wrote about his gifts. Instead, says Ribadeneyra, God inspired him to keep the *Spiritual Diary* so that future Jesuits might have a clearer understanding of his interior motions, the divine favors he received, and his vision for the Society: "Digo que le inspiró Dios a escribir esto, para que nosotros supiésemos los regalos y dones divinos con que era visitada aquella alma, y para que, quanto él más los encubría con su humildad, tanto más se descubriessen y manifestassen para nuestro provecho y exemplo" (IV.2:5).

his status and activities and request his guidance on all major decisions: particulars should consult their house superiors, house superiors their provincials, provincials the general, and the general his counselors. By the same token, superiors should take care to make their objectives clear to their subordinates before sending them out on assignments (O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 354-5; *Const.* VIII.1:3, VII.2:8). This mutual legibility facilitates the Jesuit union of hearts—the shared understanding of God's will and the ways in which the Society should realize it. Open communication between superiors and subordinates helps the former to deploy their personnel to the Society's best advantage and the latter to comprehend their role in supporting its mission:

En gran manera importa que los superiores tengan entera intelligentia de los inferiores, para que con ella los puedan mejor regir y gouernar, y mirando por ellos endereçarlos mejor in viam Domini. Así mismo quanto estuuieren más al cabo de todas cosas interiores y exteriores de los tales, tanto con mayor diligentia, amor y cuidado los podrán ayudar, y guardar sus ánimas de diuersos inconuenientes y peligros que adelante podrían prouenir. Más adelante como siempre deuemos ser preparados, conforme a la nuestra profesión y modo de proçeder, para discurrir por vnas partes y por otras del mundo, todas vezes que por el sumo pontífice nos fuere mandado o por el superior nuestro inmediato, para que se açierte en las tales misiones en el imbiar a vnos y no a otros, o a los vnos en vn cargo y a los otros en diuersos, no solo importa mucho, mas sumamente, que el superior tenga plena notitia de las inclinaciones y motions, y a qué defectos o peccados han seído y son más mouidos y inclinados los que están a su cargo, para según aquello endereçarlos a ellos mejor, no los poniendo fuera de su medida en mayores peligros o trabajos de los que en el Señor Nro. podrían amorosamente sufrir; y tambien porque guardando lo que oye en secreto, mejor pueda el superior ordenar y proueer lo que conuiene al cuerpo vniuersal de la Compañía. (*Examen* 4:34-35 73-75)

Knowledge of his subordinates' skills, strengths, and struggles helps each superior to distribute assignments—to staff the colleges, confessionals, courts, and missions under his jurisdiction—in whatever way best serves the Society's goals and God's glory. Each member, solely by his willingness to share his interior motions with his superior, helps to uphold the *Constitutions*, to prevent and resolve problems both individual and collective, to achieve the Society's ends, and to ensure its continued functioning. As ever, self-interest reinforces the incentive to self-externalization: the exposure of their interiority becomes a means by which individual Jesuits can promote the institute with which they are affiliated. The transparency of one's relationship with one's superior becomes a way to benefit not only the Society, but also the self.

#### THE SOCIETY OF JESUS AS INSTITUTIONAL SUBJECT

By way of conclusion, I'd like to examine the ways in which the same tension between autonomy and obedience that troubles the individual Jesuit's relationship with the Society reproduces itself on the institutional level, in the Society's relationship to the Church. Through its power to discern spirits, the Society can operate more or less autonomously from the hierarchical Church; it can set its own agenda, make its own decisions, and determine God's will without mediation. Like Jesuits in the mission field, it does not require oversight; it maintains a private relationship with God and a private understanding of his will. At the same time, it is bound by the divine virtue of obedience to God's representative on earth, the Holy See. Two of the Society's

most explicit (and most polemical) declarations of self-abnegation, the Fourth Vow of loyalty to the pope and the Rules for Thinking with the Church Militant, reflect the same conflict between autonomy and obedience that underlies the spiritual formation of each individual Jesuit.

In addition to their vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience, Jesuits may also make a fourth vow of service to the Holy See, which binds them to undertake any mission to which the pope assigns them, anywhere in the world, for God's greater glory. While the Fourth Vow is often held up as evidence of the outsized role that the papacy plays in the Society's ecclesiological vision, the *Constitutions* present it as a means to realize their missionary vocation and their principal mission "to help souls" (Worcester 4; O'Malley, *Saints* 113-14). Rather than demonstrating the Society's submission to the institutional Church, the Fourth Vow recruits the papacy's support for its own preexisting apostolic ends:

Mediante la summa y diuina gratia la promesa y uoto expreso que toda la Compañía con entera voluntad y satisfacción de sus ánimas hizo a Dios Nro. Criador y Sr. para obedecer a su vniuersal y summo vicario sin escusaçión alguna a maior Gloria diuina, para más y mejor laborar in agro dominico en el maior prouecho spiritual de las ánimas, mediante su diuino fauor y aiuda, ha seído para donde quiera que su santidad sentiere y juzgare para el tal effecto seer más conveniente o más neçesario imbiarnos, entre fieles o entre infieles, no entendiendo para algùn obispado o çiudad partcielar, o para ser en casa o en Compañía o en dirección de alguna persona o por algùn otro prouecho spiritual de monesterio o de otra cosa alguna particular; mas **conforme a nuestras intençiones y deseos, para ser esparzidos por diuersas y varias regiones.** Porque como fuésemos de diuersos reynos y prouincias, no sabiendo en qué regiones andar o parar, entre fieles o infieles, por no errar in via Domini, no siendo seguros adónde a Dios Nro. Sr. Más podríamos seruir y alabar mediante su gratia diuina; **hizimos la tal promesa y uoto, para que su santidad hiziese nuestra diuisión o misión a maior gloria de Dios Nro. Sr., conforme a nuestra promesa y intención** de discurrir por el mundo; y donde no hallásemos el fructo spiritual deseado en vna ciudad o en otra, para pasar en otra y en otra, y assí consequenter discurriendo por villas y por otras lugares particulares **a maior gloria de Dios Nro. Sr. y a maior prouecho spiritual de las ánimas.** (*Const.* VII.1:1, my emphases)

The word "Church" is conspicuously absent from the *Constitutions*' description of the Fourth Vow; the Jesuits "serve" and "labor for" God's glory alone. The repeated references to "our intentions," "our desires," and "our mission" suggest that, rather than submitting themselves to the Church's service in whatever ways it needs, the Jesuits are enlisting the pope's assistance with their own apostolic agenda to work "for the spiritual benefit of souls." The fact that the Society's superior general holds equivalent power to dispatch and recall members from missions at will reinforces this interpretation; the Jesuits submit to the pope's judgment not because of his authority over them, but because, as Christ's vicar and the earthly monarch of the Christian *res publica*, he has the broadest vision of Christendom and the best information about which souls need help and where (*Const.* VII.2:1; O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 289). The Jesuits' goal in requesting his direction is to deploy their missionary forces as effectively as possible. For this reason, they retain the right to relocate (as many times as necessary) if the assigned mission yields little spiritual fruit.<sup>48</sup>

<sup>48</sup> They also retain the right, like individual Jesuits out on mission, to make their own decisions and exercise their own judgment when their superior has insufficient time or information to issue orders. The *Constitutions* grant the superior the same power as the Holy See to dispatch Jesuits where he will because, in practice, the

The Fourth Vow marks above all the Society's commitment to a missionary rather than a monastic vocation, and it recruits the papacy's help in realizing that vocation more than it pledges loyalty or unrestricted obedience to the Holy See (O'Malley, *Saints* 156-57). This apparent gesture of obedience actually tends more toward the entrenchment of the Society's autonomy.<sup>49</sup>

The eighteen Rules for Thinking with the Church Militant appended to the *Exercises*, also frequently cited as proof of Ignatius's ultra-orthodoxy, similarly construe obedience to the hierarchical Church as a natural consequence of the Society's primary relationship to Christ.<sup>50</sup> The (in)famous Rule Thirteen does appear to promote blind submission to the Church's judgments, but in fact it argues that obedience to the Church, like obedience to one's superiors, is simply an extension of obedience to Christ himself: "Debemos siempre tener, para en todo acertar, que lo blanco que yo veo, creer que es negro, si la Yglesia hierárchica assí lo determina; creyendo que entre Xpo nuestro Señor, esposo, y la Yglesia, su esposa, es el mismo espíritu que nos gobierna y rige para la salud de nuestras ánimas, porque por el mismo Espíritu y Señor nuestro, que dio los diez mandamientos, es regida y gobernada nuestra sancta madre Yglesia" (*Exx.* 365). The seemingly Orwellian injunction to believe that white is black merely reiterates the Jesuit precept of total indifference to a superior's judgment. Just as individual Jesuits can prove their devotion to Christ by obeying their superiors as if they stood in his place, so the Society can prove its devotion to him by obeying the Church. The Jesuits owe loyalty to the Church not because of its

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Fourth Vow asks too much time and attention of the pope, and he exercises the prerogative too infrequently for their liking: "Mirando y deseando maior fructo spiritual de las ánimas a maior Gloria de Dios Nro. Sr. por más socorrerlas y con maior facilidad en muchas partes, y por maior seguridad y claridad de las nuestras, pareciéndonos mucho conveniente alcançamos y impetramos gratia de su santidad que el superior de la Compañía pudiese «inbiar» entre fieles christianos y también entre infieles, donde le pareçiese ser más expediente y maior seruiçio de Dios Nro. Sr. a qualesquiera de la Compañía, tamen estando allí o dondequiera que se hallasen, siempre a la disposición, ordenación y mandamiento de su santidad, conforme a la nuestra promesa" (*Const.* VII.2:1). The pope is too busy to send individual Jesuits on missions, so the superior general needs to have the same powers that he does in order to ensure that the Society actually fulfills its function. Of course, the general is still nominally subject to the pope's authority and judgment, but given how much less information the latter has about the Jesuits' mission activities, he intervenes only rarely.

<sup>49</sup> The Society's vow of obedience to the pope also protected its autonomy by establishing, in name, the Jesuits' fidelity to the hierarchical Church (Coupeau 37). In fact, direct obedience to the Holy See affirmed their exemption from episcopal authority and entitled them to sidestep the ecclesiastical hierarchy if and when the latter attempted to impede the realization of their apostolic aims. The Society's activities, like those of the mendicant orders, stood outside the scope of episcopal authority in many regards, and while Jesuits often relied on local bishops to support their missions and schools, they could go over church functionaries' heads when necessary (Worcester 5; O'Malley *Popes* 4-9). In the 1584 bull *Ascendente Domino*, Gregory XIII confirmed that members of the Society of Jesus owed obedience only to their own superiors and to the Holy See: "Deven obedecer en todo y por todo a sus superiores y prepósitos, y que son inmediatos y sujetos a esta Silla y exemptos totalmente de la jurisdicción de qualesquier Ordinarios y delegados y otros qualesquier juezes, como Nosotros por vigor destas nuestras presentes letras los eximimos" (*Vida* III.23:137). With the papacy as its only temporal superior, the Society can operate more or less autonomously in the ecclesiastical field.

<sup>50</sup> The English title is especially forceful; the Spanish is somewhat gentler: "Para el sentido verdadero que en la Yglesia militante debemos tener, se guarden las reglas siguientes." In keeping with this contrast, O'Malley suggests that the Rules, despite their common invocation as evidence of Ignatius's hardline orthodoxy, "for the most part are guidelines to pastoral practice, hardly theses for theological debate. Later commentators, Catholic and Protestant alike, have extolled or excoriated them as a specimen of hyper-orthodoxy when in fact they would have been accepted by most sixteenth-century Catholics as mainline" (*Saints* 100-1; for an example of this kind of hyper-orthodox interpretation, see Höpfl, p. 33). To this point, O'Rourke Boyle shows that several of the Rules were derived from the Canons of the Council of Sens (1528) ("Angels" 253-54).

inherent power or virtue, but only insofar as it represents the authority of their king.<sup>51</sup> Besides, the obligation to obey the Church shouldn't create conflict for the Society, since both institutions are "ruled and governed" by the same spirit: God himself (O'Rourke Boyle, "Angels" 254-55). As long as the Society has discerned its spirits correctly, its understanding of God's will should never differ from the Church's. However, in the same way that the individual Jesuit reserves the right to present his interpretation of God's will to his superior so long as the final decision remains in the latter's hands, so the Society reserves the right to argue its case to the Church.

During Ignatius's generalate, at least, the Society obeyed the Church and the Holy See in much the same way that the *Constitutions* enjoined Jesuits to obey their superiors. Ignatius negotiated forcefully—and successfully—with multiple popes, archbishops, emperors, and princes whenever he perceived them to threaten what he understood to be God's will for the Society (O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 310). For instance, despite the insistence of multiple popes, he adamantly refused to obligate the Jesuits to recite the liturgical Hours in common, which monks had to do, because it took too much time away from their ministries. They could serve the Lord more effectively by spending that time in his vineyard—teaching catechism, hearing confessions, preaching sermons, running classrooms, tending invalids, helping souls—than by singing (O'Malley, *Popes* 35, *Saints* 156-57, *First Jesuits* 53). Ignatius also contested both kings and popes in their attempts to elevate Jesuits to positions of ecclesiastical power, including prelaties, bishoprics, and even the cardinalate. He deployed every means at his disposal to prevent the formalization of these appointments: he requested continual masses and prayers from his colleagues at the Casa Professa in Rome; he wrote letters to influential allies of the Society; he visited several cardinals at their residences; he had long, tense interviews with various popes (Coupeau 38; Ribadeneyra III.15:59-64). To his mind, such promotions compromised the Society's ability to carry out God's will for several reasons. First, the obligation to reside in their dioceses would deny Jesuit prelates and bishops the mobility they needed to fulfill their monastic vocation, and to uphold the Fourth Vow. Second, regular promotions would deplete the modest ranks of the young Society, depriving it of its best and brightest members, inhibiting its growth, and limiting its reach both in Europe and overseas.

Worse still, the possibility of elevation to prestigious positions would contaminate the purity of new vocations to enter the Society; men might choose to become Jesuits out of personal ambition, rather than the fervent desire to serve God (Coupeau 38). Ignatius feared that direct involvement in the ecclesiastical hierarchy would wither the fruits of the Society's labor on the vine by choking its roots of poverty and humility with worldly temptations to wealth and power: "Secándosenos la pobreza y humildad, que son las rayzes ¿cómo no se secarán los frutos que en ella se sustentan? En grande peligro veo que nos ponen esta nueva planta, no querría que la codicia y ambición nos arranque todo lo que con la caridad y con el menosprecio del mundo hasta agora ha crecido" (Ribadeneyra III.15:60). Ignatius equates ecclesiastical leadership with loss of virtue; he assumes that men who have developed an antipathy to worldly things will inevitably

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<sup>51</sup> Rule Eighteen reinforces this point by emphasizing the obligation to obey not the Church, but God—tellingly, the word "Church" does not appear at all: "Dado que sobre todo se ha de estimar el mucho servir a Dios nuestro Señor por puro amor, debemos mucho alabar el temor de la su diuina maiestad; porque no solamente el temor filial es cosa pía y sanctissima, mas aun el temor seruil, donde otra cosa mejor o más vtil el hombre no alcance, ayuda mucho para salir del peccado mortal; y, salido, fácilmente viene al temor filial, que es todo acepto y grato a Dios nuestro Señor, por estar en vno con el amor diuino" (*Exx.* 370).

succumb to greed if made bishops or cardinals.<sup>52</sup> As a result, somewhat paradoxically, the Church is better served by the Society's autonomy than by its involvement. By operating independently from the ecclesiastical hierarchy, the Jesuits can help souls around the world; by joining its ranks, they stand to fall into disorganization, disobedience, and ruin. The costs to the Church, the Society, and the souls in their care far outweigh the benefits that a city might derive from having a Jesuit bishop—or, as Ignatius reportedly told Paul III when the latter tried to make his companion Claude Jay the bishop of Trieste, “pues es pastor de todos, que mire por todos, y no quiera sanar las llagas de los heridos hiriendo más a los sanos” (Ribadeneyra III.15:59).

Perhaps the most intriguing resemblance between the Jesuit as an individual subject of the Society and the Society as an institutional subject of the Church is the use of interiority as the basis for autonomy. Interiority is both the source and the site of each individual Jesuit's ability to discern God's will, insofar as he deciphers divine and demonic preferences from his own inner experience. The mandate to total obedience does not eliminate his freedom to exercise this ability; it only requires that he do so legibly, by externalizing the results to his superior in standard language for approval or amendment. As discussed, mutual legibility across the Society facilitates the alignment of wills necessary to realize the organization's agenda effectively. At the organizational level, the ultimate goal—the effective realization of the Society's agenda—remains the same, but the relationship between autonomy, interiority, and legibility changes.

The Society creates a kind of institutional interiority, a boundary delineating what falls inside and outside its domain, by insulating its members from non-Jesuit influences and controlling how and when they interact with non-Jesuits. This gesture of enclosure is at once inclusive and exclusive: by demarcating a limited sphere of control, the Society's leaders can maintain order more effectively among the members inside that sphere, while also protecting them from the disordering influences that lie outside it.<sup>53</sup> The logic of enclosure creates an association between internal space and order, and external space and disorder—hence Ignatius's fierce defense of the Society's regimented “way of proceeding” against the imposition of established ecclesiastical practices like chanting the divine office or accepting benefices (Galli 9-10; O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 310). The synonymy of internal space with order and external space with disorder reverses the incentive to legibility: self-externalization promotes the good order of the Society at the individual level, but threatens it at the institutional level. Hence, tautologically, the value of enclosure: the Society achieves greater control by encouraging its members to total legibility within its bounds, and also defends that control by discouraging injudicious acts of self-disclosure outside those bounds.

All of the Society's self-enclosing policies have this double valence of control and defense. For instance, exercitants' extreme isolation during their retreat encourages them to adopt the Jesuits' standard language, while also shielding them from the temptations and obligations that might threaten their vocation to religious life (*Exx.* 20). Novices remain similarly isolated during the period of probation; they cannot visit, speak to, or correspond with friends or relatives, in part to forge a deeper bond with God, the master of novices, and one another, and in part

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<sup>52</sup> Ignatius had good reason to worry about the corrupting influences of the episcopacy; the clergy in Spain and Italy during his lifetime commonly engaged in pluralism (holding multiple benefices in order to amass personal fortunes), nonresidence (living outside their dioceses and paying local priests—whose levels of competence and education varied widely—to administer sacraments for them), and nepotism (appointing friends and family members to benefices they had obtained but could not hold) (Homza, *Authority* 114-6).

<sup>53</sup> In other words, the Society establishes what de Certeau calls its “proper” place of operations (*Practice* 35-36); see the Introduction, p. 7.

because their familiars might undermine their still-tenuous commitment to the Society (*Const.* III.2:1). They are also forbidden from interacting with members of other religious orders, leaving the professed house without a superior's permission, traveling the streets unaccompanied, or speaking to any non-Jesuits: "Ninguna salga de casa ni menos coma fuera della, sino con licentia del superior, la qual en el tiempo de la probación no se conçederá sino por causas especiales alguna vez y con compañía segura a juicio del superior. Y por las mesmas causas tanpoco es bien que vayan a la portería ni a la yglesia, adonde concurre gente de fuera a los diuinos officios ni al sermón; o si salen, sea con quien mire por ellos, no consintiendo que hablen a ninguno de fuera" (*Const.* III.2:2). This insulation from the outside world enhances the novices' fluency in the Society's standard language and shields them from temptations, but it also prevents them from sharing their experiences—and the goings-on at the professed house—with any non-Jesuits who might be inclined to gossip. The proscription against conversing with members of other orders, some of whom maintained fierce rivalries with the Society and denounced the discernment of spirits as heresy, is surely a defensive maneuver (Pavone 31).

So too is the strategic circulation and censorship of Jesuit correspondence from the overseas missions. The *Constitutions* mandate that the provincials relay reports from their subordinates to the general at regular intervals to update him on the success of their ministries, to request guidance about personnel problems, local politics, or evangelical strategy, and to reinforce the alignment of wills (IX.6:2-3). However, Ignatius quickly recognized the propagandistic value of these missives both inside and outside the Society, and encouraged his missionaries to leave humility aside when describing the fruits of their ministries. To attract wider interest, he also requested that they include information about local culture and customs, flora and fauna, and geography (O'Malley, *Saints* 117-18). These letters were read at table in the Jesuit houses to fan the brothers' missionary zeal, and circulated to allies and benefactors to "silence enemies, win friends, [and] attract recruits" (O'Malley, *First Jesuits* 63). However, because they needed to serve both practical and propagandistic purposes, Jesuit superiors often expurgated the missionaries' complaints and concerns before allowing the letters to circulate: "La correspondencia era expurgada de todas las noticias que daban cuenta—además de los éxitos—de las dificultades encontradas por los misioneros. Existían, por lo tanto, dos tipos de correspondencia: el primero reservado a la lectura interna (*Litteræ quadrimestres*); el segundo, a ser *tout court* instrumento de propaganda" (Pavone 80-81). The letters served as instruments of both control and defense; they preserved institutional alignment, but also shielded the Society's reputation from its detractors and allowed Jesuit leaders to make policies and resolve problems without outside interference.

The Society also took advantage of the papal privileges of *correctio fraterna* and absolution *in foro conscientiae* to keep internal problems out of the public eye. The former entitled members of religious orders to confess and atone for certain sins privately, with their confessors, rather than having to submit to public punishment. The Jesuits were not the only order to hold this privilege, but they were one of the very few to actually exercise it; in many religious orders a member who sinned was chastised publicly before his brethren (or denounced to an inquisitorial tribunal) first, and directed to make private restitution second (Tutino 14).<sup>54</sup> The latter privilege entitled Jesuit priests specifically to absolve anyone, including readers of prohibited books, from the sin of heresy. As a result, Jesuit confessors could sidestep the Inquisition when they so chose, and no one, not even bishops, could override them (Pavone 38-39; Tutino 19; O'Malley, *First*

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<sup>54</sup> The Jesuits and their friends did get in trouble for correcting sins like occult heresy fraternally rather than publicly; their ally Bartolomé Carranza, then the archbishop of Toledo, was denounced to the Spanish Inquisition for that reason, as was one of the fathers at the College of Monterrey (Tutino 14, Pavone 57).



*Jesuits* 143-44). These privileges helped the Society to control its members while also defending its public image; Jesuits could correct and punishing their brothers' sins and errors without exposing instances of heresy or impropriety to the public.

By enclosing upon itself in this way, the Society erects the same kind of barrier around its inner workings that Jesuit superiors encounter in their subordinates; the only information to which the Pope (or the public) gains access is, in theory, that which the Society chooses to externalize—and the incentives to total self-externalization that the Society imposes at the individual level do not exist at the institutional level. The Society's equivalent of mystical experience—its collective assessment of God's will for the organization, distilled from and corroborated by its ranks of discerners of spirits—does not always become a mystic text. Like de Certeau's mystic, and like Ignatius himself, the Society stands *beside* rather than *inside* the institutional Church. It has its own immediate methods for accessing the will of God; its choices and actions are authorized by the same power. It acknowledges and owes obedience to the same sovereigns: the Holy See, and God himself. The *Constitutions* make clear that the bond uniting all Jesuits is not service to the Church, nor even the Catholic faith, but rather the mutual love of God: “Para la unión de los miembros entre sí y con la cabeza, el vínculo principal es el del amor de Dios N. S., porque estando el superior y los inferiores unidos con su divina y suma bondad, se unirán muy fácilmente entre sí mismos por el mismo amor que se extenderá a todos próximos, en special al cuerpo de la Compañía” (VIII.3:1). The Jesuit's first allegiance is to God, not to the Church. The *Exercises*' injunction to let the Creator deal directly with his creature makes this fact abundantly clear. The deeply personal bond that the exercitant forms with God during those thirty days is forged not through the sacraments, nor collective prayer, nor the mediation of the director, but through the extended mystical encounters that arise from meditation, the times of election, and the discernment of spirits. As Höpfl puts it, the *Exercises* concede that “the Christian life is lived in intimate intercourse with the institutional Church, but it is never suggested that individuals should lose themselves in the collective life of Christians. Even the member of the Society of Jesus remains an individual, who *makes* his will identical with that of his superiors, not with his brethren” (32). The Society supports, collaborates with, and even obeys the Church—but only insofar as its autonomy to serve God as it wills remains uncompromised.

Of course, all these strategies were much more effective in theory than in practice. Despite Ignatius's best efforts to establish alignment of wills and union of hearts, multiple crises of insubordination rocked the Society in its first decades. Some of Ignatius's original companions accused him of despotism; the first Portuguese provincial, Simão Rodrigues, encouraged his subordinates to prioritize asceticism and contemplation over ministry; a faction of Spanish separatists tried to oust the fifth general, Claudio Aquaviva, and replace him with someone who would allow the provinces to elect their own generals (Émonet 97; Županov 142-49; O'Malley, *Popes* 46-49). While enclosure and selective self-externalization did win the Jesuits many friends and benefactors, they did little to silence the many enemies whose opposition to and suspicion of the Jesuit way of proceeding remained strident for centuries. Some, like the vitriolic Dominican theologian Melchior Cano, found fault with Jesuit theology, arguing that it wandered dangerously close to Illuminist heresy. Others, like the stern archbishop of Toledo Juan Martínez de Silíceo, objected to the sense of exceptionalism that the Jesuits derived from the privileges and exemptions that the Holy See had bestowed upon their young order. Still others, like the ultra-orthodox cardinal Giampetro Carafa, later Pope Paul IV, bore personal grudges against members of the Society's leadership, or felt suspicious of the disproportionate number of Iberians among its early members, or resisted the Jesuit policy of accepting new Christians (O'Malley, *First*

*Jesuits* 292-95; *Popes* 32). The Society's strategy of self-enclosure yielded neither a perfect alignment of wills within nor a perfect defense against attacks from without. The fact that anti-Jesuit sentiment had reached such a pitch by the 1760s that multiple European nations ordered the Society to withdraw from their territories, abandon its schools and missions, and relinquish its properties, certainly testifies to that fact.

And yet. By the time of its official suppression in 1773, the Society had grown from ten members to more than 22,500. The Jesuits had seen six saints canonized from among their number.<sup>55</sup> They were operating more than 700 schools in dozens of countries. And they still had enough allies, in enough places, to finagle an order of restoration from the papacy just three decades after their suppression (O'Malley, *Popes* 72-73, 93). Where did they derive this seemingly miraculous power of self-renewal? Was it their ability to make, in any circumstance, the mystical experience they needed to discern God's will for them? Was it the *Spiritual Exercises*, bringing generation after generation of Jesuits back to Ignatius's original principles, just as Machiavelli recommended? Whatever the source, clearly they were on to something.

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<sup>55</sup> Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier, 1622; Francisco de Borja, 1670; Aloysius Gonzaga and Stanislaus Kostka, 1726; John Francis Regis, 1737 (*Book of Saints* 33, 246-47, 304, 342, 549).

### Chapter 3

## Sacramental confession and institutional strategy in sixteenth-century Spain and Peru

Conversion, like conquest, can ... be a process of crossing over into the domain—territorial, emotional, religious, or cultural—of someone else and claiming it as one's own. Such a claim can entail not only the annexation of the other's possessions but, equally significant, the restructuring of his or her desires as well. Affective bonds are thus forged within a hierarchy of interests. For a conqueror consolidates his position over the people he has conquered to the degree that he persuades them to defer to his interests—converts them to the view that they serve their own interests when they serve someone else's. To be converted in this sense is to give in by giving up what one wants in favor of the wants of someone else.

Vicente Rafael, *Contracting Colonialism* ix

Si el rey quería tener súbditos debía primero convertirlos.

Juan Carlos Estenssoro Fuchs, *Del paganismo a la santidad* 16

In their 1577 annual letter to the Society's secretary in Rome, the Jesuits in Peru exult over their many evangelical successes among the indigenous Andeans, and in particular over the enthusiasm that the latter have shown for the sacrament of confession. For example, father Alonso Barzana, writing from the central Andean highlands, recounts that during his stay in the village of Guancor, "hizieronse gran suma de confesiones generales assi de caciques como de otras gentes, y el cacique mayor de todos aquellos pueblos y su muger gastaron quatro dias en confesarse muy de veras y con muchas lagrimas" (21r). Barzana regards the participation of so many community leaders as especially auspicious, because their conversion to Christianity will facilitate the Christianization of the Indians they oversee. Brother Bartolomé de Santiago reports similar success with the sacrament in Bracamoros, in northeast Peru, where just before his arrival the Indians in the nearby village of Tonton had killed a missionary for his ill treatment of them. A few Spaniards had died in the ensuing mêlée and their neighbors were eager for revenge, but the Jesuit priests diffused the situation by asking everyone involved to come to confession: "Casi todos sin excepcion se confessaron y las mas confessionse generales y publicamente en la iglesia se pidieron perdon y Reconciliaron y abraçaron vnos a otros combidandose a sus casas" (22r). By encouraging all the combatants, both Spanish and Andean, to reflect on their own misdeeds, the missionaries effected a reconciliation between the two communities. The sacrament also has a bracing effect on many of the indigenous women in Bracamoros; after confessing their sins to brother Santiago, they "resistian varonilmente" when propositioned for sexual favors (22r).

Provincial superior José de Acosta adds that the Indians in Lima derive such benefit and consolation from confession that they consider it a kind of medicine: “Quando se sienten enfermos y con algun peligro . . . tienen por persuacion que para cobrar la salud corporal es medio muy cierto el acudir de todo coraçon al sacramento de la penitencia, y con effecto se ha uisto muchas vezes conualecer luego y sanar con este sacramento” (19v). Their eagerness to perform the prescribed penances has brought about an “exemplar mudança” in their behavior and customs (19v).

These starry-eyed reports on the sacrament’s appeal to and effectiveness among indigenous Andeans help to explain Acosta’s rather bold assertion in *De procuranda indorum salute*, his 1579 treatise on American evangelization, that the only tools the missionary needs in the field are a catechism and a confessional manual, written in Spanish and the relevant Indian language (V.14 568). While Acosta is sharply critical of the Indians’ current state of life—their lack of civility, their servile condition, their limited wit, their immodest habits—his knowledge of natural philosophy and his experience in the mission field have convinced him that these customs result from nurture, not nature: “La incapacidad de ingenio y fiereza de costumbres de los indios no proviene tanto del influjo del nacimiento o la estirpe, o del aire nativo, quanto de la prolongada educación y del género de vida no muy desemejante al de las bestias” (I.8 412). The Indians possess the same capacity for civility, nobility, prudence, and modesty that Spaniards do, and to realize it all they need is a systematic education in Spanish and Christian culture. Hence the catechism and the confessional manual; by teaching indigenous Andeans to recognize and to confess their sins, Acosta suggests, the missionary can effect the “exemplar mudança” of acculturating them to Spanish and Christian norms, while also enforcing and reinforcing their subjection to Spanish colonial power.

Sacramental confession already performed similar functions of cultural homogenization and social control in Catholic Europe. Thomas Tentler has argued that, from the medieval period forward, the sacrament encouraged conformity to Church rules and Christian behavioral norms by inducing penitents to feel guilt and anxiety about their transgressions—guilt and anxiety that only confession could alleviate (*xiii*). In this way, confessors extended and fine-tuned the reach of institutional power: they could intervene at the individual level, tailoring the questions they asked and the penances they assigned to each penitent’s particular proclivities and transgressions. The confessional interrogation is a pedagogical as well as a disciplinary exercise—the penitent has to be taught to articulate her sins in a way that the confessor can understand. For this reason, confessors usually conduct their interrogations according to Church-sanctioned series of rules or vices like the Ten Commandments or the seven deadly sins, with which the penitent may already be familiar (Kidder 29-30, Tentler 135-36). Over time, the penitent learns to express her sinful thoughts and actions in the same terms that the confessor uses; she learns to organize her experience according to the Church’s categories of sin. The penitent’s internalization of the institution’s categories has important effects both inside and outside the confessional: it renders her confession more intelligible to the confessor, insofar as they use the same terminology, but it also enables her to examine and to police her own behavior in the same way that her confessor would, whether or not he is watching.

Through these imperatives to regular confession and self-policing according to its categories of sin, the Church implements what Michel de Certeau calls an institutional “strategy:” an effort to control its subject population through a situated exercise of power.<sup>1</sup> In *The Practice of Everyday Life*, de Certeau explains that institutional actors like businesses, states, and churches

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<sup>1</sup> For more on the Certeaulian strategy, see the Introduction, p. 5.

attempt to perpetuate their power by designating a place “proper” to their operations—in the case of confession, the individual Christian’s conscience (*Practice 35-36*). The designation of its proper place of intervention enables the institution to establish and maintain its power over time in three ways. First, it allows the institution to plan and prepare future actions. By inducing the penitent to feel guilt and anxiety around her sins, and by mandating that she disclose those sins to her confessor at least once a year, sacramental confession ensures that the space of her conscience will be both available and amenable to future interventions by the Church.

Second, the designation of a proper place of intervention allows the institution to master that place through panoptical supervision; observing all the activities that occur within its domain grants the institution the ability to control them, at least to some extent (*Practice 36*). Sacramental confession achieves panoptical supervision of the individual conscience through the requirement of complete confession, which stipulates that if the penitent neglects to disclose even a single sin to her confessor, she cannot be absolved. This requirement seeks to grant the Church unlimited access to and control over the penitent’s conscience not just during confession, but at all times. Through the expectations of self-examination and self-policing mentioned above, the Church effectively recruits the penitent to its project of supervision, prompting her to reproduce the confessor’s gaze within herself and thereby significantly expanding its capacity for surveillance and control. Third, designating a proper place of intervention creates a positive feedback loop of power and knowledge. By exercising its power over its domain, the institution acquires knowledge that helps it to refine and reinforce the exercise of that power (*Practice 36*). The mandates to annual and complete confession enable Church representatives to collect information not only about common sins and misconceptions, but also about cultural habits, fiscal practices, and political attitudes that might lead to sin (or otherwise contravene Church interests)—and to regulate those sinful tendencies in the same space of the individual conscience.

In this chapter, I suggest that the strategy of sacramental confession works to maintain Spanish imperial hegemony—to reinforce Christian norms and consolidate obedience to the current political-cultural regime. In Hernán Vidal’s definition, “imperial hegemony” comprises the military, economic, and ideologically normative pressures an imperial order exerts upon its subjects “to preserve security within the national territory and abroad” (28). In the early modern Spanish Empire, where, according to Irene Silverblatt, Catholicism comprises a “nationalist” or imperialist ideology, the preservation of security is a joint project of Crown and Church (6-7). The safeguarding of religious orthodoxy constitutes a form of law enforcement; it protects the State from internal enemies like conversos and moriscos, but also from external enemies like pagans and Protestants. An enforcing body like the Inquisition is thus a political operation as much as a religious one: it falls under the jurisdiction of the Spanish Crown rather than the Holy See, and it justifies its actions not upon the defense of the faith, but upon the public good and the preservation of state security (Silverblatt 5-6, 10-11). This slippage between the spiritual and the political, between “defense of the faith” and “upholding the law,” manifests itself in many areas of civil and ecclesiastical activity throughout the Empire—in the term *reyes católicos*, for instance; in the original conquistadors’ calling themselves “cristianos” rather than “españoles;” in the King’s ability to draft missionaries into civil service as ethnographers, tax assessors, and viceregal watchdogs; and in the confessor’s power to interrogate and punish behaviors that run counter to imperial interests as sins (Silverblatt 138; Friede 150, 156-57).

Religious homogenization and political compliance were two such interests. On the Peninsula, the Habsburgs pursued an aggressive program of ideological normalization to manage the threat of recidivism in *converso* and *morisco* communities, the rapid spread of Protestantism in

neighboring territories, and the explosion of interest in interior spirituality (Vidal 32-36). In colonial Peru, the interests of the Church were tightly bound up with those of the Viceroyalty, whose presence was only justified by Spain's right to evangelize the Andean peoples. Converting the Indians to Christianity went hand in hand with converting them into a compliant subject population and a productive labor force. In both Spain and Peru, confession allowed confessors to enforce these programs of Christianization and normalization on an individual level, compelling the penitent's submission to imperial authority on pain of eternal damnation.<sup>2</sup> By re-encoding political and economic activities like perjury, insubordination, tax evasion, and price fixing as sins, they could discourage behaviors counter to the interests of the imperial regime even as they taught doctrine and stamped out idolatry and superstition. Teaching individual penitents the categories of sin also helped to install practices of self-policing and community policing, to ensure compliance even in the absence of a priest's supervision.

As Ines Županov has observed, "while it is widely accepted that the sacrament of penance was closely connected with social control in Europe, the way in which it combined social discipline with the missionary and colonial situation has only recently been taken up by mission historians for Mexico, China, Peru, etc." (427-28). With this point in mind, I intend to argue first that the strategy of sacramental confession sought to preserve imperial hegemony in peninsular Spain specifically by enlisting penitents in their own surveillance—by teaching them to internalize the Church's categories of sin and to police their individual thoughts and actions according to those categories. Through an analysis of two of sixteenth-century Spain's most prominent confessional manuals, Martín de Azpilcueta's *Manual de confesores y penitents* (1549) and fray Luís de Granada's *Guía de pecadores* (1556), I will show that sacramental confession as practiced on the Peninsula has three major effects on the penitent: to feel guilt and fear about offending God; to avoid offending him by internalizing the Church's laws and regulating her behavior according to them; and to comply with any imperial norms and interests that can be articulated in terms of sin.

Second, I will argue that the Church of Peru utilized these three effects of the sacrament to assimilate indigenous subjects to Spanish colonial rule. As on the Peninsula, confession encourages indigenous penitents to internalize not only the Church's categories of sin, but also Spanish and Christian cultural norms and the financial and political interests of the dominant regime. While Serge Gruzinski and J. Jorge Klor de Alva have convincingly shown that sacramental confession served similar functions among the Nahuas of New Spain, I focus specifically on Peru because the tools and instructions for the acculturation of indigenous subjects come directly from the ecclesiastical province—that is, from the institution itself. Although many of the confessional manuals that circulated in New Spain received provincial approval, they were authored by individual missionaries. By contrast, the only manual approved for use in sixteenth-century

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<sup>2</sup> See p. 130 below; in the half-century following the conquest of Peru, the Church's access to the indigenous penitent's conscience was, in fact, quite limited: few indigenous Andeans encountered priests more than once or twice a year, and particularly in the first two decades the Spanish missionaries' lack of linguistic facility meant that the confessions that did occur were rudimentary at best (Mills, "Bad Christians" 186; Estenssoro Fuchs 32). However, by the late sixteenth century, confession had become rather difficult for indigenous Andeans to avoid, and most fulfilled their annual requirement. Whether their confessions accurately represented their sins is another question; per Silverblatt, "resigned (realistically) to the powers of the colonial state and the great importance attributed to yearly confession, Indians creatively discharged their duties. Curacas and native ministers, working in concert, told their ayllu-mates to confess 'Catholic sins'—like eating meat on Friday, not going to mass, having premarital sex—to their parish priests. The joke was that these 'offenses' were not sins in Andean eyes" (201).

Peru, the *Doctrina christiana y catecismo para instrucción de indios* (1584-1585), was composed by a provincial council that the Archbishop of Lima convoked explicitly for that purpose, and as such constitutes a textual manifestation of the Church's institutional strategy in Peru (Estenssoro Fuchs 28). Through an examination of the texts that comprise the manual—the *Doctrina christiana*, or catechism; the *Tercero catecismo*, or collection of sermons; and above all the *Confessionario*—I will show that the Church of Peru uses confession to discourage not only Andean social, political, and economic customs, but also all behaviors counter to the financial and political interests of the colonial regime, by re-encoding them as sins. In this way, the Church aims to transform indigenous penitents into compliant subjects of Spanish colonial power.

#### SELF-POLICING ON THE PENINSULA

In early modern Spain, sacramental confession serves as a powerful tool of social discipline and control; confessors use their penitents' fear and guilt about offending a generous God to compel them to conform to Church-endorsed behavioral norms, whether social, political, or economic (Tentler *xiii*).<sup>3</sup> The practice of confession helps to regulate the penitent's behavior by teaching her what constitutes a sin according to the Church. She acquires this knowledge from her confessor, who analyzes her behavior according to Church-sanctioned series of vices, virtues, counsels, or commandments. Regardless of the format of the interrogation, it is the penitent's responsibility to make a complete and intelligible confession of her sins: concealing, overlooking, or muddling even one will invalidate the entire confession and subsequent absolution (Azpilcueta IX:11 36). Confessional manuals like Azpilcueta's *Manual de confesores* and fray Luís's *Guía de pecadores* help the penitent to prepare for confession by providing definitions and examples of each category of sin, so that she can conduct a preliminary self-examination that resembles the interrogation her confessor will perform. The desire to eliminate her guilt motivates her to internalize these categories of sin and police her behavior for transgressions, so that she can either reconcile herself to God by making a complete confession, or maintain her relationship with God by avoiding sins in the first place. The Church, in turn, can use this mechanism of self-regulation to encourage penitents to uphold imperial interests by identifying behaviors that contravene those interests as sins. By examining the ways in which the *Manual de confesores* and the *Guía de pecadores* instill fear and guilt about offending God, encourage self-examination and self-policing, and promote imperial hegemony, we'll see that confessional practices in sixteenth-century Spain aim to establish a homogenous and compliant population, in which subjects assess their own behavior according to the Church's categories of sin, and feel guilt for their transgressions whether or not a representative of spiritual authority is watching.

In the most basic terms, the sacrament of reconciliation (also called penance or confession) is an "ecclesiastical ritual to restore baptized Christians who have committed serious sins,

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<sup>3</sup> The Augustinian model of confession—for what is a study of Christian confession without a mention of St. Augustine?—reflects the penitent's desire to know God, and to be reconciled to him through that knowledge. Much like the colloquia and meditations of Ignatius's *Spiritual Exercises*, discussed in the previous chapter, Augustinian confession is a plea for the sovereign's mercy in hopes of a response; according to Chloë Taylor, Augustine "does not seek throughout his *Confessions* to know or to divulge *himself*, but rather to know *God* and to praise him. Augustine longs to know God with a desperation which matches the fascination that the modern subject has for knowing herself, and throughout the text he cries out to God to reveal Himself. Unlike almost every modern confessional subject, Augustine does not speak of his own silence or of having been silenced, but rather laments again and again *the silence of God*, and implores *Him* to speak, while questioning again and again his own right to speak and the pointlessness of this speech" (40).

fallen from grace and forfeited their right to full participation in the body of the faithful” (Tentler 3). This ritual is comprised of four elements that persist from the first centuries of the Christian church through the early modern period: contrition for one’s sins; an explicit confession of those sins; the performance of penitential exercises to atone for them; and the pronouncement of absolution by a priest.<sup>4</sup> Christian confession originated with the fear of postbaptismal sin, which in the early church caused converts and catechumens to delay baptism until just before death in order to maximize their chances of eternal salvation. During the second century, a process emerged for forgiving major sins and reconciling sinners to the community of the faithful. This process, called “canonical penance,” was a grueling and humiliating experience; to achieve reconciliation, penitents had to make public declarations of sin, observe extreme austerities, and relinquish their rights to marry, join the clergy, and perform military service (Kidder 12-16, Tentler 4-6). In the early fifth century, monastic communities developed a practice of private confession in which young devotees would recount their sins and spiritual struggles to an elder. In the monastic model, public humiliation gives way to self-examination; rather than submit to the judgment of the congregation, the sinner passes judgment upon himself. The spiritual novice learns the art of self-examination through the act of confessing: he articulates his thoughts, actions, and desires to his spiritual master, who then shows him how to identify, categorize, and interpret the sins among them. Through confession, the master instructs his disciple in what Foucault calls a “hermeneutics of sin”—he shows the disciple how to reproduce the analytical gaze of authority for and within himself (“Christianity” 221-22). With each confession, the disciple’s skills of surveillance, categorization, and interpretation grown stronger and subtler, until he can take on disciples of his own. This process aims not at spiritual autonomy, but rather at spiritual health through permanent discipline; through continual self-scrutiny and humble submission to the master’s judgment, the soul is continually cured of the ills of sin (Taylor 22-23).

During the Middle Ages, the Church gradually incorporated the monastic practices of self-examination and spiritual guidance into the lay version of the sacrament, officially adopting both private confession and private penance in the thirteenth century (Kidder 43-49, Bossy 22). The transition from public to private began in sixth-century Ireland, where priests allowed penitents to make reconciliation as often as desired, and dispensed with the lifelong restrictions on marriage, clerical office, and military service. In the seventh century, Anglo-Saxon missionary monks introduced this model of reconciliation to the European continent, where it flourished for the next five hundred years (Taylor 47-49). Kidder suggests that the rapid growth in the popularity of lay confession between the seventh and twelfth centuries reflects “the conviction among Christians that they stood in need of repeated, ongoing repentance. Like a patient seeking out a physician, Christians consulted with confessors concerning their moral maladies” (31). The fear of public humiliation gave way to fears of spiritual illness and eternal damnation, which confession alleviated with its promises of personal spiritual growth and reconciliation to God.

As confession became a larger part of the lay Christian’s spiritual life—and her priest’s professional responsibility—the Church took steps to standardize its practice. The ecumenical councils of the twelfth and thirteenth centuries undertook a general reform of the sacrament: the Second Lateran Council (1139) stipulated that only bishops and priests could impose penance for

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<sup>4</sup> N.B., the practice of confessing one’s sins to an authority figure is not specific to Christianity; several Greek and pre-Christian Roman philosophers promoted the examination of conscience and the reciting of one’s thoughts and actions to a spiritual or philosophical master (Taylor 13-14). Nor is it specific to Europe; confessional rituals predated the arrival of European missionaries in both South America and East Asia (Taylor 13-14; Estenssoro Fuchs 143; Harrison, *Sin* 50-51).



lay Christians; Lateran III (1179) generated four works on theology and canon law to educate clerics who heard confessions; and Lateran IV (1215) made confession an annual requirement for all baptized Christians (Harrison, *Sin* 4-5). The council's Canon 21 affirms that

all the faithful of both sexes shall after they have reached the age of discretion faithfully confess all their sins at least once a year to their own (parish) priest and perform to the best of their ability the penance imposed, receiving reverently at least at Easter the sacrament of the Eucharist, ... otherwise they shall be cut off from the Church (excommunicated) during life and deprived of Christian burial in death. Wherefore, let this salutary decree be published frequently in the churches, that no one may find in the plea of ignorance a shadow of excuse. ("Fourth Lateran Council")

Canon 21 formally clericalizes private confession, making the disclosure of one's sins to one's parish priest the only available means to God's forgiveness. Either penitents go through the Church to achieve reconciliation, or they lose all hope of salvation. The clericalization of private confession allows the Church to encourage and even facilitate each individual Christian's relationship with God while also supervising her expressions of devotion; Thomas Tentler explains that in fact Canon 21 "was originally designed as a disciplinary canon to allow pastors to know their parishioners and watch for heresy" (22). At least in theory, it is both a corrective and a preventative measure. Because private confession allows for more individual attention and more personalized guidance, each Christian can obtain a better understanding of the demands of the faith according to her specific circumstances, capacities, and status.

The success of this measure is somewhat difficult to determine. In practice, very few late-medieval and early modern lay Christians enjoyed such intimate and caring relationships with their confessors. Most confessed only once a year, and many waited until the last minute to do so: during the week before Easter, some parish priests heard as many as three hundred confessions a day. Between the noise and the crowds, the priest could only spend two or three minutes on each confession, and could not guarantee the penitent's privacy. Sometimes priests gave up and led the crowd in a general confession, in which the penitents recited a declaration of the most common sins and then received absolution *en masse* (Taylor 53-54; Harrison, *Sin* 5-6). In early sixteenth-century Spain, popular resistance to regular confession persisted despite the threat of excommunication. Through trials of *conversos* and *alumbrados* in the first decades of the 1500s, the Inquisition discovered that many Christians had little knowledge of the basic tenets of the faith, and that in general they distrusted the clergy because of the latter's licentious behavior (Harrison, *Sin* 8-9). However, things seem to have changed by century's end; according to the formal questionnaire on religious practices that Philip's royal chroniclers sent to all the towns and villages of New Castile between 1575 and 1580, most Castilians knew the major prayers by memory and made their annual confessions each year at Lent, though often in a fairly perfunctory manner, and not always with their parish priest (Christian, Jr. 141-42).<sup>5</sup>

The formal clericalization of confession placed a greater burden of knowledge of parish priests, who needed to be able to recognize and categorize a wide variety of sins in order to carry out their new duties effectively. As a result, confessional manuals exploded in popularity in the

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<sup>5</sup> For more on Philip's questionnaire, see the Introduction, pp. 1-3, 7-8, and 10-11.

late Middle Ages.<sup>6</sup> The Irish monks of the sixth century first developed these manuals—long lists of sins and their corresponding penances, organized by category—to support confessors in guiding and correcting their penitents (Kidder 26-27). By the early fifteenth century, confessional manuals were circulating widely throughout western Europe, and with the emergence of the printing press, they reached the hands of the laity, where they achieved what Tentler calls “astonishing” popularity (28). Given their utility to early modern penitents, however, perhaps their popularity is not so astonishing; they provided a ready-made hermeneutics of sin, helping lay Christians approximate the labyrinthine categories of sin in anticipation of their annual encounters with spiritual authority. The two sixteenth-century Spanish manuals under analysis here certainly reinforce that claim: by the early seventeenth century, Azpilcueta’s *Manual de confesores* had run to 81 editions, and fray Luís’s *Guía de pecadores* had been translated and sold to wide acclaim throughout Protestant and Catholic Europe, as well as in the Andes (Muñoz *xxii-iii*, Fernández 186 n.3, Guaman Poma 31.926). An analysis of these two manuals, so representative of their genre, will illuminate the ways in which the practice of sacramental confession in sixteenth-century Spain aims to establish a homogenous and compliant population whose subjects police their own behavior according to the Church’s categories of sin.

The manuals show that confession works strategically to perpetuate the current regime’s power over its subject population. First, confession secures the space of the penitent’s conscience for future interventions by inspiring a psychological need for the sacrament beyond the fulfillment of her Lenten obligation—by linking the commission of sin with spiritual illness, shame and guilt, and alienation from God, and by presenting confession and absolution as the cures for these ills. Second, it establishes panoptical surveillance over the space of her conscience through the requirement of complete confession. By obligating the penitent to memorize the Church’s categories of sin, to examine her own thoughts and actions for instances of sin, and to disclose all of those instances to her confessor, sacramental confession enlists her in the Church’s projects of spiritual supervision and enforcement. Third, it utilizes this power over the penitent’s conscience to protect and promote imperial interests, both by detecting instances of dissidence and disobedience and by punishing them as sins. In teaching penitents about the consequences and manifestations of sin, sacramental confession also attempts to install an internal mechanism of guilt around transgressive and non-normative behaviors: if sin is associated with guilt, and if the penitent knows if and when she has committed a sin, then she will feel guilty about it long before she reaches the confessional. In other words, confession teaches the individual penitent to follow the Church’s rules—or to regret not following them—whether or not a representative of Christian power is watching.

The penitent’s annual obligation to confess, though helpful, does not necessarily render the space of her conscience amenable or even available to the confessor’s intervention. While the threat of excommunication gets most Christians into the confessional booth, it may not motivate them to avoid sinning, to feel guilty for the sins that they commit, or even to make truthful confessions. To persuade penitents to buy in to the model of repeated confession through which they will internalize the Church’s categories of sin, confessors (and confessional manuals) first need to convince them that reconciliation to God is something they urgently need. One way to inspire this sense of urgency is to represent sin as a spiritual illness or injury that only confession can cure. Many early penitential manuals allegorize sin as a disease: during confession, the priest-

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<sup>6</sup> They also exploded in page count; the most illustrious examples—St. Raymond of Penyafort’s *Summa de casibus poenitentiae* (1224-1226), Jean Gerson’s *De arte audiendi confessiones* (pub. 1470), and St. Antoninus of Florence’s *Confessionale–Defecerunt* (pub. 1472)—all run to several hundred pages (Tentler 31, 39, 45).

physician examines his penitent-patient, listening to her symptoms, inspecting the various infirmities in her soul, laying his hands upon her in the ritual of absolution, and prescribing remedies in the form of penances (Kidder 34). Lateran IV institutionalized the allegory of sin-as-disease, incorporating the comparisons between confessor and physician and sinner and patient into the formal requirements for sacramental confession. Canon 21 asks that the priest “pour wine and oil into the wounds of the one injured after the manner of a skilful physician, carefully inquiring into the circumstances of the sinner and the sin, from the nature of which he may understand what kind of advice to give and what remedy to apply, making use of different experiments to heal the sick one” (“Fourth Lateran Council”). Canon 21 requires the penitent to confess annually and labels her “the sick one” and “the injured one” in essentially the same breath. Representing sin as a spiritual infirmity—and, crucially, a spiritual infirmity that her parish priest can heal—incentivizes the penitent to make a thorough and truthful confession, rather than merely fulfilling her annual obligation: the more she discloses, the more accurate her diagnosis, and the more certain her cure.<sup>7</sup> The sin-as-disease motif also appears throughout the *Manual de confesores* and the *Guía de pecadores*; Azpilcueta, for instance, recommends the writings of the Church fathers, including St. Augustine and St. Gregory, as “buena medicina” against errors of conscience and excessive scruples, and fray Luís adds that keeping the Ten Commandments is “necesaria para la salud” (XXVII:284 558; II.17 465).

For both writers, however, the need for confession derives primarily from the risks not of spiritual illness, but of alienation from God. Like many sixteenth-century confessional manuals, both the *Manual de confesores* and the *Guía de pecadores* advertise their utility to the penitent with a great deal of hand-wringing about the constant and insidious advances of sin, from which she is never entirely safe (Kidder 33). As an offense against God, sin deprives the soul of his grace and protection, leaving it increasingly vulnerable to temptation, moral decline, and, ultimately, eternal condemnation. Confession is the penitent’s only means of reconciling herself to God and escaping this fate. Azpilcueta warns his readers about the precarity of salvation with a metaphor borrowed from St. Jerome, comparing confession to the broken boards that keep sailors afloat after a shipwreck:

El sacramento de la penitencia ... llama S. Hierony[mus] segunda tabla despues del naufragio. Porque como el primer medio de los que nauegan, es la naue entera para se salvar, y el remedio despues della quebrada, es algun barco o alguna tabla della, a que se apegan: assi el primer medio de los que nauegamos espiritualmente, para llegar al puerto de la saluacion, es la pureza de la innocencia baptismal: la qual perdida por el pecado mortal, sucede el remedio de la penitencia, a que nos hemos de apegar. (Pro:1 vii)<sup>8</sup>

This harrowing image efficiently conveys the catastrophic effects of sin, the uncertainty of the soul’s fate, and, by extension, the urgency of its need for confession. The ship of baptismal purity has little chance of reaching the port of salvation intact; the incessant battering of sin

<sup>7</sup> In Thomas Tentler’s words, “it is not enough, we are told, to go to a physician and say, ‘I’m sick.’ He must know the details of your illness if he is going to cure you. ... If you are to be healed you must, to the best of your ability, tell everything” (116).

<sup>8</sup> This metaphor of St. Jerome’s seems to have enjoyed some currency among canonists and theologians in the first half of the sixteenth century: Erasmus also appropriates it, albeit much more cryptically and in narrative form, in his 1523 colloquy “The Shipwreck” (*Ten Colloquies of Erasmus*, translated and edited by Craig R. Thompson, The Liberal Arts Press, 1957, pp. 3-13).

effectively guarantees a shipwreck. The soul's only hope of survival, then, is to cling to whatever pieces of floating wreckage it can find. The penitent's need for the sacrament is abundantly clear: without the life preserver of confession, the soul will drown in mortal sin.

Perhaps most importantly, the soul owes the presence of any floating wreckage to God's grace and protection, which the commission of sin puts in jeopardy. Both Azpilcueta and fray Luís make clear that sin, because it offends God, can cause the penitent to lose his favor—and that God's favor is necessary to withstand the temptations of the terrestrial world and achieve salvation.<sup>9</sup> Fray Luís paints his readers a grim picture of life alienated from God:

Viven los malos, como olvidados de Dios; y así están en este mundo como hacienda sin dueño, como escuela sin maestro, como navio sin gobernalle, y finalmente como ganado descarriado sin pastor, que nunca escapa de lobos. ... ¿Qué mayor peligro, y qué mayor miseria, que vivir fuera desta tutela y providencia paternal de Dios, y quedar expuesto á todos los encuentros del mundo, y á todas las calamidades y injurias desta vida? Porque como este mundo sea por una parte un mar tempestuoso, un desierto lleno de tantos salteadores y bestias fieras, y sean tantos los desastres y acaescimientos de la vida humana, tantos y tan fuertes los enemigos que nos combaten, tantos y tan ciegos los lazos que nos arman, y tantos los abrojos que nos tienen por todas partes sembrados; y por otra parte el hombre sea una criatura tan flaca y tan desnuda, tan ciega, tan desarmada, y tan pobre de esfuerzo y de consejo: si le falta esta sombra, y este arrimo y favor de Dios, ¿qué hará el flaco entre tantos fuertes, el enano entre tantos gigantes, el ciego entre tantos lazos; y él solo y desarmado entre tantos y tan poderosos enemigos? (II.12 127-28)

This passage demonstrates the chaos of terrestrial life with harsh natural imagery: storm-tossed seas, deserts full of ferocious beasts, fields of sharp thistles. Like Azpilcueta, fray Luís chooses life-threatening scenarios to emphasize the precarity of the soul's fate; these painful circumstances remind readers that the world actively conspires against the soul's spiritual survival, and the comparisons to powerless or directionless beings emphasize its inability to protect itself. The rudderless ship, the wayward calf, and the man fighting blind will not survive without the guidance of someone stronger and wiser, and neither, of course, will the penitent. In the face of these violent images, confession becomes a spiritual necessity; both the *Manual de confesores* and the *Guía de pecadores* capitalize on the penitent's fear for the fate for her soul to cultivate in her an urgent need for the sacrament.

To the motivating force of fear, Azpilcueta and fray Luís add the crushing weight of guilt—the emotional price the penitent must pay for alienating her loving father with her misdeeds. This inculcation of guilt is a common feature of late medieval and early modern confessional manuals, in part because guilt helps inspire the genuine contrition required for absolution, and in part because it reinforces the penitent's need for the sacrament; with absolution comes the consolation and relief of having obtained forgiveness (Tentler 234-36).<sup>10</sup> Not unlike Canon 21,

<sup>9</sup> Penitents aren't the only ones in need of God's favor; Azpilcueta recommends that, before hearing a confession, the confessor should ask God not to forget him, and to give him the strength to resist the temptations that arise from listening to someone else's sins: ““Y no me alanceis señor de vuestra preferencia, quitando, o dexandome de dar la lumbre necessaria, para ver y alumbrar a éste, que por mi la espera de vuestra misericordia. Antes me dad animo y espiritu, para sopear las tentaciones, que de oir pecados agenos nacen” (38).

<sup>10</sup> Much as, in the Ignatian practice of discernment of spirits, an individual's affective experiences of consolation and desolation signal God's will for him, so guilt signals his loss of God's favor. According to Tentler, in

which makes sin into a disease for which confession is the cure, the manuals' association of sin with guilt creates a problem that confession can fix: it reconciles the penitent to the God she has offended. Both Azpilcueta and fray Luís make frequent use of the words "ofensa" and "ofender" when describing the nature of sin, leaning into the connotations of disrespect and ingratitude that more neutral terms like "delito" or "transgredir" fail to evoke. By their account, the sinner not only contravenes God's law, but also rejects and insults her supreme benefactor, the being to whom she owes more love and gratitude than any other. On the very first page of the *Manual de confesores*, Azpilcueta defines sin as an "ofensa de Dios sobre todo lo al amado"—not a crime against some distant monarch, but a personal insult to one's beloved (I:1 1). When represented as attacks on or betrayals of someone whom the penitent is supposed to love, sins become more intimate and more hurtful, and thereby much more conducive to guilt.

Fray Luís instills guilt in his readers by reminding them of their indebtedness to God.<sup>11</sup> He shames them for their ingratitude, arguing that they fail to acknowledge God's beneficence despite the constant stream of gifts with which he showers them: "¿Qué otra cosa hace Dios contigo dende lo alto, sino estar lloviendo siempre beneficios sobre ti? Dame una sola cosa de cuantas hay en el mundo, que no venga por especial providencia del cielo. Pues ¿cómo no levantarás alguna vez los ojos para conocer y amar á tan liberal y tan continuo bienhechor? ¿Qué es esto, sino haber perdido ya los hombres su mesma naturaleza, y héchese mas insensibles que bestias?" (I.3 24). The hyperbolic statements—"dame una sola cosa," "cómo no ... alguna vez"—convey a sense of moral outrage and disgust that the comparison to brute animals consolidates. Even dogs and lions, says fray Luís, will recognize their masters, show them gratitude, and acknowledge their care with affection and loyalty. Humans, however, return God's care with offense; they use the freedom and intelligence he gave them to disregard his laws and abuse his creations. In fact, so low is their regard for their creator that they show greater consideration to their fellow humans: "No sé si ha habido hombre en el mundo que haya hecho con otro hombre lo que los hombres hacen con Dios. ¿Qué hombre habría (por inhumano que fuese) que acabando de recibir de un príncipe grandes mercedes, fuese luego á emplear todas aquellas mercedes en hacer guerra contra él? Y tú, malaventurado, con esos mismos bienes que Dios te dio, nunca cesas de hacer guerra contra él. Pues, ¿qué cosa mas abominable?" (I.3 26). Here again the hyperbole conveys disgust as well as perplexity at the illogic of human behavior: if humans know better than to repay the a terrestrial monarch's generosity by disregarding his laws and destroying his kingdom, then why do they persist in repaying God, the most generous monarch of all, in precisely this way?<sup>12</sup> The inclusion of the morally-inflected adjectives "inhumano" and

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medieval and early modern theology guilt was an affective manifestation of "the condition of divine disfavor that meant the sinner had fallen from grace, lost heaven and become liable to eternal punishment" (23).

<sup>11</sup> In fact, all Christian sacraments were intended to imbue their practitioners with a sense of deep indebtedness to God: "Sacramental ritual, in recalling the pivotal importance of God's incommensurable gift, is meant to elicit the sense of one's perpetual indebtedness to the Infinite Creditor. In partaking of the sacraments, one avails oneself of the signs that allow one to remember what one owes to one's Creditor: a debt that is beyond life and death. The sacraments are thus intended not only to define the ultimate nature of human indebtedness but also regulate the specific means for remembering it. Indebtedness and memory are reconceptualized in terms of their putative source and ultimate referent. Hence remembering one's lack simultaneously reflects God's infinite surplus. Memory in this case is productive of a hierarchy in which God as omnipotent provider stands over human beings as perpetual receivers of gifts" (Rafael 96).

<sup>12</sup> Assumedly, fray Luís identifies the benefactor as a "prince" to create a more accurate analogy: God is the celestial sovereign, just as the prince is a terrestrial sovereign. However, it's not strictly necessary: any instance of repaying kindness with violence, or using a gift to harm its giver, should qualify as a reprehensible

“abominable” reinforces the effect of righteous indignation and, as in the earlier comparison with “bestias,” suggests that such ingratitude is less-than-human. Fray Lu s apostrophizes the reader directly to ensure that these insults inspire feelings of guilt, labelling him “malaventurado” for his persistent sinfulness and ingratitude toward God.

The *Manual de confesores* and the *Gu a de pecadores* show us how sacramental confession secures the space of the penitent’s conscience for present and future interventions by creating a need for the sacrament, beyond the fulfillment of her annual obligation, through the representation of sin as a problem that confession can solve. Whether the penitent experiences sin as a spiritual illness, the threat of eternal condemnation, or the guilt of alienating someone she loves, confession is the cure, the life preserver, and the promise of reconciliation that she needs to achieve salvation. Instilling this need for confession through appeals to fear and guilt aims not only at increasing the penitent’s susceptibility to the confessor’s interventions, but also at convincing her to do the extra work of self-examination before she arrives—at recruiting her as an agent of institutional surveillance. Having established that her salvation depends upon receiving absolution, the confessional manuals (and most Church teachings) predicate that absolution upon the penitent’s making a complete confession of her sins (Kidder 106-7). In fact, if the penitent arrives unprepared or fails to confess all of her sins, the confessor can refuse to absolve her—and, as Azpilcueta tells us, the confession remains invalid either way:

La confession ... no vale nada, sino fue entera. Porque dexo adrede de confessar algun pecado mortal, o que probablemente dudaua si era tal, o venial, o alguna circunstancia necessaria por verguença, hypocresia, o alguna cosa injusta, o porque confesso pecado mortal adrede al sacerdote que no le entendia, o la confession no fue clara por razon de las palabras, que eran obscuras ... pues todos los pecados, assi de pensamiento, como de palabra y obra, y ocultos y manifiestos se deuen confessar. (IX:11 36)

Azpilcueta makes clear that the responsibility for the completeness and intelligibility of the confession lies entirely with the penitent. Leaving something out because she doesn’t know whether it’s a sin, or because she feels too ashamed of it, or because she doesn’t know the proper term for it, does not excuse her. Unless she declares every sin that she has committed since her last confession, she cannot be absolved of any of them.

Ostensibly, this rule exists to promote the penitent’s spiritual health—the more thoroughly she communicates her sins, the more entirely she is absolved of them. However, the obligation to make a complete confession, because it entails regular self-examination and a working knowledge of the Church’s categories of sin, also enables the Church to expand its surveillance of the penitent beyond the confessional. To maximize both the comprehensiveness and comprehensibility of her eventual confession, the penitent must regularly reflect upon and interrogate her behavior “in the same thorough way and for the same purpose that the confessor conducts his interrogation, that is, according to some categorization of sins” (Tentler 109-10). In other words, she must examine and judge herself in the same way that the confessor will examine and judge

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act regardless of the relative social status of the parties involved—and arguing that we wouldn’t treat our neighbors or our inferiors that way would actually strengthen fray Lu s’s claim about human ingratitude for God’s benevolence. The analogy to the prince, though, folds in a subtle message about the sinfulness of disobedience and ingratitude to the temporal sovereign as well as the celestial, which both Azpilcueta’s *Manual de confesores* and the Lima Council’s *Confessionario* make much more explicit. This posture of submission to an invisible sovereign is a particularly useful habit to instill in colonial subjects, for whom royal power always operates at a distance and a delay.

her. The fact that the confessor can deny her absolution if she has not made this preliminary effort initiates the process of self-policing: in order to determine which of her actions require confessing, she has to know which count as sins—and if she already knows that they count as sins, then, at least in theory, she can avoid committing them in the first place. In reproducing the confessor's disciplinary actions of interrogation and correction within and upon herself, the penitent helps the Church to achieve panoptical surveillance over her conscience.

But how does the penitent know which of her actions count as sins? Herein lies the confession manuals' primary utility to the lay Christian: they help her to develop a functional hermeneutics of sin by defining, categorizing, and exemplifying sins in the same ways that confessors do, usually according to existing groupings of virtues, vices, counsels, or commandments. Both the *Manual de confesores* and the *Guía de pecadores* orient their discussions of vice around the seven deadly sins, while Azpilcueta uses the Ten Commandments as his organizing principle for virtue, and fray Luís the three theological and four cardinal virtues. Other popular series include the five senses, the eight beatitudes, and the twelve articles of faith (Tentler 135-36). The texts are designed to accommodate both quick consultation and extended study; they include detailed tables of contents, and give each sin, virtue, or commandment its own chapter.<sup>13</sup> Every chapter provides a basic definition of the relevant category, as well as examples of specific sins that might fall under its rubric, to show the penitent how to examine her own behavior before entering the confessional booth. The examples range from the general to the hyper-specific; for instance, in his rubric for the Second Commandment (*no jurarás*), Azpilcueta includes both the sin of swearing on false idols and the sin of swearing that you are healthy to gain admittance to a walled city, when in fact you might have the plague:

Si juro por el diablo, o por Mahomet, o por algun idolo, o falso Dios. (XII:4 57)

Si en tiempo de pestilencia juro verdad a las puertas de la ciudad engañosamente, y no segun la intencion de los que le preguntauan pues por su voluntad se ofrece a entrar dentro. (XII:19 62)

This second example, like many others in the *Manual de confesores*—building bridges on the Sabbath, risking death by swinging from a rope high above the ground, standing near the window in hopes of catching the eye of someone attractive—is relevant to only a small number of penitents (XIII:11 88, XV:8 104, XVI:14 115). However, these edge cases help both confessors and penitents to understand the nature and scope of each commandment. While penitents aren't expected to memorize every obscure violation, they are expected to have a clear understanding of the basic categories of sin and to be able to deduce, based on that understanding, which of their behaviors need confessing.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>13</sup> Klor de Alva observes a similarly practical bent in the bilingual confessional manuals that circulated in sixteenth-century New Spain, pointing out that “the existence of tables of contents and thematic and alphabetical indices are evidence of the pragmatic nature of the guides. They were meant to be used frequently and efficiently; however extensive their treatment of each sin or category of sinner. Though limited resources made general confessions more practical, without these bilingual texts most confessors would have been unable to carry out the detailed examinations of conscience that had become particularly popular in the sixteenth century” (“Sin and Confession” 93).

<sup>14</sup> The requirement that good Christians commit basic aspects of doctrine to memory was widely accepted and enforced; one's ability to recite the catechism, for example, was considered a reliable barometer of the sincerity of one's faith. The Church acknowledged, however, that remembering all of her sins presented an

Armed with this hermeneutics of sin, the penitent undertakes the process of self-examination. Self-examination is a joint effort of the memory and the intellect: the penitent must recollect everything she has said, done, thought, or felt since her last confession, and analyze it all according to her categories of sin. Her goal is to approximate the authoritative gaze of the confessor as closely as possible; as fray Lu s tells her, “asi ntate como juez en el tribunal de tu coraz n” (I.Pro *viii*). This metaphor reflects the juridical understanding of confession current in post-Tridentine Europe, wherein the priest, as a representative of God’s power, mediates between him and the subject who has violated his law.<sup>15</sup> In order to effect a reconciliation, the judge-priest interrogates the penitent to assess the severity of her offenses. To surrogate him effectively, the penitent must reproduce within and upon herself that discourse of interrogation and assessment; she must internalize the laws that he enforces on God’s behalf and apply them to all her recollected acts (Rafael 103). The process of self-examination, in combining recollection with analysis, “assumes that in the penitent there exists not one self but two: one that bears the undecipherable marks of an unexamined past and another that reorders and reads those marks. The examination of conscience therefore splits the convert into a hierarchical opposition between a past, sinful self and a present, interrogating conscience” (Rafael 100). I would add that, even beyond the temporal division into sinful past self and interrogating present self, the process of self-examination divides the penitent into a subject of institutional power who acts, and a representative of institutional power who observes and interrogates. While she lacks the confessor’s power to effect a reconciliation with God, her knowledge of God’s law reproduces within her the hierarchy of authority that exists between her and the confessor: she is both the self who sins, and the self who identifies and judges those sins, the object and the subject of surveillance.

This internalization of Church law and the resulting division of the penitent into surveilled and surveilling selves makes self-regulation possible because it gives rise to Christian guilt. Confession (and the consultation of confessional manuals) teaches the penitent not only

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especially difficult challenge for the penitent. From the fourth century forward, authorities including St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas encouraged penitents to use mnemonic devices to recall and organize their transgressions for sufficiently thorough confession. Augustine, for example, created the acronym SALIGIA from the first letters of each of the seven deadly sins: *superbia* (pride), *avaritia* (avarice), *luxuria* (lust), *ira* (wrath), *gula* (gluttony), *invidia* (envy), and *acedia* (sloth) (Estenssoro Fuchs 23; Harrison, *Sin* 5-6).

<sup>15</sup> The theological trend of regarding the priest as a judge who mediates between God and his wayward subject first emerges after Lateran IV; by the 1560s, the Council of Trent has decided that “in the sacrament the priest exercised jurisdiction over the individual and his offences on the model of a secular criminal jurisdiction of Roman-law type” (Bossy 23). Like a judge, the priest serves as a mediator between the sovereign and the subject who violates the sovereign’s law. He assesses the severity of the sinner’s offenses against God as well as her understanding of and contrition for those offenses, and, in his capacity as a representative of God’s power, effects a reconciliation between sinner and sovereign by imposing an appropriate penalty. Once the penalty is satisfied, the sinner, like the criminal, is restored to his former good standing. Immediately after Trent, the physical site of confession is reconfigured to evoke the experience of judgment for the penitent: in 1564, Cardinal Charles Borromeo introduces the confessional booth to give “a visible embodiment to the jurisdictional theory of the sacrament which had prevailed at Trent. It was to be a *sedes confessionalis* [seat of confession], where the priest sat in judgment *tamquam pro tribunali iudex* [as if at a judge’s bench]. . . . If the confessional was to become an instrument for intimate self-examination, for instruction of the ignorant in the rudiments of Christian doctrine, and for encouraging the denunciation of neighbours to the Inquisition for heresy and similar matters, privacy of a kind was evidently called for” (Bossy 30). The confessional booth afforded privacy and relative anonymity to both penitent and confessor, encouraging the former to expose more readily the darkest corners of her soul and underscoring the latter’s role as a vector of divine power by turning him into a disembodied voice that dispensed judgment and forgiveness from on high.



which of her behaviors are sinful, but also, as discussed, to feel guilty about having sinned. As a result, she no longer needs the presence of the confessor to inspire contrition and repentance; because she already knows that she has sinned, she feels guilty about it immediately, whether inside or outside the confessional booth: “While it is true that the encounter with the priest entails submission and shame, the heart of the system is reliance on internal feelings of guilt. If the system is working, sinners will feel guilty outside of confession; and confession will help insure that guilt is elicited independently of the presence of any other human being” (Tentler 347). Once the penitent can identify her own sins, she experiences guilt about alienating God—about wounding her beloved or offending her benefactor—much more frequently.<sup>16</sup> Ideally, the desire to assuage this guilt motivates the penitent to visit her confessor at least once a year, but also to attempt to alter her behavior in the intervals between confessions such that she avoids doing and thinking things that make her feel guilty. If her surveilling self maintains constant vigilance against the temptations and transgressive impulses of her acting self, the penitent should be able to identify and avoid sins before she commits them.

Fray Luís intends the *Guía de pecadores* to support precisely this kind of self-policing, offering readers a host of preventative and corrective techniques for common sins. His remedies are broadly relevant and easily applied; they require only memory, willpower, and a basic knowledge of the Scriptures. In his discussion of gluttony, for instance, fray Luís enjoins his readers to remember Adam and Eve and the consequences that their gluttony had for humankind whenever they feel tempted to eat or drink to excess. Another of his remedies is to pretend that you’ve already eaten and enjoyed whatever it is that you’re craving:

Considera que por un pecado de gula vino la muerte á todo el género humano. (II.8 393)

Cuando fueres tentado de la gula, imagina que ya gozaste dese brave deleite, y que pasó ya aquella hora; pues el deleite del gusto es como el sueño de la noche pasada: sino que este deleite acabado, deja triste la consciencia, mas vencido, déjala contenta y alegre. (II.8 396)

In both of these examples, the surveilling self finds a way to disrupt the desires of the acting self: reflecting upon the grave consequences of the first instance of gluttony renders your present meal that much less tempting, while pretending that you’ve already enjoyed it allows you to substitute the mental pleasure of recollection for the carnal pleasure of overconsumption. These maneuvers, simple though they sound, reveal the extent to which the penitent is expected to internalize both the categories of sin and the desire not to offend God: in the space of a moment, she must recognize the temptation, identify it as gluttony, recall the appropriate remedy, and summon the

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<sup>16</sup> For some Christians—like Ignatius of Loyola, early in his religious life—the guilt of sin became so constant as to constitute a sin in itself: scruples. Scrupulousness entailed excessive confession, the repetition of sins already confessed, the obsessive fear of having forgotten or overlooked some sins in a previous confession, and in some cases the fabrication of sins as a result of anxiety. In addition to exhausting and exasperating one’s confessor, scrupulousness demonstrated insufficient faith in and humility before God’s mercy; scrupulous penitents did not trust that God had truly forgiven them, and used confession to petition him again and again for absolution (Taylor 60-61). Unsurprisingly, scrupulousness was extremely difficult to overcome—Ignatius, for instance, struggled with his scruples for months, and at one point grew so depressed that he contemplated suicide, but, fittingly enough, eventually recovered by submitting himself entirely to the direction of his confessor (*Acta* III:19-25).

willpower to enact it. To succeed, she must be nearly as fluent in the categories of and remedies for sin as the confessor himself (though she still has recourse to his expertise if she fails).

This practice of self-policing constitutes a kind of self-subjection to institutional authority: the penitent actively represents God's power and enforces his law for and within herself. The continual process of self-subjection is the means by which sacramental confession effects social discipline—the mandate to regular and complete confession as a condition for salvation teaches penitents “how to subject their desires to the relentless surveillance and the inescapable pain of the conscience. By promising forgiveness, the priests could relieve the penitents of the very suffering they had taught them to impose on themselves. This was a mechanism of control far more pervasive, efficient, economical, and subtle than torture or punishment” (Klor de Alva, “Telling Lives” 154-55). Sacramental confession attempts to regulate the penitent's behavior from the inside out, imposing grave spiritual consequences both for sin and for the failure to disclose all of her sins to a representative of Church authority. To prepare herself adequately for confession, the penitent must simulate the confessor's interrogation for herself; she must subject herself regularly to the surveilling gaze of spiritual authority not only in the confessional booth, but also, to borrow from fray Luís, in “el tribunal de [su] corazon.”

In securing ongoing access to and establishing panoptical surveillance over the penitent's conscience, sacramental confession creates a positive feedback loop of power and knowledge through which the Church extends and refines its control over its subject population. The annual requirement to make a full and “faithful” disclosure of one's sins to the parish priest affords the Church substantial insight into the beliefs, tendencies, and attitudes of its subjects, and, as a result, substantial influence over their moral behavior and spiritual formation (Kidder 35). The increasingly juridical conceptualization of confession reinforces this influence, presenting the confessor not just as spiritual healer and guide, but also as representative and enforcer of God's law in all spheres of the penitent's life: sexual, social, political, economic, etc. Because the confessor's jurisdiction extends to all individual sins, any undesirable behavior that can be recast as a sin falls under the Church's purview, and can be addressed and punished in the confessional, on pain of loss of salvation. Through the administration of sacramental confession, the early modern Church could cultivate or eliminate almost any behavior in its subject population simply by “defin[ing] it in terms of sin so that it could be judged in the forum of penance” (Tentler 135).

Azpilcueta in particular shows how confessors can re-encode behaviors that run counter to imperial interests as sins: the *Manual de confesores* presents actions from circumcision and fortune-telling to dissidence and tax evasion as violations of the Ten Commandments, thereby bringing them under the Church's purview. This recharacterization of transgressive behaviors entitles the confessor to ask about the penitent's cultural habits and political attitudes, and to withhold absolution and impose penance for those that undermine the regime's efforts to establish a homogenous and compliant subject population. For instance, Azpilcueta uses the First Commandment (*amarás a Dios sobre todas las cosas*) to interrogate both spiritual and social practices. Questions about specific beliefs and devotional habits—does the penitent doubt some aspect of the Christian faith? does she believe that non-Christians can be saved? does she worship the Devil, the sun, or any other creature of God?—alternate with questions about clothing choices and love potions (XI:18 48, XI:24 50). The goal is to eliminate all traces of Islam, Judaism, and paganism, from the original forms of worship to their lingering cultural manifestations:

Si se circuncido, o vso de alguna cerimonia Iudaica, o Mahometica, que significasse alguna falsedad contraria a nuestra santa fe catholica. ...

Si donde por los vestidos, o alguna señal cada vno muestra la ley en que viue, traxo habito, o señal de iudio, o de moro ...

Si pregunto, o quiso preguntar a adeuinos algun hurto, o otra cosa secreta, o tento de la saber por fuertes de dados, cartas, libros, arnero, o astrolabio. ...

Si pregunto a algun Gitano por su fortuna, con proposito de firmemente creer lo que le dixesse. Aunque preguntar por curiosidad, o por reyr, no es sino lo hiziesse tal persona, que los que la viessen se escandalizarian grauemente ...

Si dio a beuer alguna conficion a alguno, para que lo amasse. (XI:24-32 50-52).

These questions aim at both religious and cultural homogenization, pushing the penitent to adopt Christian norms; she must not only believe in Christianity, but also actively embody it. Indeed, marking the body as non-Christian in any way, whether permanent (as circumcision) or temporary (as clothing), is a sin against God. These physical markings of Jewish or Moorish heritage, like the magical practices of divination and enchantment, indicate less-than-perfect faith in Christianity—and in signifying religious difference, they subvert the categorical imperative to total orthodoxy. Thus, even if they hold no meaning for the penitent beyond curiosity or entertainment, non-Christian social practices still constitute sins because of the “scandal” they create in the Christian community.<sup>17</sup>

The *Manual de confesores* also enforces submission to civil and ecclesiastical authority under the Fourth Commandment (*honrarás a tu padre y madre*), explaining that the term “padres” encompasses the *patria* and its rulers in addition to parents and relatives, and that “honrar” entails obedience as well as respect: “Por padres en este mandamiento entendemos principalmente ... los que nos engendraron, y los parientes, la patria, y amigos della, que nos conseruan. Y segundariamente los gouernadores ecclesiasticos y seglares. ... En tres cosas parece consistir la honra, de que este mandamiento habla, conuiene a saber, en amar, obedecer, y acatar de coraçon, palabra, y obra” (XIV:3 91). In essence, the penitent must love and obey anyone who works to conserve her wellbeing in any way, from parents to princes and priests to popes. Moreover, obedience extends beyond actions to words and attitudes; in addition to fulfilling her superiors’ orders and following their laws, the penitent must speak and even think about them with respect. Disobeying civil and ecclesiastical leaders is a sin in all cases, and heresy in some:

Si dexo de cumplir las leyes y mandos justos de sus superiores, por le parecer, que en esta vida no tienen los vnos poder sobre los otros, y aun heregia.

Si dexo de cumplir las leyes y mandamientos justos de sus superiores, por no quererse someter a ellos, aunque creia que eran sus superiores, que es proprio pecado de inobediencia. (XIV:16 96)

As we saw in the previous chapter, obedience entails the abnegation of one’s own will in favor of the superior’s. Azpilcueta demands the same submission from the penitent that Ignatius demands of the Jesuit—but to all members of the civil and ecclesiastical hierarchy, rather than just to her

<sup>17</sup> The last three questions are also strategic in the Certeaulian sense, insofar as they secure the space of the penitent’s conscience for future Church interventions. The prohibition of divinatory activities like card-reading, astrology, and fortune-telling both protects the Church’s monopoly on predictive power as well as encouraging the adoption of Christian norms: only priests and confessors can tell the penitent what her future holds, salvation or damnation, based on how closely she conforms to the Church’s dictates—and only the espousal of Christian virtues, rather than potions or incantations, can improve her fate.

religious superiors. The refusal to comply with royal or Church laws, as expressions of a superior's (the King's or the Pope's) will, therefore violates the Fourth Commandment—and the refusal to acknowledge an agent of those laws as a superior constitutes heresy.

Nor does following the superior's laws and orders fully satisfy the Fourth Commandment; the penitent is obligated to obey him “de corazón y palabra” as well as “de obra.” With this injunction, Azpilcueta turns opposition of the current regime into a sin. Speaking ill of temporal leaders, disagreeing with them, and even disliking them all become punishable offenses:

Si tuuo odio, o quiso algun mal notable a sus padres, o a su patria, o a sus reyes, o a sus juezes, o al Papa, o a algunos prelados, o curas, o curadores, y tutores suyos. Ca aunque el odio injusto, y deliberado para daño notable contra qualquiera, sea pecado mortal. (XIV:5 92)

Si menosprecio a sus superiores, o no les quiso dar la honra y acatamiento, que notablemente se les deuia, aunque fuessen malos. (XIV:16 96)

These questions recruit the confessor as a kind of imperial watchdog, entitling him to scrutinize the penitent for any signs of dissidence. The categorization of hatred and ill intent toward civil and religious authority as mortal sins is an attempt to stop insubordination at the source. The injunction against insulting or complaining about temporal leaders has a similar aim: forbidding the penitent to articulate her discontent makes it harder for her to sow discord or foment rebellion in her community. The addendum that “bad” superiors deserve the same respect reinforces the expectation of absolute obedience. No matter their flaws—incompetence, corruption, cruelty—the penitent must obey them on pain of damnation.

Finally, Azpilcueta safeguards the regime's financial interests through the Seventh Commandment (*no hurtarás*), which he extends to encompass a whole host of economic transgressions, such as producing counterfeit money, defaulting on rent payments, and engaging in usury (XVII:164 172, XVII:194 181, XVII:202-79 184-211).<sup>18</sup> Most relevant to our purposes here, he also includes questions about defrauding and evading both royal and ecclesiastical taxes:

Si no pago los derechos reales justamente puestos por autoridad papal, o real, o costumbre immemorial. ...

Si sin autoridad papal, o real impuso algun derecho a sus subditos, es rapina. ...

Si cobro derechos algunos claramente ilicitos, o sabiendo que son tales. (XVII:196-97 182)

Here the confessor takes on the role of tax collector. Labelling the failure to pay the *diezmo* and other such ecclesiastical taxes an instance of theft from the Church is quite obviously an act of self-interest—and so, though perhaps less obviously, is the enforcement of civil taxation. The Spanish Church relies on the Empire's armies to defend its Catholic ministries in Europe and to expand its evangelical ministries in America. Without military support, these apostolic activities would, like the Iberian missions in Africa and Asia, remain small in scale and pose great personal risk to the missionaries involved. However, Spain's continual campaigns of defense and

<sup>18</sup> N.B., Azpilcueta appended five commentaries to the 1556 edition of the *Manual de confesores*, two of which—the “Comentario resolutorio de cambios” and the “Comentario resolutorio de usuras”—address economic sins in even greater depth. The “Comentario de cambios” was published in English in 2014 as *On Exchange* (op. cit.).

expansion leave the Crown dangerously cash-poor: Charles V overspent so much that, upon assuming the throne in 1556, Philip II found himself already in arrears until 1561—a fact that did nothing to curb his own military expenditures (Vidal 34). Hence the inclusion of tax evasion and fraud as sins: it is in the Church's interest to maximize royal tax revenues, to ensure continued support for its evangelical endeavors around the Empire.

Azpilcueta's *Manual de confesores* and fray Luís's *Guía de pecadores* show us that, in sixteenth-century Spain, sacramental confession aims to reinforce imperial hegemony through a highly localized system of discipline that teaches individual Christians to examine and police themselves against sin. Through self-policing, the penitent can avoid the fear and guilt of offending God, and through confession, she can obtain his forgiveness when offenses occur.<sup>19</sup> While the early modern Church exercised its authority over individual Christians in many ways—sermons, parish activities, canon law courts, public pressures—sacramental confession was “an especially effective way of reaching people, for it was here, in the forum of penance, that a priest representing the traditional, hierarchical church directly confronted and corrected the fallen, the unreformed. It was here that the church demanded all sins of every adult Christian be acquitted. It was here that vice was judged and sentenced, that virtue was hopefully encouraged” (Tentler 138). The confessional booth, rather than the inquisitorial tribunal, proves the ideal site for social surveillance because it grants the Church access not just to criminals against the faith, but to every baptized Christian. Confession obligates the penitent to seek out a representative of the Church and disclose her sins as thoroughly as she can, while also, by implanting the very guilt and anxiety that it promises to cure, creating in her a psychological need for this self-disclosure. By implanting these mechanisms of self-disclosure and self-policing according to the Church's categories of sin, confession enables the Church to perpetuate its power over its subjects by designating social, political, and economic activities that contravene its own interests as sins. Ultimately, the strategy of sacramental confession aims to enhance the reach and strength of the Church's disciplinary power by teaching penitents to exercise it upon themselves.

#### ACCULTURATION IN THE ANDES

As we've seen, sacramental confession teaches penitents to internalize the Church's laws and to police their own behavior according to those laws. The spiritual mechanism of self-policing supports the imperial projects of cultural homogenization and political compliance, insofar as confessors explicitly demand the adoption of Christian norms and obedience to terrestrial laws and their agents through the First, Fourth, and Seventh Commandments. On the Iberian Peninsula, it also offers an effective way to encourage desired behaviors among populations with limited exposure to centralized authorities—like most lay Christians, who rarely encounter bishops or archbishops (Christian, Jr. 3-4, 175-79). These effects prove exceptionally useful in the colonial context, where indigenous Americans must be persuaded to abandon their own norms and customs for Catholic Spain's, but whose geographic dispersal makes constant (or even frequent) supervision impossible. As in Spain, sacramental confession teaches indigenous penitents to internalize Spanish and Christian norms in all spheres of life: social, sexual, political, and

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<sup>19</sup> As we saw in Chapter 2, this system incentivizes self-exposure to authority: just as Jesuit novices are rewarded for disclosing their interior experiences of consolation and desolation to their superiors with more effective spiritual guidance and faster spiritual advancement, so penitents are rewarded for disclosing their sins to their confessors with the consolation of absolution, which reassures them that they are reconciled to God and that their salvation is secure once again.

economic. Colonial confessional manuals reflect this project of indigenous acculturation in their incorporation of sins that rarely appear in their peninsular counterparts, such as the worship of regional deities carved from stone, or the consumption of stimulants like coca. However, as in the Spanish manuals examined above, they don't restrict themselves to customs that directly contravene the Ten Commandments; they also re-encode indigenous social, political, and economic norms as sins, so that priests can police these activities—and teach penitents to police themselves—through the confessional. In this way, confession grants the colonial order influence over a space it would otherwise struggle to access: the indigenous subject's conscience.

While many manuals intended for confessing indigenous penitents circulated in Spanish America in the sixteenth century, only one was created and endorsed by an ecclesiastical province: the *Doctrina christiana y catecismo para instrucción de indios*, a trilingual collection of evangelical materials published by the Third Council of Lima in 1584 and 1585. The *Doctrina christiana*, *Confessionario*, and *Tercero catecismo*—the Third Council's catechism, confessional manual, and *sermonario*, respectively—show us the form that the Church of Peru intended the sacrament of confession to take, as well as the behaviors that they intended it to discourage and the attitudes and beliefs that they intended it to instill. Through an analysis of these texts and the circumstances of their development, we'll see that sacramental confession serves as an acculturative and disciplinary strategy in sixteenth-century Peru, which aims to teach indigenous Andeans to regulate their behavior according to Spanish and Christian norms, and thereby to reconstitute themselves as subjects of colonial authority.

Confession played a crucial role in the Spanish colonial enterprise's efforts to overwrite Andean space and culture with Christian norms and practices. This campaign of Christianization was a legal obligation for Spain, whose presence in the Americas, according to its foremost legal scholars, had no other justification. Ferdinand and Isabella had based their claims to the land and its inhabitants upon the 1494 donation of Pope Alexander VI, but in fact the pope's authority did not encompass pagans—as evidenced by the fact that, if the shore upon which Columbus had landed had in fact been China, the Spanish would have had no claim upon the territory (Pagden 13-14). The definitive word on the matter came from fray Francisco de Vitoria, chair of theology at the University of Salamanca. In his 1539 treatise *Relectio de Indis*, Vitoria argued that the Indians' paganism did not confer upon the Spanish the right to dispossess them of their goods: “La fe no quita el derecho natural ni humano. Ahora bien, el dominio es o de derecho natural o de derecho humano. Luego, no se pierde el dominio por falta de fe. ... La confiscación de bienes es una pena, y como no hay una pena en la ley divina para esta vida es claro que, por derecho divino, no se pierden los bienes por herejía” (Vitoria 20-21). Vitoria argues that, under natural law, Spain could legitimately dispossess the Indians of their territory if they were irrational beings, incapable of self-governance. However, the fact of their paganism does not prove their irrationality, because they had no access to Christian truth until the Spanish arrived. Nor does their paganism constitute grounds for dispossession of territory under divine law, because heresy—another crime of disbelief—carries a lesser penalty. The only title that the Indians' lack of Christian belief confers upon the Spanish is the *ius predicandi*, the right to travel to America to propagate the faith: “Los cristianos tienen derecho a predicar y anunciar el Evangelio en las provincias de los bárbaros” (Vitoria 87). The fellowship of man—each person's God-given responsibility to care for his neighbor—entitles the Spanish to try to save their American brothers' souls, but not to topple their empires.<sup>20</sup> For this reason, the project of colonization, to justify itself, had to

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<sup>20</sup> Vitoria adds that, so long as the Indians allow the Spanish to evangelize without intervention, the latter cannot legitimately declare war on them or occupy their territories. However, if the Indians resist, the Spanish can

incorporate the project of evangelization; as Estenssoro Fuchs puts it, “si el rey quería tener súbditos debía primero convertirlos” (16).

The intertwining of Spain’s political and spiritual agendas created a great deal of jurisdictional crossover between bureaucrats and clergymen. Viceregal functionaries like *oidores* frequently included religious instruction in their plans and recommendations for the governance of Peru’s indigenous inhabitants (see, for example, Juan de Matienzo’s *El gobierno del Perú* [1567]), while missionaries joined the civil service as colonial ethnographers and tax assessors (Estenssoro Fuchs 114, Friede 145-46, 150-152). The first missionaries to arrive in the Andes launched ambitious projects of urbanization and resettlement in order to impose colonial order upon the indigenous Andeans. The construction of cities, churches, and convents around Peru sought to facilitate tribute collection and the distribution of indigenous laborers, but also to immerse Spain’s new subjects in Christian culture and to impress upon them the grandeur and glory of God (Mills, “Religious Coercion 156). Serge Gruzinski explains that Christianization also exposed indigenous subjects to a battery of social and political norms, pressures, and proscriptions. The entire Church infrastructure—regular and secular clergy, ecclesiastical judges, provisors (diocesan judges appointed by the bishop) and their tribunals, Christianized indigenous leaders—imposed and disseminated these norms through preaching, catechism, oral and written instruction, and Church rituals like sacramental confession (“Normas cristianas” 109).

Confession was a particularly effective method of acculturation because it involved the direct, explicit, and repeated transmission of the rules governing Christian life from confessor to penitent. Through the sacrament, clergy conveyed extensive rules for personal life (marriage, sexuality, hygiene, baptism, the rites and attitudes around death), economic life (selling goods at prices commensurate with their quality; being truthful with customers, clients, and tax collectors; paying laborers a fair wage; making loans; charging interest), and political life (obligations to one’s superiors, inferiors, and community; uses and abuses of power; the regulation of labor) (Gruzinski, “Normas cristianas” 109-10). As on the Peninsula, confession also taught penitents to police their own conformity to these rules; according to Klor de Alva, the sacrament

served military, political, economic, and social functions by acting as both an *external* mechanism of social control, subjecting personal behavior and subjective ideas to the public scrutiny of non-Indians, and as an *internal* mechanism of self-control, which resulted from successful attempts to inculcate guilt, fear, or devotion upon the minds of the penitents. . . . The pragmatic desire on the part of religious and lay officials was to develop in the hearts of the indigenes an ethos of Hispanic order, loyalty, obedience, and responsibility that would obviate the need for expensive administrative and military controls. In effect, the right to hear confessions and determine penances shifted to the Church a large portion of the local policing responsibilities that would otherwise have fallen on the shoulders of the secular powers. (“Sin and Confession” 91)

Klor de Alva suggests that in the colonial context, sacramental confession served as a form of “penitential discipline,” instantiating self-policing and approximating local policing among

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continue to evangelize against their will, declare war on them, and occupy their territories, “siempre ordenándolo todo más al bienestar y utilidad de los bárbaros que al propio interés” (90). However, this right must be assessed and implemented case by case, because while the Indians do in some places impede evangelization, it is largely because they have received poor treatment from Spanish soldiers and governors.

indigenous Christians, and helping to indoctrinate them as both Christians and Spaniards, loyal to God and to the King.

These forms of self- and local policing were especially necessary in colonial Peru for two reasons. First, at least in the half-century immediately following the conquest, the small number of missionaries meant that inhabitants of rural and outlying areas saw priests only a few times a year, if that. In addition, linguistic limitations made the sacrament of penance particularly challenging to administer; the Province of Peru required missionaries to send any penitents with whom they had no common language to the nearest priest that did. For the administration of time-sensitive sacraments like baptism and extreme unction, and for ongoing activities like the recitation of the major prayers and the catechism, missionaries counted on the support of Christianized Andeans, who also provided the kind of local policing to which Klor de Alva refers (Mills, “Bad Christians” 186; Estenssoro Fuchs 32; Gruzinski, “Conquista de los cuerpos” 190).

Mercedarian missionary Diego de Porres, who authored an “Instrucción para los sacerdotes que se ocuparen de la conversion de los indios del Perú” sometime between 1558 and 1565, explains that the establishment of self-sufficient communities of indigenous Christians is necessary “por estar los yndios dibididos en muchos pueblos y no aver copia de sacerdotes para doctriñarlos” (26). Porres, who during his forty-year career in Peru served as provincial of the Mercedarian order, Visitor for the bishops of Lima, Cuzco, and Charcas, and vicar general of Santa Cruz de Sierra, and who by his own estimation baptized some eighty thousand souls and married another fifty thousand, wrote the “Instrucción” to teach his confreres how to indoctrinate as many Indians as possible, given their limited manpower (Castro Seoane 251). In the priest’s absence, for example, all the Christians in a given village should gather in front of the Church each Sunday and Wednesday to recite their prayers and the general confession, and to listen, “con todo silencio, lo que allí les platicaren los muchachos que son unos coloquios de doctrina Xpiana” (Porres 31).<sup>21</sup> When indigenous Christians fall seriously ill, their fellow Christians should encourage them to make a confession of their sins. If the priest is in the area, someone should send for him; if not, the sick penitent should confess directly to God: “Estubiere el padre cinco o seis leguas de allí en esta comarca, hasta... luego le embien a llamar por la posta, y si no estuviere en la dicha comarca, decille que se confiese a Dios y llore y se arrepienta de sus pecados, ... y alce las manos a Dios pidiéndole misericordia y háganle decir la confesión general, en la lengua que para esto les queda, en cada pueblo” (Porres 31-32). These examples demonstrate the extent to which indigenous Christians were expected to supervise their own spiritual development, and that of their neighbors.

The second reason that self- and local policing was essential to the evangelization of indigenous Americans was that the Holy Office’s jurisdiction did not extend to indigenes. While Philip II did not officially prohibit the trial of indigenous Christians for religious crimes outside their dioceses until 1571, the Inquisition in the Americas had generally left indigenous cases

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<sup>21</sup> Encomenderos in Spanish America were obligated by royal mandate to provide their indigenous laborers with “sufficient” doctrinal education in exchange for their service and tribute (Tibesar 529-30). Porres’s instructions for Bible study, the recitation of the prayers and catechism, and the declaration of the general confession suggest that this kind of self-guided and largely unsupervised indoctrination was the primary source of religious education for many Indians in encomienda. Whether the Church and the Viceroyalty considered this indoctrination “sufficient” is difficult to say, but in 1560 Archbishop Loayza did issue a series of injunctions, the *Avisos breves sobre las obligaciones de los conquistadores*, which required encomenderos to return any tribute payments received from laborers who did not know “las cosas nescesarias a la fe,” such as the Credo, the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria, the Decalogue, and the commandments of the Church, or could not recite and discuss them with the degree of complexity appropriate to their capacity (Tibesar 530).



alone since 1540, when Charles V reprimanded the apostolic inquisitor of New Spain, fray Juan de Zumárraga, for sentencing Texcoco leader and anti-Spanish rebel don Carlos Ometochtzin to death by burning at the stake (Klor de Alva, “Colonizing Souls” 3-5; Moreno de los Arcos 29-31).<sup>22</sup> Sacramental confession emerged as an effective alternative both for gathering information about indigenous cultural and religious practices and for instructing indigenous subjects in Spanish norms. Confession gave priests an excuse to ask penitents detailed questions about their (and their neighbors’) beliefs and behaviors, and to teach them the techniques of self-surveillance that would replace those beliefs and behaviors with

a Christian form of self-discipline that would ultimately make external force secondary or unnecessary. This intrusive strategy sought to constitute the most discreet punitive mechanism possible: a fear of divine retribution nourished by a scrupulous consciousness of one’s wrongdoings. And where this failed, as it very frequently did, it excused the policing intervention of the priest, with his threats of supernatural punishment, corporal penance, and public shaming and ridicule. (Klor de Alva, “Colonizing Souls” 15-16)

Rather than physical coercion or institutional intimidation, confession relies on the fear of eternal damnation and the self-imposed guilt trip. Once the penitent has internalized both the categories of sin and the anxiety about offending God, she no longer recognizes the priest as an agent of discipline; the imperative to comply with God’s laws comes either from her own conscience or from God himself (Klor de Alva, “Colonizing Souls” 17).

Confession, then, becomes a powerful instrument of acculturation in the colonial context; it teaches the indigenous penitent how to sin, thereby inducing guilt for a whole range of thoughts and actions to which representatives of colonial power, whether religious or secular, would not otherwise have access. Her ability—and her willingness—to police her own behavior according to the Christian system of values marks the penitent’s subjection to the Spanish colonial order (Klor de Alva, “Sin and Confession” 100; Gruzinski, “Confesión” 206-7). Both Gruzinski and Klor de Alva argue that the confessional manual, and more specifically the multilingual manual, enables missionary priests to enact this subjection throughout the colony by furnishing them with standard formulas for assessing compliance and inspiring guilt. The manual ensures that, regardless of the confessor’s own theological or linguistic competence, he can collect and impart the information necessary to enforce institutional interests; it gives him “the code for an extremely intimate and comprehensive mode of coercion that took hold of the individual

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<sup>22</sup> Trial records indicate that, despite its effectiveness in Europe, the Holy Office failed as both punitive system and a data-collection scheme in the Americas for several reasons: “First, ... charges were formally restricted to the types of crimes and breaches legally recognized as within the competence of the Holy Office. These included a significant but extremely small number of categories of acts that needed to be controlled by the colonial powers .... Second, there were legal restraints upon the interrogative procedures used that made it difficult for important but excludable information to enter the record. Third, the extreme and public nature of the penalties could serve as a warning to many but did so at the price of moving the key rebels who resisted the colonial order further underground, where it became more difficult to uproot them. Fourth, the cultural and demographic barriers between Indians and Europeans, the Holy Office’s legalistic procedures, and the Inquisition officials’ constant concern with status—all called for levels of financing, energy, and personnel that spelled the need for the institution to focus its attention and resources on what it knew best and ultimately feared most: heresy and deviance among Europeans” (Klor de Alva, “Colonizing Souls” 11-12). In addition, the Inquisition was a punitive technique designed specifically for baptized Christians (15-16).

body, family, and community in places otherwise inaccessible to the colonial powers” (Klor de Alva, “Sin and Confession” 100-1). The confessional manual also promotes the dissemination of a consistent set of social norms, ensuring that confessors assimilate the entire subject population to the same categories of sin, and thereby encouraging and discouraging the same behaviors in all penitents. This standardization of sins, because it facilitates surveillance, advances the interests of the colonial establishment more consistently and renders new colonial subjects more accessible to power.

Bilingual confessional manuals circulated in much of Spanish America in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Especially in the early decades of evangelization, they were important tools for missionaries, who often lacked the linguistic and cultural knowledge necessary to confess indigenous penitents effectively. Members of the regular clergy wrote many of these manuals in order to share their knowledge and experience with their confreres in the mission field. While some manuals circulated in manuscript form within the author’s religious order, others—usually the most authoritative and comprehensive—were published for wider use. In Mexico, the most popular manuals included the *Confessionario mayor* (1565, with additional editions in 1569 and 1578) by Franciscan Alonso de Molina, the *Doctrina Christiana muy cumplida* (1575) by Augustinian Juan de la Anunciación, the *Confesionario en lengua mexicana y castellana* (1600) by Franciscan Joan Baptista, and the *Camino del cielo* (1611) by Dominican Martín de León (Klor de Alva, “Sin and Confession” 92; Gruzinski, “Confesión” 174, 189, 192-93). While several members of the regular clergy in Peru also authored confessional manuals—including the “Confesión general” and “Plática para todos los indios” (written 1555, published 1560) by Dominican Domingo de Santo Tomás and the “Instrucción para los sacerdotes” (written between 1558 and 1565) by Mercedarian Diego de Porres—only a handful of those written in the first half-century of Peru’s colonization survive, none prior to 1545. This erasure of the archive is due to the very active role that the Church of Peru assumed in dictating the structure and content of catechetical materials intended for indigenous Andeans. In the years immediately following the conquest of Peru, the lack of Church infrastructure in the new colony meant that the few clergy on the ground adopted a rather haphazard approach to evangelizing the natives, determined largely by each individual missionary’s theological knowledge, personal spiritual priorities, and linguistic facility (Estenssoro Fuchs 17, 25). In 1545, the recently-arrived Bishop (later Archbishop) of Lima, Jerónimo de Loayza, forbade the circulation of all extant manuals and catechisms on pain of excommunication. His goal was to eliminate the linguistic and doctrinal inconsistencies that these materials had already generated among indigenous Christians; he wanted the Peruvian Church to settle on a single catechetical standard and to create an official corpus of multilingual texts for clergy to use in the field (Estenssoro Fuchs 26-27, 46).

With this goal in mind, Loayza convoked a provincial council in Lima in 1551. Anticipating fierce debate from his colleagues, he asked Charles V to issue a royal cédula ordering that the clergy in Peru put an end to the dangerous state of confusion that their competing evangelical strategies had engendered in the native population (Estenssoro Fuchs 38). Following guidelines that Loayza himself had penned in 1545 and revised in 1549, the Council required missionaries to teach the major prayers (the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, and Credo), the Ten Commandments, the works of mercy, and the articles of the faith in Spanish, but allowed the use of one specific catechism (the text of which, curiously enough, the delegates did not include in the Council’s constitutions) in Quechua, since it was the “lengua más general y de que más continuamente usan los naturales” (Vargas Ugarte I:1 7). The First Council of Lima also imposed strict penalties upon indigenous Christians who failed to make confession: caciques and their wives were

imprisoned for three to four days, while commoners received fifty lashes and had their heads shorn (Vargas Ugarte I:23 20).<sup>23</sup> Estenssoro Fuchs suggests that the Council's dependence upon threats of violence to induce Andeans to confess demonstrates “el deseo, y la dificultad, de individualizar la esperanza de conseguir la salvación y de controlar las consciencias de las autoridades indígenas”—all the more so because the penalties could only be imposed upon baptized converts capable of confessing in Spanish (38).

Over the next decade and a half, the regular and secular clergy in Peru came to believe that confession played a crucial role in the spiritual development of new Christians, and lobbied to improve indigenous converts' access to the sacrament. In 1567, when Loayza convoked a second council to decide how the Church of Peru would implement the decrees of the recently-concluded Council of Trent, he made the facilitation of indigenous participation in all the sacraments a priority (Estenssoro Fuchs 142). The Second Council of Lima decreed that missionary priests should teach their indigenous congregants about the need for confession, the annual obligation to confess, the importance of making a complete confession, and the method of examining one's conscience before confessing, and stipulated that the priests communicate all this information—and hear the resulting confessions—not through an interpreter, but in the penitents' own language (Vargas Ugarte II.1:13 226, II.1:81 235, II.2:49, 51-52 247).<sup>24</sup> To this end, they recommended that the Province undertake the composition of an official catechism and confessional manual to ensure “que se guarde por todos uniformidad en la doctrina y en el modo de enseñar a los indios” (Vargas Ugarte II.2:2 240).

The Third Council of Lima, convened in 1583 by Loayza's successor (and future saint) Toribio de Mogrovejo, undertook precisely this task. The delegates produced a catechism based on the *Roman Catechism* that Pope Pius V issued in 1565 to accompany the decrees of the Council of Trent, and assembled a confessional manual from extant materials authored by active missionaries, including some of those named above. The Third Council then handed these Spanish-language documents to a committee of translators, comprised of members of both the regular and secular clergy, to be rendered into Quechua and Aymara, the two most widely-spoken languages in Peru (N.B., the Jesuits Bartolomé de Santiago and Alonso Barzana, both cited in the *carta anua* above, contributed to the Quechua and Aymara translations, respectively). The two texts were intended to work in concert: missionaries would use the *Doctrina christiana* to instruct

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<sup>23</sup> Andean chronicler Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala complains about the Spanish confessors' cruel treatment of indigenous penitents in his *Primer nueva coronica y buen gobierno* (1615), writing that “los dichos padres, curas de confición son tan locos y coléricos y soberbiosos y brabos como leones y sauen más que sorra. Quando confiesa a los yndios o a las yndias, danle de puntillasos y bofetones y mugicones y le da muchos asotes. Y por ello se huyen de la confición y encubrin sus pecados. ... Aunque fuese bestia se huyría, que los dichos padres no lo hazen con amor y caridad el oficio que tiene de seruir a Dios como saserdote” (23.597). The illustrations accompanying this passage show priests punishing indigenous penitents who kneel, weeping, before them with hands folded in prayer—in one, a confessor chastises and kicks a pregnant woman; in another, a priest whips a naked man with knotted cords—to emphasize the brutal and indiscriminate application of these harsh penalties (Guaman Poma 23.590, 596).

<sup>24</sup> The ability to converse with indigenous Christians and possible converts in their own tongues was highly prized in sixteenth-century Peru, and both royal and ecclesiastical legislation incentivized the learning of Indian languages. For example, Pope Pius V rewarded all Catholic missionaries who could preach in American languages with 100 days of indulgence, and the Spanish Crown established university chairs in Quechua in Lima (1580) and in Quito (1581), “to examine those priests who intended to occupy parishes where Quechua was spoken. Royal decrees of 1580, 1603, 1605, 1622, and 1628 insisted that the religious learn and speak the languages traditionally found in their parishes” (Harrison, “Rhetoric” 4).

indigenous communities in the basic tenets of the faith, and the *Confessionario* to correct errors and assess obedience at the individual level (Estenssoro Fuchs 16-17, 182; Harrison, *Sin* 61, 118-19). The *Confessionario* served pedagogical, disciplinary, and rhetorical purposes. The general interrogation taught penitents the categories of sin; like Azpilcueta's *Manual de confesores*, it is organized according to the Ten Commandments, but with questions specific to the Andean context. It also includes batteries of questions specific to civic leaders like caciques and kurakas, lower-level bureaucrats such as *fiscales* and *alguaciles*, Andean spiritual leaders, "idolaters" who persist in worshipping their *huacas* (regional deities), and individuals who refuse to perform their assigned penances. The first two sets of questions remind indigenous functionaries of their responsibilities to both their superiors and inferiors in the colonial hierarchy, while the latter three attempt to persuade colonial subjects resistant to Christianization of the grave error of their ways. Both the general interrogation and these status-specific sections also contain brief exhortations about the dangers of worshipping idols, drinking to excess, and making incomplete or untruthful confessions; Estenssoro Fuchs argues that these monologues "constituyen pequeñas piezas de oratoria intimistas destinadas a un solo individuo," with the end of "cultivating" the penitent's conscience (182). During the tête-à-tête that confession accorded the missionary priest with his indigenous congregants, he sought to imbue the lessons imparted in the *Doctrina christiana* with greater personal significance and emotional resonance, and to ensure that they both knew and believed the central tenets of the faith.

To support this aim, the Council also published the *Tercero catecismo*, a collection of thirty-one sermons on the sacraments, the commandments, Christian virtues, the nature of sin, and the last judgment, in Spanish, Quechua, and Aymara.<sup>25</sup> Unlike the *Confessionario*, the *Tercero catecismo* is an optional resource—priests are not required to use nor to own it—but the Council's prologue suggests that they might find the sermons to be more persuasive than the catechism: "Tambien era menester que esta misma doctrina se les propusiese a los Indios en tal modo, que no solo la percibiesen, y formassen concepto de estas verdades christianas: pero tambien se persuadiessen a creerlas, y obrarlas como se requiere para ser saluos. Y para esto es necesario diferente estilo, y ha de ser como sermon o platica del predicador, y tal que enseñe, y agrade, y mueva a los oyentes, para que assi reciban la doctrina de Dios y la guardan" ([5v] 358). The narrative format of the sermon, as opposed to the interrogative structure of catechism and confession, gives missionaries the opportunity to exercise their oratorical skill. It also allows for the incorporation of Biblical parables and extended analogies between Christian and pre-Hispanic culture and mythology. Like the *Confessionario*'s brief exhortations, these sermons aim to elicit an emotional response from their indigenous audience, whether the desire for the rewards of heaven, the guilt of offending a generous God, or the fear of the torments of hell. The *Confessionario* and the *Tercero catecismo*'s sermons on sin and confession use many of the same metaphors and rhetorical tactics that we saw in Azpilcueta and fray Luís: the representation of sin as

<sup>25</sup> Estenssoro Fuchs notes that "la verdadera historia de la redacción de estos sermones queda por el momento como un enigma cuya respuesta dará seguramente elementos para conocer mejor todos los entretelones y profundos debates que acompañaron el diseño de las políticas de evangelización durante el tercer concilio. Si es indudable que durante el concilio no se leyeron ni aprobaron estos textos, hay más de un indicio para sospechar que ya habían sido redactados para entonces. Ello llevaría a tener que pensar en una eventual dificultad para hacerlos aceptar como parte integrante de los materiales oficiales. En el índice del primero de los volúmenes impresos por el concilio, la *Doctrina christiana* (anterior a la supuesta redacción de los sermones), figura ya una 'Exposición de la Doctrina christiana, por Sermones' que hubiese debido integrar la primera parte, agrupando según este plan los tres catecismos, y comenzar en la página 83 (*Doctrina* 1584: [7]). El lapsus es demasiado evidente como para que pueda ser explicado como una simple errata" (n. 37, pp. 220-21).

a spiritual illness; the emphasis on the penitent's indebtedness to God and the offense she causes him by sinning; and the promotion of complete confession as protection against eternal suffering.

Like the peninsular manuals, the Third Council's materials attempt to secure the space of the indigenous penitent's conscience for future interventions by inspiring a psychological need for the sacrament through the guilt of offending a generous God, the threat of eternal punishment, and the fear of spiritual illness. Confession is the only remedy for these afflictions, and its application is especially urgent for the recent convert to Christianity, who has unknowingly alienated the all-powerful deity who controls her soul's fate. God takes offense at her disregard for his laws and her ingratitude for his many gifts—particularly because she bestows the honor and reverence that he deserves upon some of the creations he designed expressly for her benefit. One of the fundamental lessons of the *Doctrina christiana* is that natural bodies like the sun, moon, and mountains are not themselves gods, but rather objects that God made for humankind. This lesson appears in both the “Catecismo breve para los rudos y ocupados” and the more detailed “Catecismo mayor, para los que son más capaces,” the latter of whom the Third Council evidently deems more capable of grasping the reasons that idolatry angers God:

**P.** Pues el Sol, la Luna, Estrellas, Luzero, Rayo, no son Dios?

**R.** Nada de esso es Dios, mas son hechura de Dios que hizo el cielo y la tierra y todo lo que ay en ellos, para el bien del hombre. (“Catecismo breve” [14r] 47)

**P.** Pues el sol, la luna, las estrellas, el trueno, las cumbres de los montes, y los ríos, fuentes, y tierra fértil, y las otras cosas, que adoran los Indios viejos no son Dios?

**R.** Nada de esso es Dios, y quien lo adora enoja a Dios, y le quita su honra cometiéndolo contra el grandissimo peccado y ofensa. (“Catecismo mayor” [31r-v] 81-82)

Not unlike Azpilcueta's invocation of the beloved, this characterization of idolatry as depriving God of the honor his generosity merits highlights the personal nature of the offense; the sin not only violates God's law, but also hurts his feelings—which fact is more immediately conducive to guilt in penitents to whom, as yet, God remains relatively unknown.<sup>26</sup>

The *Confessionario* and the *Tercero catecismo* redouble this guilt by telling the penitent how much God loves her, thereby making her disrespect and ingratitude all the more hurtful. The

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<sup>26</sup> Perhaps the clearest expression of this generosity appears in one of the documents upon which the Third Council's materials draw: the “Plática para todos los indios,” a short sermon in Spanish and Quechua included in the *Grammatica quichua* (1560) of fray Domingo de Santo Tomás. Santo Tomás, the second bishop of Charcas, was provincial of the Dominicans in Peru and a close ally of Bartolomé de Las Casas, alongside whom he lobbied King Philip II to protect and acknowledge indigenous dominion and property rights (Harrison, *Sin* 29; Adorno 85-86). In the “Plática,” Santo Tomás establishes the penitent's indebtedness to God by emphasizing his beneficence and generosity in creating this world entirely for her: “Mucho tiempo ha no avía cielo, ni sol, ni luna, ni estrellas, ni avía este mundo inferior, ni en él avía ovejas, ni venados, ni zorras, ni aves, ni mar, ni pexes, ni árboles, ni otra cosa alguna. Solamente entonces avía Dios. ... Hizo y crió el cielo, la tierra, y todo lo demás que ay en ellos. Hizo el cielo para casa y morada de los ángeles y de los buenos hombres. Hizo el sol para dar resplandor y alumbrar el día. También crió la luna, juntamente con las estrellas, para alumbrar la noche y darle claridad. Hizo este mundo para que nosotros los hombres viviésemos, anduviésemos y morásemos en él. Hizo el aire para que respirásemos, las aves, los pexes, y todo lo demás que ay criado, todo lo hizo y crió para nosotros los hombres. Algunas cosas dellas crió para que nosotros comiésemos. Otras para que nos ayudassen y sirviessen en nuestras necesidades. Otras para que nos gozásemos y holgásemos en verlas” (172-74). These gestures of pure generosity and pure concern for human wellbeing lay the groundwork for the inspiration of guilt in the confessional.

*Confessionario* depicts God as an adoring father with infinite patience for his wayward child; no matter how many times she offends him, he continues to provide for her and to await her return with open arms: “No peques mas hijo mio, y buelute de coraçon a Dios nuestro señor que te ha esperado, y te quiere saluar, mira quan bien Dios es, y como es tu padre, que te dio el ser que tienes, y te sustenta y da todos los bienes que tienes. Y porque te ama como a hijo ha sufrido tus peccados, aunque le has offendido mucho, y agora te llama y combida a que hagas penitencia y le pidas perdon” ([22r] 239). Like the *Guía de pecadores*, the *Confessionario* uses hyperbolic language (“el ser que tienes”, “todos los bienes que tienes”) to underscore the penitent’s indebtedness to God. This recitation of her debts, in combination with God’s almost pathetic eagerness to forgive them—he waits patiently for his child, never losing hope that she might return to ask his pardon—is clearly intended to tug at the penitent’s heartstrings. The *Tercero cathecismo* takes a different tack, appealing to the penitent’s reason to contextualize her transgressions and justify God’s anger. Building on the *Confessionario*’s God-as-father motif, Sermon II articulates the penitent’s relationship to God in terms of human analogues that entail mutual affection but also submission and respect: child-parent, servant-master, and subject-king:

Si vuestro hijo, a quien vos engendrastes y criastes, y les manteneys, es rebelde y desobediente, y os dize palabras feas, y toma vn palo para daros con el, que direys deste mal hijo? que merece por tanta maldad? Si el criado roba la hazienda a su señor, y dize mal del, que hara el señor, no se enojara? no le castigara como a malo? Dios es vuestro padre, que os crio y dio el ser que teneys, y os mantiene. Dios es vuestro señor, y vuestro Rey, en cuya casa estays (que toda la tierra es casa suya) pues no os parece que auiendoos el hecho tanto bien, y siendo tan gran Rey, y señor se enojara con razon, que vos le offendays y le desprecieys, y le quebranteys su ley? Si que se enojara mucho, y con mucha razón. ([15v-16r] 378-79).

Just as parents or benefactors take offense when their children or beneficiaries ignore their rules or take advantage of their generosity, so God takes offense when his subjects disregard his laws and fail to acknowledge his benevolence. These analogies make God’s anger at their transgressions both justifiable and relatable. Tellingly, this passage also refers to relationships of subjection that exist within the colonial order, so that in justifying God’s anger toward disobedient Christians, the text also implicitly justifies the encomendero’s anger toward a disobedient laborer, or the King’s toward a disobedient vassal. In all these cases, the penitent should recognize her debts and duties to her benefactor and feel guilt for offending him.

In addition to inducing guilt, the *Confessionario* and the *Tercero cathecismo* attempt to frighten the penitent with threats of eternal suffering and spiritual illness. Her sins, though committed unknowingly, still carry heavy penalties, including the poisoning of the soul and condemnation to the torments of hell.<sup>27</sup> The *Confessionario* tells the penitent that sin has rotted her soul,

<sup>27</sup> The Third Council’s materials seem to take it for granted that the penitent, despite having no previous knowledge of the existence of God or his laws, is nevertheless responsible for her offenses against them. In this assumption, they follow Santo Tomás, who in his “Plática” encourages his indigenous listeners to beg God to forgive *them*, despite their having been led into error by malicious demons: “Estos demonios son los que a nosotros cada día nos aconsejan el peccado, engañándonos y persuadiéndonos lo malo, y a vosotros (aunque no lo véis) os ponen en vuestros coraçones malos pensamientos, os dizen adorad el sol, a la luna, a las piedras, a los ídolos. Y por esto avéis enojado con vuestros peccados mucho a Dios nuestro señor. Por esso avisad de aquí adelante, y no lo hagáis assí como hasta agora, sino de aquí adelante emendaos de vuestros peccados, y con vuestros coraçones y pensamientos allegaos a Dios nuestro señor, diziendo: ‘O, señor mío, vos sois mi

leaving it so shriveled and blackened that it disgusts even God, her loving father: “El peccado, es como vna ponçoña que que mata el Alma: y si viesses tu anima qual esta con esos peccados que has hecho ternias gran dolor. Porque el peccado la ha parado muy negra y muy fea. Tanto que la aborrece el mismo Dios que la crió” ([21r-v] 237-38). The fact that the penitent cannot see her soul makes this revelation especially distressing; she has been carrying a rotted, dying thing inside her for years without knowing it. The *Tercero cathecismo* describes this putrefaction’s effects on the soul in greater detail, explaining that sin is like snake venom, “vna pestilencia que corrompe, y hiere de muerte el alma que toca” ([13v] 374). Sin affects the soul in the same way that death affects the body; no matter how beautiful it once was, it becomes ugly, dirty, and foul. It also loses its force and vigor, and becomes unable to defend itself: “Era primero vn moço rezió y valiente despues de muerte no se menea, ni anda, ni habla ni siente, y si lo echays al muladar, o le pisays no se defiende” ([13v-14r] 374-75). As Azpilcueta warns, sin atrophies the soul, stripping its powers of self-defense and leaving it more vulnerable to future temptations. In this weakened state, the soul has especial need of support and protection, but its distasteful appearance alienates everyone who might be able to help, including God: “Todos huyen del muerto, porque espanta, y huele mal. ... [El peccado] quita la vida spiritual que es Dios y el alma apartada de Dios, queda fea, y suzia” ([14r] 375). Like fray Luis’s rudderless ship, the *Tercero cathecismo*’s sinning soul faces the world alone and unprotected.

This lack of protection has high stakes. If the penitent dies without first curing her spiritual illness, her soul will be “condenada a ser sepultada en el infierno, y padecer eternos tormentos” ([14r] 375). To impress the gravity of her situation upon the penitent, the *Confessionario* focuses on the unbearable pain of hellfire, enjoining her to imagine enduring such extreme torment for a single day, let alone an eternity:

Vn solo peccado mortal merece tormento de fuego para siempre en el infierno. Dime que sentirías, si te pusiesen en el fuego vn día entero? Y si te hiziessen estar ardiendo diez días que sentirías? Pues como estaras ardiendo en el infierno vn año? Y diez años? Y cien años? Y mil años cuerpo y alma, y para siempre jamas sin fin? ... O que cosa tan mala es el peccado que lleva al infierno. Quantos hombres están alla pensando para siempre por peccados como esos que tu has hecho? Y si tu vuieras muerto en ellos, donde estuuieras agora? ([21r-v] 237-38)

The insistent repetition of the central question (how would it feel?) and exponential increase in the duration of suffering (a day, ten days, a year, ten years) conveys the incomprehensibility of the torment that sinning souls experience in hell. By beginning the sequence with “un día entero,” rather than “un solo día,” the text communicates the horror of the punishment—that the prospect of one day in flames is already worse than anything humans can imagine—rather than the penitent’s weakness. The *Confessionario* requires the priest to lead the penitent through this thought exercise immediately after she has completed her confession, consolidating her need for

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señor y criador, hasta agora no os he conocido, y assí (adorando los ídolos) os he mucho enojado. De aquí adelante me emendaré, y nunca más peccaré. Y a vos solo adoraré y amaré, más que a todas las cosas” (“Plática” 176-78). The prayer that Santo Tomás exhorts his listeners to recite prompts them to accept responsibility for their actions (“assí ... os he mucho enojado”) despite the fact that they did not know they were sins according to his law (“hasta agora no os he conocido”), and were in fact manipulated into sinning by demons. Santo Tomás refers to the precedent of Adam and Eve, whom God held responsible for violating his commandment despite the serpent’s influence, to justify this requirement (Plática 176).

the sacrament and his ongoing access to her conscience by intensifying her relief at having escaped the fate of so many other sinners, and reminding her to return when she sins again.

Happily, the damage is not irreversible. The penitent can overcome illness and escape damnation simply by confessing all her sins to the priest and making a faithful effort to follow God's laws in the future. The *Tercero catecismo* entreats the penitent to take advantage of the confessor's curative powers, seeking him out for spiritual remedies just as she seeks out healers and doctors for bodily ones:

Quando te duele el vientre, o tienes hinchado el pescueço, u otro mal que te da mucha pena, no huelgas de que te curen? No agradeces al medico que te sana, con yerbas o emplastos? No le das gracias y aun se lo pagas? Si tu oueja tiene caracha, no la vntas y curas? Pues porque a tu anima la dexas morir en el peccado teniendo al medico de valde? Ea hijos mios, de aqui adelante no vengays de mala gana a la confession. Mas muy contentos por la merced que Dios os haze de sanar vuestras animas con tanta blandura, y con tanto amor: porque es el vuestro padre, y os quiere curar y sanar, como a hijos suyos, para que limpios del peccado alcanceys su gracia y despues la gloria del cielo. (XI [65v-66r] 478-79)

Here we return to the sin-as-disease motif, which analogizes the confessor to a physician and the penitent to his patient. This metaphor positions the priest as an ally and benefactor, rather than an agent of discipline. He not only desires the penitent's wellbeing, but also possesses the means to realize it: he can restore her soul to health, reconcile her to God, and teach her to how to maintain this state in the future. In this way, the *Confesionario* and the *Tercero catecismo* aim to reinforce the penitent's psychological need for the sacrament through a positive association with the priest who administers it. The disclosure of her sins to a representative of colonial power thereby becomes a form of consolation, an instance of healing and relief from the guilt and anxiety that sin inspires (Gruzinski, "Individualization" 99-100).<sup>28</sup>

Having established in his penitent the need to confess, the priest must teach her how to do so. Like the *Manual de confesores* and the *Guía de pecadores*, the Third Council's doctrinal materials enlist the penitent in her own surveillance by presenting self-examination and self-policing as the keys to a successful confession—in fact, in keeping with their acculturative mission, they insist even more strongly on this point. Despite their greater access to and leverage over the indigenous penitent's conscience, confessors still face some of the challenges that larger disciplinary bodies like the Holy Office confront in the New World. For example, the Inquisition's policy of imposing public penalties for crimes against the faith helped to deter idolatry and recidivism among some indigenous Christians, but it also pushed holdouts and resistance movements further underground, ultimately making them harder for the Church to detect and extirpate. Analogously, fear of God's wrath, the priest's retribution, the shame of recounting particularly

<sup>28</sup> Gruzinski argues that confession did in some cases provide support and comfort to indigenous individuals traumatized by the process of deculturation, serving as "a defensive and therapeutic mechanism, capable of appeasing not only the anguish raised by its own practice but also the traumas generated by colonial rule. Furthermore, by conferring a meaning to the new order, to the new misfortunes, and to the multiplicity of new cultural references overtaking the indigenous reality, confession helped create a buffer between the traditional cultures and naked violence of colonial exploitation. If we fail to take into account the ambiguity of this Catholic rite, we run the risk of remaining ignorant about the adaptive strategies conceived by certain sectors of the indigenous population, and of overlooking attitudes and activities that reflect the capacity of reception, assimilation, and recreation on the part of the indigenous cultures in colonial society" ("Individualization" 111).



scandalous offenses, and the risks of public exposure and humiliation prompted some penitents to avoid confession altogether, or at the very least to leave their—or their neighbors’—most inflammatory behaviors unmentioned (Klor de Alva, “Colonizing Souls” 11-12; Harrison, *Sin* 75-76). The 1577 *carta anua* from the Jesuits in Peru recounts, for instance, the long-overdue reconciliation of an Andean Christian who had avoided confession for seven years because he feared that the priest would punish him for helping a friend to commit suicide: “Acudio un pobre yndio enfermo que auia siete años que por miedo de los curas tenia encubierto un peccado y hera que rogandole otro yndio hechizero que le enterrase viuo por miedo que tuuo del padre que otros le auian acusado lo hizo assi. Y assi quiso mas el otro de su enturado ser enterrado viuo que no castigado por el cura” (Acosta 23r). This example is particularly illuminating because the friend, we learn, was also motivated by his fear of the priest’s anger. He preferred suicide to the priest’s retribution for his sins of idolatry. Thus, for fear of punishment, the fact of this man’s status as a shaman and his continued engagement in pagan worship did not reach the ears of a priest for at least seven years—hardly an evangelical success story.

The Third Council’s materials attempt to eliminate these fear- and shame-based lacunæ in the penitent’s confession, and thereby to achieve panoptical supervision over her conscience, in two ways: first, by reassuring her of the inviolable secrecy of the confessional; and second, by making incomplete confession a sin in itself, so as to leverage the fear and shame of offending God as a countermeasure. The exhortation that the *Confessionario* asks the priest to deliver before examining the penitent reminds the latter that she can only escape spiritual illness and eternal torment by confessing all of her sins, and that skipping even one will render her confession invalid. However, the priest counters this threat with the reassurance that he faces the same penalties for sharing anything that she discloses in the confessional with another person:

Si tu assi te dueles de tus peccados y los manifiestas todos, seras saluo; si escondes alguno, no te valdra nada la confession: antes haras de nueuo otro mayor peccado. Por esso dilos todos, y no temas, ni ayas verguença, que por muy feos que sean, te los perdonara Dios: y yo no los dire a nadie aunque me maten, ni me enojare, ni te castigare: antes te querre mucho, y de parte de Dios te absoluere y perdonare tus peccados, y olvidare todo lo que me uvieres dicho, como si los echasses en medio de la mar. Por que nuestro Dios manda, que los padres no descubramos ningun peccado que se nos dize en confession. Y si lo dixessemos, yriamos al infierno para siempre y aun aca seriamos castigados con terribles penas si descubriessemos cosa alguna de lo que sabemos en confession ... assi descubre todo tu coraçon. ([5v-6v] 206-8)

This breathless insistence upon the proscriptions against punishing the penitent or revealing her secrets attempts to prevent situations like the one the Jesuits described, in which penitents either avoid the confessional or omit particularly egregious sins for fear of public shame or retribution. Instead, the priest incentivizes complete confession by offering his love and alliance (“te querre mucho,” “no los dire aunque me maten”) as a reward, in addition to God’s forgiveness. Just in case these promises have loosened the penitent’s tongue, the *Confessionario* gives her an opportunity to disclose any sins that she might have omitted from previous confessions, instructing the priest to ask her for how many years she has concealed each one ([4v] 204).

The *Tercero cathecismo* urges the penitent to confess all her sins by building on the fear and revulsion she has already been made to feel about the putrefaction of her soul. While sin in general is a venom that corrupts the soul, each individual sin is an ugly toad that sits inside the penitent’s body, and which she can only expel by confessing it:

Sabe que quantos peccados dizes, tantos demonios y sapos feos vomitas, y si callas alguno, todos se bueluen luego a ti. Vn Christiano se confessaua vna vez, y vio otro Christiano, que como se yua confessando sus peccados, assi le yua saliendo por su boca otros tantos sapos muy suzios: y vio mas que de aya vn rato (porque aquel Christiano callo un peccado por verguença del Confessor) que luego boluieron todos los sapos a entrarse vno a vno por la boca. Veys hermanos que haze el callar algun peccado, o mentir diciendo menos, o mas de lo que se acuerda. (*Tercero cathecismo* XII [68r-69r] 483-85).

The revelation that the sinner's body is infested with vermin is deeply disturbing. The sermon relies on tactile and gustatory imagery—the sensation of vomiting and then swallowing wriggling, slimy toads—to elicit a strong visceral response in the listener. Moreover, the toads are not metaphorical; the passage describes them in literal language and cites an eyewitness account. As Estenssoro Fuchs says, “no se trata de un símil o de una metáfora”: the sermon leads the penitent to believe that she will suffer these consequences if she makes an incomplete confession (145).

As in Azpilcueta and fray Luís, the obligation to complete confession entails the anterior obligation to self-examination. Here again, the priest presents himself as an ally who shares these obligations out of concern for the penitent's wellbeing, and conveniently knows how she can best fulfill them. The *Confessionario* considers self-examination a prerequisite for complete confession; before beginning his interrogation, the priest must ask the penitent, “Agora para confessarse has pensado bien tus peccados?” ([4v] 204). If she replies in the negative, he can refuse to proceed. However, the confessional offers important pedagogical opportunities, especially for new penitents. Priests can impart the categories of sin directly through the interrogation; the *Confessionario* recommends that, in addition to the questions the text provides for the Ten Commandments, priests use their knowledge of the penitent or the community to develop their own questions around the seven deadly sins ([20r] 235; Harrison, *Sin* 118-19). Priests can also provide their penitents with remedies against these sins by teaching them about good Christian habits—including, of course, daily self-examination:

Que obras hazes de Christiano para saluarte? Que rezas? Y quando? Y a que fin? Das alguna limosna? O hazes algun bien? Tienes alguna deuocion de ayunar o hazer otra penitencia? Piensas algun rato de Iesu Christo? Y en su sagrada passion, o en las cosas de la otra vida? como son los tormentos de los malos, y la gloria de los buenos? Que esas cosas hacen los buenos christianos, y especialmente a la mañana quando se leuantan llaman a Dios, se ofrecen a el pidiendole ayuda para no peccar aquel dia, y a la noche antes de dormir miran si han hecho algun peccado, y piden perdon a Dios, proponiendo de confessarle al padre, y emendarse de a y en adelante. ([20r-v] 235-36)

The *Confessionario* promotes the penitent's assimilation of Christian norms by associating the adoption of these habits with salvation, and the failure to observe them with sin. However, the text singles out the daily efforts to follow God's law and to scrutinize one's own behavior for instances of sin as the defining features of the good Christian. Most importantly, this self-examination achieves surveillance through complete confession and self-policing; the penitent should disclose the sins that she uncovers during her evening ritual to the priest at her next confession, and in the meantime should strive to emend her behavior to avoid repeat offenses.

The *Tercero cathecismo* gives the penitent more specific instructions for conducting the nightly self-examination, telling her not only what questions to ask herself, but also how to

remember and record her answers. Sermon XII recommends that she keep an account of her sins, a running tally of which ones she has committed and how many times, in the same way that she might keep an account of the goods in a storehouse:

Has de pensar bien tus peccados, y hazer quipo dellos: como hazes quipo, quando eres tambo camayo, de lo que das, y de lo que te deuen: assi haz quipo de lo que has hecho, contra Dios y contra tu proximo, y quantas vezes: si muchas, o si pocas. Y no solo has de dezir tus obras: sino tambien tus pensamientos malos: quando, si pudieras, los pusieras por obra si desseaste peccar con fulana, y la miraste para esso: si quisieras hurtar la manta, o el carnero de otro, y lo dexasse porque no te castigasse el Corregidor, si te enojaste con el Padre, o con el Curaca, y no te atreuiste a herille, pero en tu coraçon quisieras hazello. Todo esto hijos mios, aueys de dezillo: porque tambien por los peccados del coraçon que no se ven, se condenan los hombres. Despues de auerte pesado, y hecho quippo de tus peccados por los diez mandamientos, o como mejor supieres, has de pedir a Dios perdon con mucho dolor de auelle offendido, y enojado y dezille, que te emendaras, y no peccaras mas, y tu diras todas tus culpas al padre. (XII [67v-68r] 482-83)

In a fascinating attempt at syncretism, the *Tercero cathecismo* here encourages the penitent to repopulate a familiar Andean structure of thought with new Christian content. The *kipu* (“quipo”) was an Incan mnemonic technology for accounting and historical record-keeping, composed of knotted cords; the “tambo camayo” (*tampu kamayuk*), or storekeeper, used *kipus* to keep track of his inventory (Charles 12, 17-18).<sup>29</sup> This enthusiastic endorsement of the *kipu* as a sacramental aid is perhaps the strongest evidence of the Peruvian Church’s eagerness to extract complete confessions from its indigenous subjects. Sixteenth-century missionaries used confession to eliminate many aspects of Andean culture, such as the worship of *huacas* and the consumption of coca, but actively encouraged penitents to repurpose the *kipu* to keep “accounts” of their sins and to create public records of important religious doctrines and instructions, such as the Ten Commandments (Charles 15-18).<sup>30</sup> The Church embraces this particular

<sup>29</sup> N.B., *Tampus* functioned as both storehouses and lodging houses for Inca functionaries, and were situated along the Incan royal roads throughout the empire. Guaman Poma lists the locations of all the *tampus* in Chapter 35 of the *Primer nueva corónica* (see pp. 1092-1103).

<sup>30</sup> While the Jesuits claim to have been the first religious order to promote the confessional use of *kipus*, the Dominicans and the Mercedarians are more likely candidates (Estenssoro Fuchs 149). Porres recommends the use of *kipus* for doctrinal (though not confessional) purposes in the early 1560s, before the Society of Jesus had arrived in Peru. For example, he suggests that each village should make a *kipu* recording the First Council of Lima’s requirements for indigenous Christians, so that no one can conveniently claim to have forgotten them: “En presencia de todos, leerles y declararles, lo que manda la sancta sínodo, y dárselo por quipo, al cacique, por que no pretendan ignorancia de lo que allí les obliga y manda” (27). Porres also recommends the use of the *kipu* as a prayer manual; he instructs missionary priests to order all the villagers “que ningun yndio biejo ni muchacho daran sin el tal quipo para que por allí sepan las dichas oraciones, y que siempre lo traigan consigo” (28). Here, the *kipu* serves as a portable reminder of God’s law, to ensure that the indigenous Christian can recite her prayers and say her catechism wherever she goes. While the use of confessional *kipus* had achieved wide acceptance among missionaries by the 1580s, as reflected in their inclusion in the *Confessionario* and *Tercero cathecismo*, they fell out of favor in the following half-century; by 1631, prominent priests like Juan Pérez Bocanegra argued that *kipus* undermined, rather than promoted, the proper practice of confession (Charles 13, 18-19) (see Pérez Bocanegra, *Ritual formulario e institución de curas*, ed. Oscar Paredes Pando, Universidad Nacional de San Antonio Abad del Cusco, 2012). Among Andeans, however, the

technology because it makes Andean Christians more effective agents of their own surveillance. By making *kipus* of her sins, the penitent becomes the keeper of her own spiritual storehouse. Rather than tracking how many units she has of each different good, she tracks instances of each different sin: how many times she lusted after a neighbor, considered stealing a sheep, or fantasized about punching a priest. The sermon stresses that the penitent should track not only sins of action, but also sins of thought. The examples provided—wanting to steal someone’s blanket but abstaining for fear of the corregidor; thinking about harming the kuraka but not daring to follow through—reinforce the sinfulness of disobeying political leaders, but they also evince an intriguing preoccupation with the effectiveness of the colonial hierarchy. Tracking the indigenous penitent’s sins of thought, it seems, helps priests determine how much they fear and respect representatives of both secular and religious power.

Having implanted in the penitent’s conscience both the guilt of having offended a loving deity and the complex armature of self-surveillance, the confessor has only to declare definitively which acts constitute sins. It is in the Lima manuals’ identification of sins that the intermingling of the ecclesiastical and political agendas in the colony emerges most clearly. By re-encoding behaviors non-Christian, non-Spanish behaviors as offenses against God, confessors can access and direct indigenous activities in all spheres of life—social, sexual, political, and economic—and thereby initiate the positive feedback loop of power and knowledge through which the colonial order consolidates its control over its newest subjects.<sup>31</sup> Klor de Alva explains that, while New-World confessional manuals incorporated different questions based on their target populations and regional politics, they shared a single fundamental goal:

to Christianize the natives and to transform them into peaceful, loyal subjects of the colonial administration. This required ... investigation into economic behavior to root out whatever was considered unjust by the Spanish sector, which benefited extensively from restrictions on native commercial activity; the promotion of forms of political organization that favored the colonial hierarchy and promoted native

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practice seems to have remained popular. In 1615, Guaman Poma incorporates the use of confessional *kipus* in his definition of confession—“los dichos padres del santo sacramento de la confición mande exsaminar su ánima y consencia una semana el dicho penetente, aunque sea español. Y el yndio haga quipo [cordeles con nudos] de sus pecados”—and Regina Harrison met a priest in Cuzco in the 1990s who “remembered seeing confessional *kipus* years ago, when Quechua-speaking penitents pulled out their knotted strings to speak of their sins in color. Black knots (for homicide), red knots (for sexual sins), yellow (hypocrisy), gray (lies), orangish/red (theft), green (a kiss on the chin)” (Guaman Poma 23.616; Harrison, *Sin* viii).

<sup>31</sup> The effort to re-encode undesirable cultural practices as sins is apparent even in much shorter confessional guides, such as the one-paragraph “confesión general” that Domingo de Santo Tomás includes in his 1560 *Lexicón* of the Quechua language. Santo Tomás designed this general confession—which, as Porres tells us, indigenous Christians would recite when they gathered in the absence of a priest (see p. 128 above)—to remind its users of the general categories of sin, but he has also tailored those categories to the Andean context: “Yo muy gran pecador, me confieso y digo todos mis pecados a Dios, y a Santa María, y a Santo Domingo, y a todos los santos, y a vos padre que he pecado mucho, en mal pensar, en mal hablar, hablando en vano, comiendo y bebiendo demasiado, mal obrando, riendo, haciendo burla de otros, andando en balde, jugando, jurando, siendo negligente y perezoso en bien obrar. Por tanto de todos estos mis pecados me pesa, y me enmendaré de ellos, y no volveré más a pecar. Y ruego a [la] señora Santa María Virgen y madre de Dios y a todos los santos rueguen a Dios por mí, y en tu nombre me absolváis de ellos. Amen” (“Confesión general” 450). We can trace clear evocations of the Ten Commandments and the seven deadly sins (thinking bad thoughts, speaking in vain, eating and drinking to excess) in this recitation, but also certain undesirable behaviors (gambling, negligence or laziness in one’s work) that the colonial regime is eager to stamp out.

subordination to approved local leaders; and the imposition of moral comportment that would lead to social peace, the adoption of European ideals of proper sexual behavior, and the moderation of personal habits in order to make the penitent conform with the Spanish model of docile servitude. All this was encouraged by designating deviations as sinful and therefore subject to temporal and eternal punishments. (“Sin and Confession” 92)

Colonial confessional manuals prohibited an impressive diversity of indigenous behaviors under the rubric of the Ten Commandments, which in addition to regulating religious and social life could be interpreted to encompass sexual activity (the Sixth Commandment, *no fornicarás*), political activity (the Second, Fourth, and Eighth Commandments, *no jurarás, honrarás a tu padre y madre, no levantarás falso testimonio*), and economic activity (the Seventh Commandment).<sup>32</sup> As we’ve already seen, confessors encouraged their penitents to obey representatives of colonial power, including kurakas, corregidores, encomenderos, and, of course, the King. As Inca market-goers transitioned from a barter to a monetary system, priests also asked penitents whether they misled or manipulated buyers in the marketplace and whether they participated in price-fixing schemes, the creation of monopolies on specific goods, and other forms of collusion among sellers. Indigenous functionaries like *alguaciles* and *fiscales* encountered questions about misappropriation of public funds and the enforcement of Spanish laws of inheritance, while caciques and kurakas, hereditary Inca leaders who were often exempt from paying tribute to Spanish encomenderos, were asked about abuses of power and the legitimacy of their titles (Harrison, *Sin* 183 and 193; *Confessionario* [15v-17v] 226-30).

Many of the questions in the *Confessionario* encourage the penitent’s assimilation to Spanish social norms by prohibiting pre-Hispanic cultural practices, including the worship of *huacas*, the consultation of shamans, the consumption of alcohol, and ritual community dances (*taki*). The worship of idols falls squarely within the ambit of the First Commandment, but the *Confessionario* also extends the proscription to encompass any interactions with non-Christian spiritual guides or healers, as well as any endorsement of pre-Christian customs:

Has adorado huacas, villcas, cerros, ríos, al sol, o otras cosas? ...

Haste confessado con algun hechizero?

Haste curado con algun hechizero? Haslo llamado o hecho llamar para tus necesidades? ...

Has persuadido a otros a que idolatren y hagan cosas al modo de los antiguos o has fauorecido a los tales que persuaden esso? ([6v-7v] 208-10)

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<sup>32</sup> I won’t address the *Confessionario*’s treatment of the Sixth Commandment in detail here, but it does receive more attention than any other commandment in the text (twenty-two questions in total; the Fifth Commandment is next, with fourteen; the others receive between four and ten). This uneven distribution reflects the evangelizers’ investment in altering indigenous sexual practices to conform more closely with Christian norms, particularly around virginity, requirements for marriage, and multiple partners. The majority of the questions are oriented toward male penitents, and in general they are more detailed than those for the other commandments. In addition to questions about premarital and extramarital sex, there are also questions about incest—sleeping with relatives, or with women who are related to one another (two sisters, mother and daughter, any relative of one’s wife)—and about the observance of Christian norms in one’s relationship, masturbation, sodomy, and bestiality (*Confessionario* [11r-12v] 217-20). For more on the confessional regulation of sexuality in the colonial context, see Gruzinski, “Confesión, alianza y sexualidad” and “La ‘conquista de los cuerpos’” (cited below).

By labelling the consultation of *hechiceros* for either spiritual or physical needs a sin, the Church guards its monopoly over the indigenous penitent's conscience. With these questions, the priest appoints himself her sole spiritual guide and healer, thereby reinforcing the penitent's need for the sacrament and guaranteeing his continued access to her disclosures of sin.<sup>33</sup> The vague prohibition against doing things "al modo de los antiguos" gives the priest *carte blanche* to forbid any customs he considers contrary to Christian or Spanish norms. However, one custom that colonial authorities find particularly undesirable, drunkenness, receives its own treatment under the Fifth Commandment (*no matarás*). The *Confessionario* excuses this intervention by labelling drunkenness a form of "self-harm," which the Fifth Commandment forbids: "Haste priuado de tu juyzio emborrachandote, o sido causa que otros se emborrachen, induziendoles, o forçandoles a ellos?" ([10r] 215). The interdiction of drunkenness has economic as well as moral aims; here, the priest promotes the interests of the encomenderos and mine owners by seeking to maximize the productivity of their labor force.

The questions for caciques and kurakas also promote the substitution of Spanish and Christian norms for Andean ones by holding indigenous leaders responsible for the extirpation of pre-Christian rites in their communities. According to the *Confessionario*, the cacique violates the First Commandment not only when he himself commits idolatry, but also when he fails to name idolaters or *hechiceros* to the priest, when he allows idols to remain on his lands, and when he leads his subjects or allows them participate in any pre-Christian rite:

Has encubierto a los hechizeros, idolatras, y a los amancebados, y has recebido algun cohecho para esto?

Tienes, o sabes de algunos cohaderos, o ídolos que aya en tu tierra, o en las Chacras, y hechizeros a quien acudas en tus necesidades?

Has hecho taquies y borracheras particulares, o publicas donde se hagan ritos anti-guos y otros peccados? ([16v] 228)

The priest makes the cacique an agent of acculturation by predicating his salvation upon the Christianization of his subjects. This re-encoding of pre-Hispanic customs as violations of the First and Fifth Commandments enables missionary priests to promote the adoption of Spanish and Christian social norms and to install local policing against idolatry, *taki*, and other rites.

As mentioned earlier, the Seventh Commandment (*no hurtarás*) allows the priest to inquire after the penitent's economic activities. The sin of "theft" encompasses obvious violations like stealing objects from the local church as well as subtle instances of financial manipulation like price fixing and usury:

Has hurtado algo de la Yglesia, o alguna cosa sagrada? ...

Has engañado a otros vendiendo y comprando en el Tianguetz, o en otra parte?

Has prestado dinero o otra cosa a logro? y has recebido el tal logro? que tantas vezes lo has vsado? y que tanto te han dado?

Has pagado los jornales a los que trabajan en tu hazienda? Casa? O Chacra?

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<sup>33</sup> In their efforts to secure the space of the penitent's conscience for future Church intervention, these questions closely resemble Azpilcueta's injunctions against divination and fortune-telling, which also violate the First Commandment (see n. 17 above).

Deues alguna cosa? A quien? Y teniendo con que has pagado, o restituydo lo que deues? O no has querido? ([12v-13v] 220-22)

Urging the indigenous penitent to sell her goods at fair prices, pay her laborers a living wage, and resolve her debts undoubtedly protects the rights of her Indian neighbors. However, it also enables Spanish consumers, merchants, and encomenderos to extract more money and more labor from the Indians with whom they do business. In this way, the *Confessionario* helps to uphold the socioeconomic hierarchy of the colony; recasting financial self-interest as a sin ensures that wealth funnels up to the top, rather than accumulating at the bottom. The questions for caciques reflect an even more obvious desire to reclaim excess wealth from indigenous hands. Caciques oversaw groups of indigenous laborers, *ayllus*, and helped tax assessors to determine how much tribute these laborers owed the encomendero whom they served. However, thanks to their hereditary nobility, the caciques themselves were often exempt from paying tribute (Harrison, *Sin* 193). The *Confessionario* attempts to catch caciques taking money under false pretenses, either by embezzling tribute payments or by usurping another family's title:

El Cacicazgo que tienes vuistelo [hubístelo] de herencia de tus Padres, desde el tiempo de Ynga, o haslo vsurpado tu a otro, que le pertenecia, trayendo pleitos cõ falsas relaciones y gastando la plata de los Indios, para quedar con el Cacicazgo? ...

Las Chacras que tienes, son tuyas heredadas de tus Padres, o haslas quitado a los Indios, o eran de difuntos que murieron sin herederos, o que pertenecían al comun del pueblo, y tu te las has tomado para ti? ...

Has hecho que paguen los Indios que no han de pagar, como viudas solteras, o viejos, o los enfermos y contrechos, o haslos hecho pagar dos vezes con mentiras? ([15v-17v] 226-30)

The text takes on an unusually forceful tone in these questions; words like “usurpado,” “quitado,” and “mentiras” convey a strong suspicion of guilt that does not emerge in the general interrogation. As above, defining these opportunistic efforts to extract personal profit from the encomienda system as sins certainly protects the interests of the indigenous laborers in the cacique's *ayllu*, but also aims to ensure that wealth concentrates in Spanish rather than Indian hands.

Finally, the priest promotes political compliance by encouraging penitents to respect, obey, and assist representatives of colonial power through the Second, Fourth, and Eighth Commandments. The *Confessionario* extends these commandments to encompass perjury, insurrection, the defamation of spiritual and political leaders, and the failure to inform on idolaters and rebels. For example, lying to a judge under oath falls under the rubric of taking the Lord's name in vain: “Has jurado falso ante algun juez siendo testigo, o por otra via?” ([7v] 210). While Indians did not generally appear before the Inquisition, they testified frequently in secular and ecclesiastical courts. Between the 1550s and 1570s, for example, the Crown brought several suits against encomenderos in Peru for mistreating and demanding excessive tribute from their indigenous laborers, many of whom were called to give evidence (using the *kipus* they had kept of their debts and payments) (Abercrombie 254). Again we see that the injunction against lying to judges, while it prevents the miscarriage of justice, also protects the interests of the encomenderos and other Spaniards against whom Indians might bring suit. The requirement of truth-telling also extends to lies of omission; penitents who fail to report idolaters to the proper authorities commit the sin of bearing false witness: “Sabes que alguno sea hechizero o enseñe contra la ley de los Christianos, o viua mal? Y sabiendolo has dexado de manifestarlo al Padre, o al Visitador,

o a quien puede remediarlo? Mira hijo que tienes obligacion de hazerlo assi porque de otra suerte te yras al infierno” ([14r] 223). Here the priest recruits the penitent, like the cacique above, as an agent both of Christianization and of Church surveillance, staking her salvation to the compliance of those around her. This requirement to disclose her neighbors’ sins reminds the penitent of her subjection to colonial authority, emphasizing that her primary loyalty should be to the Church, rather than to her community.

The demand for loyalty also manifests in the injunctions against disobeying, speaking ill of, or harming secular and spiritual authorities. Priests, kurakas, and other colonial functionaries, because they conserve the penitent’s wellbeing, deserve the same honor as her blood relatives:

Has honrado a tus Padres, o Abuelos, a los Sacerdotes, a las Iusticias, y a los Curacas obedeciendo lo que te mandan en cosas buenas?

Haslos injuriado de palabra o obra, o has puesto las manos en ellos? ([9v-10r] 214-15)

As for Azpilcueta, honor entails both obedience and submission. Rebelling against these leaders’ authority in any form, no matter how small, violates the Fourth Commandment—uprisings and attacks, but also insults and any actions that run counter to the leaders’ interests, are sins. The priest attempts to foster blind submission to colonial power, and to nip revolts and resistance movements in the bud. To this same end, he prohibits the penitent from sowing discontent in her community by spreading rumors about priests or caciques: “Has murmurado del Padre, o del Cacique, o de otros diciendo mal de sus cosas?” ([13v] 222). It was not uncommon for both clergymen and caciques to take advantage of their power to obtain financial and sexual favors; even as this question attempts to forestall malicious gossip and the fomenting of rebellions, it also encourages penitents to keep certain facts to themselves (Mills, “Bad Christians” 187; Harrison, *Sin* 193).<sup>34</sup> In this way, the *Confessionario* endorses submission to and support for both spiritual and secular authority, in hopes of molding penitents into docile colonial subjects. In colonial Peru, as in Spain, the strategy of sacramental confession works to maintain imperial hegemony by teaching the indigenous penitent to police herself against social, economic, and political activities that might threaten the interests of the existing colonial regime.

The doctrinal materials of the Third Lima Council show that sacramental confession effects social discipline in the Andes much as it does on the Iberian Peninsula: through the imposition of guilt, the instantiation of self-surveillance, and the perpetuation of institutional power. Confession is a particularly effective disciplinary strategy in the colonial context because it affords a granularity of intervention that other forms of power cannot achieve; the priest can instruct and correct each individual penitent, tailoring the incentives to compliance and the penalties for transgression to her capacity and circumstances. In addition, the requirement of self-examination enables penitents to police their own behavior (and that of their neighbors), which promotes cultural homogenization and political compliance despite the geographical dispersal of the indigenous population and the limited manpower of the missionaries: through the power of confessional self-surveillance, a small number of priests can acculturate a large number of indigenes. The confessional manual—and particularly a standardized, Church-endorsed manual like the Third Lima Council’s—is indispensable to this project. The manual ensures that every priest instructs his congregants in the same tenets of faith, categories of sin, and rules for normative behavior. The standard program of spiritual and cultural education for all new Christians and new

<sup>34</sup> Guaman Poma addresses these clerical abuses in detail in the *Corónica*; see Chapter 23, pp. 591-94.



political subjects to which manuals like the *Confessionario* aspire aims to strengthen the colonial order in Peru by assimilating the Indians as already-normative, already-compliant subjects.

#### CODA: CONFESSIONAL AUTOBIOGRAPHIES

In sixteenth-century Spain and Peru, sacramental confession imposes upon the penitent the regular obligation to *rendirse cuenta*, to give an account of herself, to a representative of institutional power. However she keeps that account—on paper, in a *khipu*, in her memory—she must organize it according to the categories of sin that she has learned in the confessional, and must update it frequently: if it is incomplete, or unintelligible to her confessor, her soul will answer for it. Both the Spanish and the Peruvian Churches deploy the penitent's obligations to internalize their categories of sin and examine her behavior on their terms to encourage cultural homogenization and political compliance. On the Peninsula as well as in the colony, sacramental confession also teaches penitents to advance the political and financial interests of the dominant regime and to adopt Spanish and Christian behavioral norms in many aspects of their lives.

These norms are conveyed explicitly, spoken aloud in the confessional and imparted to penitents as rules, but there also exist “normas ‘silenciosas’, postulados *implícitos* sobre los cuales se apoyan los códigos de la Iglesia” (Gruzinski, “Normas cristianas” 110). While Foucault links confession, and particularly the invasive and sexually explicit interrogation ascendant in the fifteenth through seventeenth centuries, to the stigmatization and medicalization of sexual desire, Gruzinski argues that, in colonial Spanish America, the sacrament helps to impart an even more fundamental set of norms around free will and the nature of the self or soul (*History* 18-19, 58-59). The very concept of *sin*—a violation of the law of an invisible sovereign, which originates from the individual's own will, and for which she is solely responsible—carries with it an elaborate epistemological and cosmological armature; it implies that

el indígena debe actuar de su propio movimiento, y dar cuenta de sus actos, haciendo a un lado su medio y grupo social; debe pasar por alto el peso de la tradición y de las fuerzas externas que solían influir sobre sus comportamientos, ya fuese el poder o el enojo de un dios, el hechizo de un brujo, la envidia de un vecino o de un familiar, la emanación nefasta de un desviante sexual o de un infractor de prohibiciones, etcétera. En pocas palabras, al centrarse sobre el *sujeto* —en el sentido más occidental del término— el interrogatorio de la confesión podía hacer estallar las antiguas redes de solidaridad y sociabilidad, socavando los lazos temporales y sobrenaturales transmitidos y reforzados por la tradición indígena. ... Aparece en cambio una definición nueva de la persona: la noción cristiana y occidental de individuo que se vuelve una, o tal vez *la*, norma fundamental impuesta a los indígenas. (“Normas cristianas” 111)

Through her assimilation to an epistemological model based on free will and individual agency, the indigenous penitent becomes responsible, and culpable, for all her sins. She has to assume the entire burden, casting none of it to fate, the devil, or even her neighbors. In this way, the penitent is made *subject*; she must humiliate herself, she must recognize and resolve her debt to God for the violations she has committed, albeit unknowingly, against his laws (see n. 27 above). Moreover, this new epistemological model also entails a new form of autobiography: to satisfy the priest, she must narrate her violations as an agent of free will who chose to sin but now chooses to repent, and must also perform the mental gymnastics of splitting herself into two subjects, one who acts and another who observes. Small wonder, then, that so many Spanish missionaries

complain about indigenous penitents' ineptitude in the confessional—in the sixteenth century, they suspect that penitents are lying; by the seventeenth, they start to complain about the Indians' "poca capacidad" and "corto juicio" (Klor de Alva, "Telling Lives" 136; Gruzinski, "Normas cristianas" 114-15).

I wonder whether, in addition to reflecting the challenge and the trauma of overwriting one's perception of oneself and one's relation to the world, these unconvincing accounts might represent a form of resistance to the strategy of sacramental confession—instances of what de Certeau calls a "tactic," an individual subject's unpredictable response to the strategy's intervention, or the momentary turning of the strategy's means of implementation to the subject's own ends (*Practice* 34).<sup>35</sup> Chloë Taylor suggests that silence, especially in a culture that demands the transformation of all one's thoughts and desires into discourse, can be an assertion of freedom—or, if the First Lima Council has decreed that silence will earn you fifty lashes and a fairly unflattering haircut, then perhaps "withdrawal from all self-reflective discourse is a possible means (and the only possible means) to avoid the workings of disciplinary power and the policing effects of subjectification" (234). Of course, there is no universal, nor even a regional, indigenous response to Christianization; all of the colonial scholars cited here emphasize the vast diversity of strategies and behaviors that indigenous Americans devised to survive and to thrive during the first century of Spanish colonization.<sup>36</sup> However, the refusal to engage in self-reflection, whether through silence, untruth, or unintelligibility, is a response that many indigenous Andeans employ to resist forcible assimilation and the overwriting of their stories and spaces. Some people hid *huacas* or the evidence of offerings; some responded selectively to priests' and episcopal visitors' questions, lapsing into strategic silences to avoid punishment; some recycled confessional *kipus*, telling old sins, or someone else's sins, rather than conducting the requisite self-examination; and some, apparently, made illegible confessions (Silverblatt 201-2; Mills, "Religious Coercion" 167; Charles 13).

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<sup>35</sup> For more on the Certeaulian tactic, see the Introduction, pp. 18-19.

<sup>36</sup> That said, some have made efforts at a typology of responses to Christianization; see, for instance, J. Jorge Klor de Alva, "Spiritual Conflict and Accommodation in New Spain: Toward a Typology of Aztec Responses to Christianity," *The Inca and Aztec States, 1400-1800: Anthropology and History*, edited by George A. Collier, Renato I. Rosaldo, and George D. Wirth, Academic Press, 1982.

## Conclusion

### *Rendirse cuenta:* To give an account of oneself

We must keep in mind not only the capacity of state simplifications to transform the world but also the capacity of the society to modify, subvert, block, and even overturn the categories imposed upon it.

James C. Scott, *Seeing Like a State* 49

I've argued throughout the dissertation that institutional subjects in sixteenth-century Spain and Peru perform their subjection creatively to promote their own interests and achieve their own ends. However, despite its transatlantic scope, the project has not examined the negotiation of legibility among colonial subjects, whether Spanish or indigenous, in any detail. To address this omission, I'll conclude with a brief case study of the *Primer nueva corónica y buen gobierno* (1615), the illustrated history of the Andes that Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala prepared for King Philip III of Spain, which—though written after the sixteenth century—offers a particularly illuminating example of a colonial subject giving an account of himself to institutional power, and attempting to negotiate terms of subjection more favorable to his own interests.

As we've seen, uniqueness and difference undermine the institution's project of legibility; unique subjects are unable (or unwilling) to be assimilated, categorized, and counted. Scott tells us that "however unique the actual circumstances of the various individuals who make up the aggregate, it is their sameness or, more precisely, their differences along a standardized scale or continuum that are of interest" (80). The sixteenth-century debates over the rights of indigenous subjects show how essential the demonstration of "sameness" is to the project of assimilating the Amerindians into the Spanish Empire. The theologians, canonists, and missionaries who argue that indigenous subjects deserve the same rights as their Spanish counterparts have to prove that the two groups are equal in some fundamental way—that they belong to the same institutional category despite their many superficial differences. Most of these writers settle on the common properties of rationality and civility; they argue that the Indians possess the same capacity for reason that the Spanish do. For example, in the *Relectio de Indis* (1539), discussed in Chapter 3, legal theorist and founder of the Salamanca School Francisco de Vitoria argues that the Indians can only be denied political rights if they are sinners, infidels, fools, or irrational beings (12). The first two categories do not apply because the Indians exist in a state of "invincible ignorance": they are not morally responsible for their unbelief because they have never received revelation. The second two categories do not apply because American societies display a high degree of civility: large cities; complex social norms and hierarchies; highly-ordered military,

legal, and political systems; organized religion. Since the Indians are as rational as the Spanish, they are entitled to the same series of universal rights, including the right to possess and retain their goods; the right to choose their own faith; and the right to a prince who works to preserve their well-being (Vitoria 59, 29, 112-13, 116, 120).

In the 1550 *Apología* that he delivered before a panel of theologians and jurists at Valladolid, Bartolomé de Las Casas defends Vitoria's conclusions by turning stereotypically "barbarous" indigenous practices, such as cannibalism and human sacrifice, into evidence of Indian rationality. He argues that, because these unfamiliar customs result from "probable errors" of natural reason, they actually prove that the Indians possess it. According to Las Casas, natural reason prompts all humans to attribute their existence to the goodness of a supreme being. Their gratitude to this being obliges them to venerate him in a unique way; as a result, all rational societies engage in some form of sacrifice (*Apología* 276, 279-82). Natural reason also tells humans that, to express their gratitude adequately, they must sacrifice that which they hold most dear: their lives. Christians, thanks to direct revelation from God (and his timely intervention in Isaac's immolation), know that divine law forbids human sacrifice. However, without the benefit of revelation, the Indians conclude through natural reason that human sacrifice is the only way to prove their gratitude to the supreme being, by returning to him the greatest gift he has granted them (*Apología* 283-85, 290). In *De procuranda indorum salute* (1579), also discussed in Chapter 3, José de Acosta reinforces Las Casas's claim that the Indians' apparent lack of reason results from differences in custom, not capacity. Were an Indian and a European to change places at birth, the Indian would acquire the literacy, prudence, and Christianity of his caretakers, while the European would acquire the simplicity and godlessness of his: "No hay nación, por bárbara y estúpida que sea, que si fuese educada desde la niñez con arte y sentimientos generosos, no despusiese su barbarie y tomase costumbres humanas y nobles. ... Si vosotros os hubierais criado como ellos, ¿en qué os diferenciaríais?" (I.8 413). The apostrophizing of the Spanish reader performs the commonality for which Acosta argues, prompting her to imagine herself in the barbarian's place and inspiring pity for his misfortune. In all these cases, the goal is to demonstrate that indigenous subjects fall into the same category—"rational," "civilized"—as Spaniards, regardless of their superficial differences.

These arguments, coming as they do from prominent theologians who successfully bent the ears of Charles V and Philip II, are much more likely to affect royal policy about indigenous rights than the chronicle of an unknown Andean noble (Adorno 82-86, 113; Acosta 1594). However, because they are accounts *of* Indians but not *by* Indians, they tell us little or nothing about how indigenous subjects negotiate their legibility at the point of contact with institutional power. If, as I've argued, legibility is a component of subject formation, then the subject herself must do the work of assimilation; she must approximate herself to an existing category to make it easier for representatives of institutional power to recognize her: "If I try to give an account of myself, ... I will, to some degree, have to make myself substitutable in order to make myself recognizable. The narrative authority of the 'I' must give way to the perspective and temporality of a set of norms" (Butler, *Account* 36-37). Again, uniqueness is less useful (and less recognizable) to the institution than sameness—but it is up to the subject to determine if and how she is the same. Guaman Poma, I would argue, does this work of self-assimilation in the *Primer nueva corónica*. He makes an even more ambitious demand for indigenous rights than the writers discussed above—he wants Indian sovereignty and self-governance under Philip's banner—but he bases his claim on shared spiritual heritage rather than shared reason: both Andeans and Spaniards, he

says, have Noahic ancestry and a pagan past. He uses this sameness to render indigenous Andeans legible as political subjects, and by extension to make a claim for their political equality.

Guaman Poma's proposal for the reorganization of the current order is admittedly rather bold. Following the model of the Inca Guayna Capac, who entrusted the four corners of his kingdom to four kings over whom he ruled as emperor, Guaman Poma suggests that Philip III preside as supreme monarch over the four corners of the Earth, each of which will be governed by a native son—the Inca over the Andeans, the King of Guinea over the Africans, the Pope over the Christians, and the Gran Turco over the Moors: “En medio destas quatro partes del mundo estará la magestad y monarca del mundo rrey don Phelipe que Dios le guarde de la alta corona. Representa monarca del mundo y los dichos quatro rreys, sus coronas bajas yguales” (963). As an intermediate step toward this reorganization, Guaman Poma also asks Philip to enforce his Andean vassals' equality by punishing their Spanish abusers. To “allanar,” level out, the political landscape in Peru, the king must “castigar a todos los que maltratate a buestros bazallos yndios principales y de los yndios pobres. Y ci es nesasario, castigue a los saserdotes y destiere a esos rreynos” (998). To justify these demands for Andean equality, Guaman Poma points to the spiritual heritage that indigenous Americans hold in common with their Spanish colonizers.

Guaman Poma's principal claim for Andean equality is based on shared ancestry: he suggests that the Andeans, like the Spanish, have Biblical origins because after the Flood, America, like Europe, was repopulated by one of Noah's sons: “Quedó en la arca Noé con sus sey hijos cazados. Cómo multiplicó éstos y unos éstos enbió Dios a las Yndias, al Mundo Nuevo deste rreyno, fue *uira cocha* español. Y acá al primero yndio le llamaron *Uari Uira Cocha Runa*” (925). Here, Guaman Poma incorporates Andeans and Spaniards into a single origin story: God sends one of Noah's sons to America, where he finds a new race of men. This integration of Andean and Christian mythology allows him to make the rather surprising claim that the first Indian was, in fact, Spanish—“fue *uira cocha* español.” The primordial ancestor of the Andean people, Wiraqucha, shared a womb with the primordial ancestor of the Spanish; they come from exactly the same stock. This shared ancestry renders them fundamentally equal, and any differences between them purely superficial. Guaman Poma traces this ancestral commonality between Andeans and Spaniards into their early history, arguing that both peoples engaged in pagan worship before becoming Christian: “Los españoles fueron de poco sauer pero desde primero fueron ydultras gentiles, como los yndios desde el tiempo del *Ynga* fueron ydultras. . . . Ydultraron como gentiles y adoraron al sol su padre del *Ynga* y a la luna su madre y a las estrellas sus hermanos y a sus ydulos *uaca bilca*” (925-26). Before they received Christian revelation through colonization, both Iberians and Andeans worshipped celestial bodies and carved idols “like gentiles”—Guaman Poma suggests that the Incas' reverence for the sun, stars, and local deities closely mirrors the pre-Christian religions of the Celts and Romans in Spain. Past paganism, then, constitutes another common property—so their history of idolatry should not disqualify Andeans from the rights that their Spanish counterparts, also former idolaters, currently enjoy.

Why does Guaman Poma argue for shared spiritual heritage, rather than for reason or civility? Spiritual heritage is a lowest common denominator, a characteristic that no superficial differences in appearance, language, or custom can negate.<sup>1</sup> Rationality, on the other hand, is a complex trait with many gradations. In *De procuranda*, for instance, Acosta lays out a hierarchy of barbarians ranging from lettered empire-builders like the Romans to naked savages like the

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<sup>1</sup> For a more detailed discussion of this gesture of basing a population's right to political participation upon a characteristic that its members share with the rest of the polity, see Jacques Rancière, *Dis-agreement: Politics and Philosophy*, translated by Julie Rose, U of Minnesota P, 1999.

Caribs. The Incas fall somewhere in the middle: they rank below the Chinese, the Japanese, and the eastern provinces of India because they lack public laws, writing systems, and civil and philosophical knowledge; but they're still well above the nomadic tribes because they have "su república y magistrados ciertos, y asientos o poblaciones estables, donde guardan manera de policía, y orden de ejércitos y capitanes, y finalmente alguna forma solemne de culto religioso" (Pro. 392).<sup>2</sup> Acosta's favorable assessment notwithstanding, reason is clearly an unreliable guarantor of equality. Because it is assessed according to external factors like civility, it can easily be misrepresented, restricted, or denied. Noahic ancestry and pagan history, by contrast, are both absolute and binary: a population either is or is not descended from Noah, and either did or did not formerly engage in pagan worship. Because there is no sliding scale, no indigenous population can be excluded on the basis of some superficial indicator of incapacity. Hence the elegance of Guaman Poma's gesture; by basing his claim for political equality on shared spiritual heritage, he manages to "allanar" the political landscape of Peru just as he asks Philip to do.

There can be no denying that Guaman Poma's bid for Andean sovereignty qualifies as an instance of negotiation at the point of contact with institutional power. Like Teresa, Ignatius, and penitents in sacramental confession, he performs a primary relation of alignment with the institution's categories (subjection to the King), and a secondary relation of negotiation (self-governance). Like the priest in the Third Lima Council's *Confessionario* and *Tercero catecismo*, he presents himself as an ally and benefactor, a holder of local knowledge that the Crown can use to improve the effectiveness of its interventions in America. He makes no attempt to reject Philip's authority (and in fact he expands it, elevating him from emperor to universal monarch); instead, tactically, he finds a way to advance his own interests alongside the Crown's. Throughout the *Corónica*, he insists upon the colonial regime's contempt for Andean life, showing how the encomienda system, extended labor in the mines, neglect of Inca-era irrigation systems, and the concubinage of Indian women diminish both the indigenous population and the King's prosperity. Aside from causing the Andeans to suffer, this apparent disregard for indigenous welfare on the part of the colonizing Spaniards will eventually deprive Philip of his largest source of wealth and power: "Cin los yndios, vuestra Magestad no uale cosa porque se acuerde Castilla es Castilla por los indios" (982). In this way, Guaman Poma pegs Philip's survival to the Indians'.

He also argues that the Spaniards who emigrate to Peru, despite their promises to uphold royal orders, consistently privilege their own interests over the King's.<sup>3</sup> For instance, their taste for Indian women is causing the indigenous population to shrink and the mestizo population to grow: "Se acauan los yndios y multiplica mestisos. Cin prouecho pierde su Magestad deste rreyno" (943). While Indians are required to pay royal tributes and to serve in the *mita*, or labor rotation, mestizos are not—so the indiscretion of the King's Spanish subjects may cost him both a steady income and a labor force. Along similar lines, the Spanish encomenderos' disregard of Viceroy Francisco de Toledo's mandate to maintain the Incas' extensive network of irrigation canals has resulted in smaller crop yields: "Se pierde todas las sementeras por falta de agua. Desto pierde los yndios sus haziendas y pierde su quinto rreal su Magestad" (958). Spanish carelessness puts both the King and the Andeans at risk; without water for their farms and livestock, the Andeans lose their livelihood, and the King his tax revenue. In both cases, their interests are

<sup>2</sup> Acosta justifies his assignments of the Mexica, the Inca, and the Chinese in greater detail in the *Historia natural y moral de Indias* (1590), book VI, chapters 1-7.

<sup>3</sup> "Vuestra Magestad enbía jueces y justicias y perlados, obispos y canónigos, deán, para que le faboresca a los señores principales y pobres yndios. Dízele a vuestra Magestad que yo lo faboreseré, cí, cí que hare justicia. Pero saliendo de la Puerta de la mar, se muda otro nombre: antes a de faboreser a los rricos españoles" (990).

aligned such that the King must protect the indigenous population of Peru in order to protect himself. This emphasis on shared welfare makes Guaman Poma's proposal for Andean sovereignty sound a bit less far-fetched; while the Spanish clearly can't be trusted to protect the King's best interests in Peru, the Andeans can.

Although he makes a much larger demand, from someone much higher up the institutional ladder, than the subjects we examined in the previous chapters, Guaman Poma pursues the same end in his negotiation that they do in theirs: a measure of autonomy within the space of the institution. Like Teresa, who wants to preserve an immediate relationship with God; like Ignatius, who wants the Society of Jesus to set its own priorities and direct its own operations; like the indigenous penitents who stay silent or recycle friends' *kipus* in the confessional, Guaman Poma wants his community to have some place of agency and self-determination under the institution's banner. His comparative boldness derives, I suspect, from the greater geographical and emotional distance between him and the representative of institutional power with whom he is negotiating. Teresa actually appeared before inquisitorial tribunals, and had personal relationships with some of the censors who reviewed her manuscripts. Ignatius held regular audiences with the popes who reigned during his generalate. Indigenous penitents actually sat face-to-face with their confessors. Guaman Poma, however, will never interact directly with Philip III; he writes that while he would prefer to speak with the King in person, his age and infirmity prevent him from making the transatlantic journey: "Quiciera seruir a vuestra Magestad . . . ; uerme cara en cara y hablar, comunicar de presente sobre lo dicho no puedo, por ser biejo de ochenta años y enfermo, yr a tan lejos" (976). Instead, he offers the *Corónica*, in which he answers all the questions that he believes the King would ask.

Guaman Poma's proposal never reached Philip, but even if it had, it very likely would not have succeeded—perhaps because of its boldness, but more probably because of the King's overwhelming political and economic incentives to uphold the current system.<sup>4</sup> Moreover, the *Corónica* is not the only unsuccessful attempt to reclaim Andean territory in which Guaman Poma engaged; he also filed lawsuits in the 1590s to reclaim lands in the Chupas valley that Túpac Inca Yupanqui had supposedly granted to his family, which in 1600 resulted in his banishment from the region (Puente Luna 125).<sup>5</sup> As we've seen throughout the dissertation, negotiating with the institution is always a gamble: Teresa saw her manuscripts confiscated and her good name maligned, Ignatius spent sixty-seven days in Toledo and Salamanca jails, and Andean penitents who refused to make confession faced whipping, tonsure, and house arrest. Then, too, we've seen that institutional power is not monolithic but multifaceted—each new censor, new inquisitor, or new confessor brings the subject a new opportunity to negotiate the precise terms of her subjection. Given the passion and persistence that Guaman Poma demonstrates in the *Corónica*, it seems likely that he negotiated for his interests at many other points of contact with institutional power throughout his life, perhaps with greater success.

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<sup>4</sup> Guaman Poma was not the first to propose that the Spanish return the Andes to their original owners; some fifty years earlier, Las Casas argued in the *Tratado de las doce dudas* (1564) that Philip II could only guarantee his own salvation by ceding his control over the territory: "El Rey Católico de Castilla, nuestro señor, está obligado, de necesidad de salvarse, a restituir los reinos del Perú al Inga nieto Guainacápac, digo al que fuere heredero de los dichos reinos. Y es obligado a dar a los demás señores lo que fuere suyo" (531). Unsurprisingly, this forceful claim had very little effect on Philip's subsequent policy decisions (Adorno 85).

<sup>5</sup> For the lawsuits themselves, see *Phelipe Guaman Poma de Ayala: Y no ay remedio*, edited by Elías Prado Tello and Alfredo Prado, Centro de Investigación y Promoción Amazónica, 1991. N.B., in the 1597 suit, Guaman Poma was trying to reclaim the land from other indigenous Andeans, the Chachapoyas Indians.

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