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Forging an Ascetic Planet:  
Jesuit Lives and Virtues on the Mission Frontier  
of Eighteenth-Century New Spain

A dissertation filed in partial satisfaction of the  
requirements for the degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in Hispanic Languages and Literatures

by

Bryan David Green

2012

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

Forging an Ascetic Planet:  
Jesuit Lives and Virtues on the Mission Frontier  
of Eighteenth-Century New Spain

by

Bryan David Green

Doctor of Philosophy in Hispanic Languages and Literatures

University of California, Los Angeles, 2012

Professor Anna H. More, Chair

This work examines how a uniquely Jesuit ascetic ideal, or will to power over the self and others, developed on the Spanish-American frontier and was represented in Jesuit-authored hagiographies and natural histories in both New Spain and the metropole during the eighteenth century. As missionaries and prolific authors, the Jesuits were crucial to the expansion and representation of the frontiers of New Spain; likewise, the Spanish-American mission frontier was essential to Jesuit subjectivity as a space of meaningful action where the missionary could perform the ideal of ascetic conduct preserved in Christian tradition. Through the performance of this ideal and the production of missionary narratives and natural histories, the Jesuits bridged the ascetic ideal and the inner-worldly exercise of self-discipline and social control that is central to theories of modernity. The idealized representation of the Jesuit subject's conduct not only

reaffirmed the order's corporate identity but also actualized a political and cultural hegemony through narratives that served as a medium for establishing value orientations in all strata of Novohispanic society. Originating in the Society's tradition of "Edifying Letters," eighteenth-century Jesuit narratives increasingly turned towards more detailed accounts of individual subjects' lives and reiterated a common narrative structure covering their early childhood, education within the order, work as teachers and finally the fulfillment of their apostolic vocation on the frontier. This phenomenon is observable in the boom of Jesuit-authored missionary hagiographies appearing in New Spain from 1725 until the expulsion of the order in 1767, coinciding with the Society's most embattled period in both New Spain and Europe. The proliferation of works representing individual missionaries' "vidas y virtudes" was accompanied by the differentiation of missionary biography from Jesuit-authored natural histories, which increasingly focused on a secular European reading public. Nevertheless, both genres reflect the enactment of the Jesuit ascetic ideal in distinct value spheres of colonial and European modernity: while the biography of the exemplary missionary responded to the imperatives of social control and the ethical rationalization of the colonial order, Jesuit natural history presupposed an ascetic subject that increasingly pursued knowledge of the natural world as an end in itself.

The dissertation of Bryan David Green is approved.

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## Introduction

It is the purpose of this work to explain how a uniquely Jesuit ascetic ideal, or will to power over the self and others, developed on the Spanish-American frontier and was represented in Jesuit-authored hagiographies and natural histories written both in New Spain and the metropole during the eighteenth century. Insofar as it was an indexical category that depended on an act of enunciation produced from a specific cultural or political center, the Jesuits “invented” the Spanish-American missionary frontier; however, the colonial frontier was also formative of Jesuit subjectivity as it represented a space of meaningful action where the missionary could mirror and adapt an ideal of conduct preserved in the tradition of Christian asceticism.<sup>1</sup> While this tradition was part of the “medieval heritage” of New Spain, as Luis Weckmann has argued, the Jesuit ascetic ideal was also linked to the this-worldly exercise of social control and self-control that is central to theories of modernity from Max Weber to Michel Foucault.<sup>2</sup> The performance of an ideal of ascetic conduct on the missionary frontier was not only a reaffirmation of the order’s own corporate identity, for it also reaffirmed the political and

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<sup>1</sup> “Invention” is used here in the sense intended by Edmundo O’Gorman in *La Invención de América*. O’Gorman dismissed traditional histories of the discovery of America for attempting to attribute an immanent being to the “trozo de materia cósmica que hoy conocemos como el continente americano” (51). O’Gorman argued that the idea of America is a projection of European desire and fear unfolding in an historical and cultural process in which Europe and America together become part of a world order. In contrast to O’Gorman’s thesis, however, I argue that this process is not limited to the rethinking traditional cosmography to include the Americas but perhaps more importantly involved the invention of forms of orienting action in the world towards new ends for both European and Amerindian subjects.

<sup>2</sup> Weckmann cites numerous examples of ascetic practices including various extreme forms of self-mortification practiced by members of all religious orders, including the Jesuits, during the sixteenth century (1: 273-94). According to Weckmann these practices were part of the medieval religiosity imported from Spain to the Americas, but beyond his thorough perusal of colonial chronicles for examples of extreme acts of ascetic self-discipline he does not examine how the experience of missionaries in Spanish America resignified these practices throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Furthermore, many of the chronicles that he cites, such as those written by Agustín de Vetancurt and Baltasar de Medina, are from the late seventeenth century, thus begging the question of how the representation of these early acts of Christian asceticism in New Spain changed with the evolving social context of the viceroyalty in subsequent centuries.

cultural hegemony of the viceroyalty through Jesuit-authored narratives that served as a medium for establishing value orientations for the conduct of missionaries as well as colonial society at large.

During the eighteenth century, Jesuit narratives of the missionary experience increasingly turned towards more detailed accounts of individual subjects' lives and began to reiterate a familiar narrative structure covering the early childhood, education in the Jesuit college system, subsequent work as teachers within this system, and finally the fulfillment of an apostolic vocation on the mission frontier. This phenomenon is observable in the boom of Jesuit-authored missionary hagiographies in New Spain from 1725 until the expulsion of the order from the viceroyalty in 1768. While these narratives often continued to portray the missionary's experience on the frontier as a providential struggle for the salvation of Amerindian souls against the agents of Satan, they nevertheless increasingly shunned supernatural or thaumaturgical elements and focused on the more quotidian exercise of virtue as an example of conduct to all strata of colonial society. Of course, the "Edifying Letter" on the exemplary Jesuit subject's life and work was a tradition initiated during the first decades of the Society's existence, stemming in part from the need to coordinate tasks and share information within a worldwide network of colleges and missions but also from the need to maintain a strong corporate identity among isolated members. These letters, which were collected and published in Europe, reached a wide audience largely due to the information they contained on the remote climes and non-European cultures encountered in the order's missionary activity. Although narratives focusing on the lives of individual missionaries proliferated in New Spain during the eighteenth century, this form of missionary biography was increasingly differentiated from the production of Jesuit-authored natural histories. While these missionary hagiographies, or *Vida y virtudes*, might appear to be a

residual expression of a pre-modern forms of asceticism that were abandoned by the instrumental-scientific discourse of natural histories, both genres reflect the enactment of the Jesuit ascetic ideal in distinct value spheres of colonial and European modernity. On the one hand, the narrative of the exemplary Jesuit's virtues responded to the imperatives of social control and the ethical rationalization of the colonial order, while on the other hand Jesuit natural history likewise presupposed an ascetic subject that increasingly pursued knowledge of the natural world as an end itself.<sup>3</sup>

In the seventeenth-century Jesuit narrative of the Spanish-American mission frontier, such as Antonio Ruiz de Montoya's *Conquista espiritual hecha por los religiosos de la Compañía de Jesús en las provincias del Paraguay, Paraná, Uruguay, y Tape* and Andrés Perez de Ribas' *Historia de los triumphos de nuestra Santa Fe entre gentes las más bárbaras de esta Orbe*, the "Edifying Letters," originally written for a readership within the order, were incorporated into the overarching narrative of chronicles of the Society's work in a specific province (Ahern 10-12). In eighteenth-century New Spain, however, the Jesuits penned and published a profusion of both shorter "Edifying Letters," as well as voluminous hagiographic narratives on the lives of individual members of the order who had exercised their vocation in the viceroyalty. Many of these works were printed in Mexico City or Puebla, while others made their way in manuscript form to Spain where they were edited and published by the Society. This proliferation of works portraying the model conduct of self-sacrificing apostles is at least in part attributable to the perception among Criollo elites, as well as the administrators appointed by the Bourbon monarchs, that the moral constitution of the viceroyalty, which was lauded by seventeenth-century Novohispanic savants as a kind of convent-republic, was quickly eroding

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<sup>3</sup> For a thorough analysis of the cognitive, ethical and aesthetic dimensions of this differentiation of value spheres in Western modernity see Jürgen Habermas' *The Theory of Communicative Reason* (1: 164-75).

due to the pernicious effects of fashionable pastimes and the increasing encroachment of Amerindians, mestizos and *castas* on the urban centers.<sup>4</sup> It is not a coincidence, then, that these eighteenth-century Jesuit missionary hagiographies present their subjects as exercising superlative virtue within the urban colonial center (in the schools, on the street, and even in private homes) as well as the mission frontier. On the other hand, this boom was also the result of the Society's need to justify its activities in the face of an increasingly hostile public sphere in both New Spain and in the metropole.<sup>5</sup> Likewise, the publication of natural histories such as Andrés Marcos Burriel's *Noticia de la California* was the result of the Jesuits' performance of the ascetic ideal on the frontier at the same time that it was posited as a strategy for restoring the order's reputation by demonstrating the Jesuits' contributions to the progress of secular knowledge and social organization.

Jesuit writing in eighteenth-century New Spain emerges in a critical conjuncture not just for the Society of Jesus but also for the viceroyalty and the metropole. In Europe, the Church was forced to compete for legitimacy with a secular public sphere, which provided an ample reading public for Jesuit-authored natural histories at the same time that it condemned the order as a representative of everything that the Enlightenment opposed.<sup>6</sup> The reforms undertaken by the Bourbon monarchs, which accelerated under Carlos III (1759 -1788), increasingly turned

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<sup>4</sup> This perception, as well as the academic debates on whether this was the result of a relaxation of mores or a tightening of discipline, is detailed in Juan Pedro Viqueira Albán's *Relajados o reprimidos*.

<sup>5</sup> For the context of anti-Jesuit literature in New Spain see Ramón Kuri Camacho, *La Compañía de Jesús: Imágenes e ideas. La axiología jesuita, Juan de Palafox y Mendoza y otros estudios novohispanos*. This eighteenth-century literary offensive included the republishing of Juan de Palafox's *Verdades sin lisonja*, the seventeenth-century Bishop of Puebla's final salvo in his dispute with the Society over the secularization of Jesuit *doctrinas*. David Brading portrays the anti-Jesuit backlash as a result of the Jansenist reform movement in eighteenth-century Spain, an interpretation which relies too strongly on the Jansenist portrayal of the Jesuits as proponents of a popular superstitions and a pre-Enlightenment Baroque culture (501). As I attempt to show throughout this work, the Jesuits were actually promoters of the Bourbon reforms and the ascetic ideal that Jesuit missionaries performed on the Spanish-American frontier was a precursor to eighteenth-century natural history.

<sup>6</sup> I am here employing Habermas' concept of the public sphere as the open exchange of private individuals applying their reason to public issues, primarily through the medium of print culture, eventually subjecting the state to the imperatives of public discourse (*Structural* 51).

Spain's American territories into colonies to be exploited to increase the metropole's wealth and in the process excluded a Criollo elite from the political and economic spheres, a development that sparked a reaffirmation of the viceroyalty's cultural identity and political autonomy.<sup>7</sup> European empires began to occupy territories on the fluid boundaries of Spain's American territories, and the Seven Years' War (1756-63) redefined the geopolitics of the region that is today divided by the border between the United States and Mexico.<sup>8</sup> Jesuit writings during this period demonstrate the order's attempts to adapt to these circumstances as well as the need to defend the Society against a growing number of enemies by extolling the virtues of the order's members and their contributions to both the social order of the viceroyalty as well as to the field of natural history.

This critical period in eighteenth-century New Spain and Europe has been the nexus of several lines of recent academic inquiry which include the following: the definition of the Jesuits' role in European and Latin-American modernity, revisionist histories of the Enlightenment that account for knowledge produced in Spain and Spanish America, historiographic and anthropological inquiry into cultural exchange on the Spanish-American borderlands, and literary approaches that examine the colonial archive with the tools of textual analysis in order describe the struggles for legitimacy and representativity within and among

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<sup>7</sup> Antony Higgins argues that through the economic and political exclusion of a Criollo elite, the Bourbon reforms inadvertently provoked an affirmation of a Novohispanic identity that turned to the representation of nature as well as Amerindian and Mestizo subjects within a "Criollo archive" (12). For David Brading, the expulsion of the Jesuits from the viceroyalty was a decisive step in the Bourbon reforms that ultimately alienated the Criollo elite by demonstrating that New Spain was viewed by the metropole as a colony to be exploited for the economic benefit of Spain without the least recognition of the providential mission of evangelization that was bestowed upon the monarchy in the Alexandrine donation (507).

<sup>8</sup> Adelman and Aron have described the geopolitical transformation of the colonial hinterlands in North America during the eighteenth century, and have broadly defined the frontier as a "meeting place of peoples in which geographic and cultural borders were not clearly defined" and the borderlands as "contested boundaries between colonial domains" (815). During the eighteenth century the colonial frontier as a fluid space of encounters and negotiations between European colonizers and Amerindians gave way to a game of *real politique* between European imperial powers, especially in the wake of the Seven Years War, until finally becoming the "bordered" spaces of the modern nation-state in the nineteenth century (Adelman and Aron 839; Elliot 292-324).

colonial actors. Though this study examines Jesuit hagiography and natural history as related and unique forms of narrative that were key to the reproduction of colonial social reality, other approaches have guided the course of my research and illuminated the primary sources analyzed throughout the dissertation. What follows is not an attempt to draw out prescriptive disciplinary boundaries but rather to reveal how the methodological and theoretical debates occasioned by different approaches are addressed in the present work. In fact, this overview demonstrates the increasing difficulty of drawing any clear disciplinary boundaries in the contemporary study of colonial Latin America.

In recent decades, the historiography of the Company of Jesus has taken on an ecumenical, multi-disciplinary approach that is reflected in several recent anthologies representing a wide range of academic fields.<sup>9</sup> This new Jesuit historiography has naturally built upon Jesuit-authored sources and the vast archives compiled under the aegis of the order, such as the *Monumenta Historica Societatis Iesu*. While traditional Jesuit-authored histories have emphasized theological disputes within the Company – as well as with other religious orders – and, with the rise of absolutist monarchies, the political conflicts into which the order was inevitably drawn, the new secular historiography has focused on the role of the Jesuits within the history of science and philosophy and their contribution to the epistemic shifts in European thought during the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. In these new approaches we witness a shift from the portrayal of the Jesuits as the Counter-Reformation rearguard to their portrayal as agents of modernity.<sup>10</sup> While recognizing that the Jesuits retrospectively defined their order as a

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<sup>9</sup> The most notable of these recent anthologies include *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts 1540-1773*, edited by John O'Malley (S.J.), *Les jésuites à la Renaissance*, edited by Luce Giard, and *El saber de los jesuitas, historias naturales y el Nuevo Mundo*, edited by Luis Millones Figueroa and Domingo Ledezma.

<sup>10</sup> William Bangert's (S.J.) oft-cited *A History of the Society of Jesus* (1972) is typical of the virtues and flaws of traditional Jesuit-authored historiography. Bangert provides elegant syntheses of the theological disputes over Probabilism and the political intrigues waged against the order by Sebastião José Carvalho e Mello, but his role as

reaction to the Protestant Reformation, John O'Malley's history of the founders of the order and the organic formation of the institutions that would come to be most recognizably Jesuit (the overseas mission and the colleges) emphasizes both the continuity and the modernity of the Company without recourse to a negative definition opposing the order to Lutheranism.

O'Malley, a member of the order who has become a representative of this new Jesuit historiography, asserts that the Jesuits would have come into being with or without the Protestant Reformation (*First* 17). Reserving the rubric "Counter-Reformation and Catholic Reform" for certain activities within the Church, O'Malley has opted to place the Company within the broader context of "Early Catholic Modernity" in order to account for all the order's activities including those that would seem to contradict the commonly held view of the Jesuits as militants of the Counter Reformation ("Ignatius" 193). Viewing the Company of Jesus as an institution born of and responding to the context of early modernity in Europe has opened the field to studies of the role of the order in the history of philosophy and science, art history, popular education, the formation of the public sphere, and practices of colonialism. In addition to the changing perspective towards the history of the so-called "Counter Reformation", O'Malley also points to a new multiculturalist perspective in historiography that has found a rich field of

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an apologist becomes egregious when he turns to the Jesuits' missionary enterprises and the complex relations of missionaries and catechumens on the colonial frontier. The sophisticated discussion of theology and European *real politique* turns into an un-nuanced and transparently racist characterization of the relationship between the Jesuits and Amerindians. Referring to missionaries' attempts to resettle their *reducciones* after the 1750 Tratado de Límites, Bangert asserts, "Some natives became obstinate, others censured the missionaries. Still others cooperated for a while, but then returned. Their qualities of instability and fickleness came to the fore" (352-3). A similar view is reflected in his characterization of the heroes of the missions of northern New Spain, Fathers Salvatierra and Kino: "One of the many Jesuits inspired by Kino was Juan Salvatierra, a son of Italy from Milan, who found his great challenge in Lower California, that long finger of land, sterile, arid, and inhabited by indolent and dull yet cruel and treacherous natives" (348). With respect to their view of *reducción* and Amerindian civilization, this twentieth-century Jesuit-authored historiography adds little to the eighteenth-century chronicles and natural histories written by their predecessors.



research in the Jesuits' overseas missions, where missionaries and locals were drawn into spaces of cultural negotiation ("Historiography" 25-6).

In his introduction to *Les jésuites à la Renaissance*, Luce Giard characterizes this trend in Jesuit historiography as a "désenclavement" that has permitted contemporary scholars to see the order as Francis Bacon did: a key institution in the transformation of European science and philosophy during the early seventeenth century (xv-xvi). For Giard, the Jesuit college system was the forerunner of modern scientific and academic communities such as the Royal Society of the seventeenth century and the *Encyclopédistes* of the eighteenth century and thus laid the ground work for a public sphere in which an international community of intellectuals could publish, share and critique knowledge of nature and man (xv). The Jesuits' contribution to the production of knowledge and the creation of an impressive network of data gathering and distribution were matched by their reformation of European pedagogy, in part due to the necessity of preparing their professed members according to the rigorous standards of the order and in part due to the educational demands emerging from an incipient bourgeoisie. To the historian of European modernity, Giard asserts, the history of the Company of Jesus addresses major topics in the history of ideas: tradition versus rupture in the formation of the Western episteme, the role of philosophy in the Scientific Revolution, and the role of Christianity in the New Science. To these historians, the Jesuits are indicative of European modernity as a whole, as Giard writes,

Parce qu'ils voulaient comprendre comment fonctionnent les mécanismes intégrateurs du savoir et du croire, des historiens ont choisi d'étudier le cas des jésuites à la Renaissance, c'est-à-dire d'une société en mutation (comme la nôtre) et d'un milieu circonscrit où il

semble possible d'évaluer, pour des individus singuliers comme pour des sous-groupes définis, la manière d'être dans la modernité ou de s'y opposer. (liii)

Similarly, the case of the Jesuits, both through the lives of its individual members as well as its overall organization, provide a unique perspective into how the frontiers of Spanish America were both inside and outside European modernity during the eighteenth century, on the one hand performing a millenary tradition of Christian asceticism while also forging modern forms of subjectivity. As I argue throughout this work, this is not only due to the order's role in collecting and transmitting empirical information about non-European cultures and lands through their world-wide network of missions and colleges, but also involves the Jesuits' ideas about organizing ideal communities of Amerindian subjects on the colonial frontier and exercising a unique ascetic ideal in carrying out their inner-worldly affairs.

Of course, examining the Jesuits' contributions to modernity runs counter to the prevailing logic of some of the eighteenth-century's most widely read and influential intellectuals, who considered the order representative of superstition, irrationality and hypocrisy. Already in the seventeenth-century the order had come to be associated with obscurantist theological and philosophical speculation, of which Hobbes was a lapidary critic in defining Jesuit scholastic thought as a type of madness that reigns "when men speak such words, as put together, have in them no signification at all; but are fallen upon by some, through misunderstanding of the words they have received, and repeat by rote; by others, from intention to deceive by obscurity" (58). Referring to the eighteenth-century, neo-pagan *philosophes*, Peter Gay writes, "As the Enlightenment saw it, the world was, and always had been divided between ascetic, superstitious enemies of the flesh, and men who affirmed life, the body, knowledge and generosity; between mythmakers and realists, priests and philosophers" (33). For many of the

most celebrated authors of the century, the Jesuits were synonymous with these corrupt and repressive elements of the Church establishment. The hostility towards the order among secular intellectuals in eighteenth-century Europe is epitomized in Voltaire's *Candide* (not coincidentally published the same year the order was expelled from Portugal), in which the Jesuits are portrayed as cynical pederasts who despotically live off the labor of Amerindians in their Paraguayan missions and wage war against fellow Europeans to protect their dominion. Notwithstanding his scathing satire, Voltaire also embodies the ambivalence of the century towards the Society, for he was a product of the Jesuit school system who studied under Pierre François Xavier Charlevoix (the author of a widely-read history of the Jesuits in Paraguay who the illustrious student once praised for his veracity), and possessed the 34 volumes of the *Lettres édifiantes* in his personal library (Duchet 70). Nevertheless, criticism of the order dominated the European public sphere that the Jesuits had in part helped to form, both from secular intellectuals who sought to undermine the Church's authority as well as from a Jansenist orthodoxy that condemned the Jesuits for encouraging laxism.<sup>11</sup> According to Jean Le Rond D'Alembert, the order used religion as a pretext to increase its control over the credulous: "*Gouverner l'univers, non par la force, mais par la religion; telle paraît avoir été la devise de cette société dès son origine; devise qu'elle a laissé voir davantage à mesure que son existence et son autorité se sont accrues*" (22). D'Alembert, writing on the expulsion of the Jesuits from France in 1763, compared the order to the marshlands of Holland, which were protected from the force of the ocean by a precarious system of dykes: the Jesuits' downfall, therefore, was seen as an inevitable submission to the superior force of Enlightenment reason, which the order had paradoxically

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<sup>11</sup> For an overview of the anti-Jesuit literature that peaked during the eighteenth century see John W. O'Malley's "The Historiography of the Society of Jesus: Where Does It Stand Today?" in *The Jesuits: Cultures, Sciences, and the Arts, 1540-1773*. For the attitudes of both Jansenists and the incipient bourgeoisie towards the Jesuit laxism and probabilism see Bernhard Groethuysen's *La formación de la conciencia burguesa en Francia durante el siglo xviii* (269-306).

helped bring to fruition through their educational mission and their international labor of gathering and publishing empirical knowledge from their mission outposts.

Attempts at debunking this version of the the Jesuits' relation to modernity have culminated in recent studies that single out the Society of Jesus as a key organization in the advancement of knowledge from the sixteenth to seventeenth centuries. Abandoning the paradigm of a purely secular pursuit of knowledge opposed by a reactionary and anti-intellectual Church establishment, new approaches to the history of science have focused on the Society's educational institutions and mission network as indispensable to the Scientific Revolution. Building on John Law and Bruno Latour's work in action network theory, Stephen Harris has demonstrated that the Society of Jesus functioned as one of the early modern period's most important corporate organizations for the collection, concentration and diffusion of knowledge about nature. Harris argues that the Jesuits were principal contributors to the "large-scale sciences," such as astronomy, geography, natural history, meteorology and navigation that required many contributors working within a tightly organized network stretching across the globe. This work has long been overlooked by an historiographic interest in small-scale science and individual discoveries, yet, as Harris claims, "If the story of Galileo as an operator of networks of instruments and patrons spans two decades and half of Italy, the story of the Society of Jesus as a corporate operator of networks of missions and colleges spans more than two centuries and the entire globe" ("Long-Distance" 298). The Jesuits success is attributed not only to their ability to collect data from their global missions and then disseminate findings among learned circles in the metropole, but also their ability to use the same circulation of information to instill discipline and morale in members who saw their contributions to the study of nature as a necessary complement to their apostolic mission (Harris, "Confession Building" 311). I will

demonstrate that this function of corporate discipline and morale building in Jesuit narrative was not only essential to reinforcing the missionary's vocation but also contributed to sustaining the colonial order and the metropole's relationship to its colonial frontiers.

These studies are related to a general decentering of the Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment, traditionally portrayed as movements emanating outward from two or three nodal points in Europe to the rest of a belated and benighted world. As some recent historiography claims, Spain and Spanish-America have been relegated to the periphery of the history of European modernity due to deeply rooted biases that can be traced back centuries.<sup>12</sup> Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra maintains that it was not simply a matter of Spain and Spanish America catching up to an enlightened Europe during the eighteenth century; rather Spanish scientists and intellectuals had always been contemporaries, and even forerunners, of the Scientific Revolution.<sup>13</sup> Antonio Barrera Ossorio has made similar claim for the inclusion of Spain in a history of the Scientific Revolution, particularly through the empirical approach of navigators

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<sup>12</sup> Traditional histories of Bourbon Spain have portrayed the Enlightenment as only begrudgingly or timidly accepted in the peninsula, and then only insofar as it contributed to the administrative and economic reforms begun under Carlos III (Lynch 259-60). Richard Herr's *The Eighteenth-Century Revolution in Spain* is typical of this view, in which the Spanish intellectual elites held fast to religion even as they pragmatically accepted some of the scientific innovations imported from abroad (46). According to Herr, the relative inactivity of the Inquisition in Spain during the eighteenth century was not a sign of the weakening of this institution's control over the production of knowledge, "but mainly because religious doubt had not yet noticeably penetrated Spanish society" (211). Anthony Pagden, referring to the resistance of the New Philosophy in Spanish universities throughout the eighteenth century, more bluntly states, "Spain never experienced a 'scientific revolution' or, as we have seen, anything which could plausibly be accommodated under such a description. The only 'modern' science to achieve any degree of intellectual uptake (and that only at the very end of the eighteenth century) was political economy" ("Reception" 139). Jonathan Israel's monumental *Radical Enlightenment* was undertaken to show, by a thorough examination of primary and secondary materials in their original languages, that the most radical ideas of the French *philosophes* originated in the Low Countries some eighty years before the publication of the *Encyclopedia*, and had already circulated, particularly through the work of Spinoza, throughout Europe. More than simply shifting the center and the chronology of the Enlightenment, Israel examines the national contexts of the Enlightenment and the ripples that *spinozisme*, whether studied in salons or denounced on the pulpit, sent through all sectors of society, even in Spain. According to Israel, and here he is directly at odds with Pagden's assessment, the debate over the New Philosophy spread throughout the Iberian Peninsula prior to 1750 and considerably transformed medicine, science and higher education in both Spain and Portugal (528-40).

<sup>13</sup> For example, Cañizares-Esguerra asserts that Francis Bacon modeled his *New Atlantis* after Andrés García de Céspedes' *Regimiento de navegación*, and that this debt to Spanish natural history and cartography has gone unacknowledged due to a discourse of modernity in which Protestantism and the Enlightenment are opposed to a rearguard Catholic Iberia (*Nature* 23).

and merchants exploiting the opportunities for profit in the New World (57). More so than Cañizares-Esguerra, Barrera Ossorio recognizes the importance of Spain's overseas empire in fostering the development of an empirical approach to science and a modern network of information gathering and sharing. As Harris argues, the Casa de Contratación, the Consejo de Indias, and the Society of Jesus were all key contributors in Spain and Spanish-American's scientific tradition and legacy to the West (Harris, "Long-Distance").

Cañizares-Esguerra's work has also focused on the production of scientific knowledge as a key element of the formation of a Criollo identity in New Spain during the eighteenth century. According to Cañizares-Esguerra, Novohispanic intellectuals such as José Antonio de Alzate y Ramírez and Antonio León y Gama developed a "patriotic epistemology" that is as much a part of the intellectual tradition of modernity as the European Enlightenment and in fact actively sought to debunk the work of European natural historians by criticizing their shaky epistemological foundations (*How to Write* 209-10). These Criollo polymaths contested the conjectural histories of the Americas written by De Pauw and Buffon through their knowledge of primary sources and an "Enlightenment art of reading [...] characterized by a skeptical probing of the internal consistency of texts and the search for alternative, non-literary forms of evidence" (*How to Write* 299). Antony Higgins likewise has described a Criollo subject of modernity emerging in the late eighteenth century through the production of literary and scientific knowledge. This subject, according to Higgins, did not necessarily appear along the faultline separating the secular bourgeoisie from traditional religious culture (as in England and France), but rather was "overdetermined" by the need to differentiate itself from an external authority that seemed increasingly arbitrary and repressive to a Criollo elite excluded from the viceregal economic and political spheres under the Bourbon reforms (5). Higgins emphasizes the

importance of the Jesuit colleges as a “stand in for the absent public sphere” among the Criollo elite that promoted the values of Europe’s secular Enlightenment: “in particular, empiricism, experimental method, an aesthetics based on clarity of exposition and universal standards of ‘good taste,’ and a pragmatic approach to agriculture and economy” (16). Both Cañizares-Esguerra and Higgins focus on the modernity of a Criollo elite that manifested its identity through literary and historical texts meant for a restricted circle of readers closely related to the Jesuits’ institutions of higher education in New Spain; the Jesuits’ contributions to a Novohispanic modernity through the promotion of an ascetic ideal, however, were not limited to this exclusive strata of society. The Society, many of whose members working in New Spain were neither Criollo nor Spanish, also spread an ideal of social control and an ethical orientation for action that reached all sectors of the viceroyalty through popular education, ministries, catechesis, sermons, demonstrations of popular devotion, and missions.

In her history of the Jesuits’ institutions of popular education in New Spain, Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru notes that the urban ministries of the Jesuits were effective vehicles for the diffusion of Ignatian piety and respect for the social order of the Viceroyalty across all strata (48). Through examples of conduct cited from the pulpit or employed as objects of contemplation in “Spiritual Exercises,” the Jesuit ascetic ideal reached a public beyond the religious order and the upper strata of the Criollo elite. While recognizing that the frontier missions were essentially pedagogical enterprises, Gonzalbo Aizpuru relegates them to a marginal application of the Jesuits’ practices of popular education (37). Yet their importance was manifest not only through the order’s efforts to extend the political and cultural hegemony of the viceroyalty but also in the representation of this mission through Jesuit narratives in the colonial center and metropole. Although her research demonstrates that the Company’s educational

activity was mainly concentrated in urban centers, she does not account for the fact the most widely read and distributed Jesuit texts were those concerning *reducción* on New Spain's remote frontiers, where the colonial order was reaffirmed through the exercise of the Jesuits' ascetic ideal.

These new approaches to the study of the Jesuits in Spanish America are related to the trend in historiographic and literary studies of the Spanish-American colonial frontier, which have increasingly focused on Amerindian agency in exchanges with representatives of the colonizing culture. The problem, as noted in Edward H. Spicer's classic work on the Amerindian cultures affected by the Spanish and Anglo-American colonization of borderlands, is that colonial history is registered almost exclusively from the perspective of the colonizers, and any attempt to discern other perspectives is like looking "through a glass darkly" (22). Spicer's work, a break with the school of borderlands history founded by Herbert Eugene Bolton, has informed recent historiography that portrays Amerindians as more than a passive presence in the forward march of European civilization.<sup>14</sup> Through archival research and inter-disciplinary dialogue, the mission frontier is now seen as a heterogenous space where the seemingly straightforward alliances among representatives of the colonizing culture and Amerindian cultures are reconfigured, resulting in a profound transformation, both cultural and political, on all sides of the exchange.<sup>15</sup> Despite the overt bias of the colonial archive, new studies have rendered complex descriptions of this exchange and of the Amerindian cultures affected by contact with

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<sup>14</sup> In his foundational essay on mission history, Bolton praises the "humanitarian principles" of Spanish colonization as well as the "humanitarian zeal" of the missionaries, who according to the historian brought Amerindians into the fold of civilization (52). In contrast to this triumphalist vision of colonial culture, David Sweet describes the new mission history: "Nothing about the mission enterprise is self-evident, and in view of its terrible consequences for the native populations it was designed in principle to benefit, nothing about it should any longer be taken for granted or at face value by serious historians" (45).

<sup>15</sup> David J. Weber's *The Spanish Frontier in North America* is typical of this shift in historiographical perspective (13).



Europeans. In his study of the Jesuit missions of Lower California, for example, Ignacio del Río notes the irony in the fact that despite their denial of any recognizable social structure or religion among the *californios*, eighteenth-century Jesuit historians actually provide a wealth of detail that allows contemporary historians and anthropologists to at least partially describe the Amerindian cultures of the peninsula and the attempts of these groups to adapt to the religious order's mission regime (31).

In their search to do justice to the complexity of Amerindian cultures and their responses to European colonization, historians have turned to anthropological, archaeological and literary approaches as well as attempts to recast the history of Spanish conquest through Amerindian cosmogonies.<sup>16</sup> While recognizing the devastation wrought by European conquest, the aim of these studies is to move beyond the one-dimensional view of the Amerindian as either passive victim or intractable resistance. To this end, Cynthia Radding studies the cultural transformations on the northwestern frontier of Mexico in the eighteenth century as an instance of “ethnogenesis,” or the constant assimilation and adaptation of cultures to outside influences (249-50). Radding maintains that the Northwest of New Spain remained an open frontier well into the Mexican Republic, and that subaltern identities were shaped, but not entirely suppressed, by the various social, economic and religious institutions imported by Europeans, including the

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<sup>16</sup> In *When Jesus Came the Earth Mothers Went Away*, Ramón Gutierrez applies this method, reading the Spanish colonization of the Pueblo Indians through the cosmogony preserved by contemporary Acomas. The first explorers and missionaries to venture into the region that would come to be known as New Mexico are seen as *katsina*, rain spirits that represent the Pueblos' ancestors (43), and Nuestra Virgen del Rosario is perceived as an incarnation of *Nautisi*, the mother the first men in the Puebloan creation myth (143). Gutierrez describes the social structure and sexual mores of the Pueblos prior to the arrival of Europeans and how these were first misunderstood and then exploited in order to justify violence, exploitation, and sexual coercion perpetrated by Spanish soldiers and missionaries alike. Like Spicer, Gutierrez sees the Pueblos as a culture that, while assimilating aspects of the European patrilineal family structure and monotheistic religion, has maintained a unique identity despite the constant threats of colonization and acculturation. Perhaps the most important contribution of Gutierrez' work is his emphasis on the role that female sexuality played as an important battleground for colonial frontier power relations. This approach has yet to be undertaken with the Jesuit missions of Northwest New Spain, perhaps due to the generally ascetic tone of Jesuit writing and the natural aversion (at least in the written record) of those selected for missionary work.

Jesuit *reducción*. The result of Radding's work is an alternative map of the "social ecology" of the Northwest, through which she attempts to capture the "complex web of relations among different indigenous peoples and between them and their Spanish overlords in reference to the land they occupied" (303). Radding's work is a clear example of the productive, though at times polemic, dialogue between literary approaches and historiography in studies of colonial Latin America, where the distinction between document and text has become increasingly blurred.

Finally, any contemporary study of colonial Latin American literature bears the onus of making sense of the varied and original contributions to the expanding field of literary studies during the 1980's and 90's.<sup>17</sup> This conjuncture provided theoretical tools and a sense of political urgency in analyzing culture and representation in Latin American history as well as the ways in which contemporary academic discourse (particularly in the center of a world-wide Anglo-American military and cultural hegemony) might be complicit with historical and contemporary hegemonies based on race, class and gender. The debates over the past and future of colonial studies in the early 90's as well as the programmatic nature of some proposals attests to an awareness that, while certainly not without antecedents, the field was undergoing profound changes.<sup>18</sup> At the root of these debates within the field of Latin Americanism was a fundamental methodological and theoretical question: how can the archive be interpreted to represent Amerindian or subaltern agency. Julio Ortega has cautioned that these debates, while well-

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<sup>17</sup> This period included pitched political struggles against repressive military regimes in Latin America, subsequent transitions to democracy, the fall of the Soviet Union, the concomitant spread of the economic policies and triumphalist discourse of neo-liberalism, a productive and sustained dialogue with post-structuralist and neo-marxist theories of language and society coming out of Europe, the presence of an exceptional generation of Latin American expatriot intellectuals in U.S. academia, the formation of professional organizations for interdisciplinary dialogue among Latinamericanists, and an Amerindian led insurgency in Mexico that, along with providing a contemporary example of subaltern agency in action, was the first political movement to use the internet as means to call immediate world-wide attention to its struggle.

<sup>18</sup> The "Founding Statement" of the Latin American Subaltern Studies Group (1995), with its call to abandon a national-bourgeois paradigm of culture in order to examine how subaltern subjectivities shape their own cultures at the margins of hegemony, is redolent of early manifestoes of cultural and political avant-gardism in both Europe and Latin America.

intentioned, often seem to devolve into the “liberal paternalism of symbolic compensations” (“Towards a map”). None the less, this approach has raised legitimate questions about the blurring of disciplinary boundaries and the complicity of academic discourse with hegemonic perspectives both past and present. With like-minded schools of thought splitting over theoretical debates that are abstruse even to specialists, it would be a formidable task to give a full account of the divergent directions of Latin American colonial studies. Therefore, the following only aims to outline the general trends whose potential and limits are explored in my study of Jesuit narrative in eighteenth-century New Spain.

Angel Rama’s critique of the written word in *La ciudad letrada* was key to this generation’s understanding of the role of culture in the establishment of the authority of a Criollo elite and the exclusion of other forms of symbolic production to the margins. Rama’s description of the “lettered city” could well describe the relationship between Jesuit *reducción* on the colonial frontier and the writing of hagiographies and natural histories: “Es la que creo que debemos llamar la ciudad letrada, porque su acción se cumplió en el prioritario orden de los signos y porque su implícita calidad sacerdotal contribuyó a dotarlos de un aspecto sagrado, liberándoles de cualquier servidumbre con las circunstancias” (57). In Jesuit narrative the conflict between the utopian order of signs and the hostile circumstances of the colonial frontier is represented as the performance of an ascetic ideal manifest in the action of the missionary and naturalist. Rama’s work is indicative of the influence of post-structuralist thought on Latinamericanism, particularly through the work of Michel Foucault and Jacques Derrida. The former contributed a concept of indirect and diffuse forms of coercion exercised through apparatuses linking the production of knowledge to the exercise of power, while the latter provided a hermeneutic that uncovered the underlying aporia of Western metaphysics and its

reliance on the violence inherent in writing's encounter with the non-European other (*Grammatology* 106).<sup>19</sup> While these post-structuralist imports continue to orient the study of colonial Latin American history and literature, they have also occasioned important debates among like-minded critics within the field.

As Rolena Adorno has stated in an early debate centered on literary and historiographic approaches colonial Latin American studies, literary theories informed by poststructuralist critiques of written discourse and authorial intention enable us to view the text more as an event that constitutes its social context than as a mere reflection of reality (“Reconsidering” 137).<sup>20</sup> Though Adorno has espoused this same understanding of colonial Latin American literary studies in her latest work, her selection of representative works privileges written discourse and authors (Amerindian, Spanish, Criollo, and mestizo) that are now part of a canonical curriculum (*Polemics* 4).<sup>21</sup> Notwithstanding this limitation, her readings of colonial texts as sallies in the “polemics of possession,” encompassing a struggle for narrative authority and ontological

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<sup>19</sup> In one of his late lectures, Foucault succinctly summarizes this project: “The point of all these investigations concerning madness, disease, delinquency, sexuality, and what I am talking about now, is to show how the coupling of a set of practices and a regime of truth form an apparatus (*dispositif*) of knowledge-power that effectively marks out in reality that which does not exist and legitimately submits it to the division between true and false” (*Birth of Biopolitics* 10).

<sup>20</sup> Adorno's comments were made in a special issue of the *Latin American Research Review* (1993) dedicated to the topic of “colonial discourse,” in which she, Hernán Vidal and Walter Mignolo responded to a review article by the historian Patricia Seed on five works dealing with the topic from different perspectives. The issue is interesting not only for its description of a conjuncture in colonial Latin American studies but also for the genealogies of Latin American literary criticism given by each of the contributors.

<sup>21</sup> The exception to her focus on written discourse is, of course, Guaman Poma de Ayala, who, largely thanks to Adorno's extensive scholarship, has become a staple of the Latin American colonial curriculum in U.S. academia. Yet, instead of using the tools of literature (or those literature has appropriated for the analysis of traditional literary texts) to “non-literary” documents in order to achieve a more complete and nuanced understanding of early modern Spanish-American culture, those texts that are deemed most “literary” are picked out in order to justify the disciplinary bounds of a Latin American literature curriculum. The influence of Roberto González Echevarría's *Myth and Archive* is manifest in Adorno's “Overview” of *The Polemics of Possession in Spanish American Narrative*: colonial literary criticism is posited as an offshoot of the Boom's creative rewritings of colonial chronicles whose purpose is to trace out a teleological history of Latin American literature culminating in the work of canonical twentieth-century authors such as Borges, Carpentier and García Márquez. For a thorough critique of González Echevarría's theory of Latin American literature and its application to colonial texts see Alberto Moreiras' “Mules and Snakes: On the Neo-Baroque Principle of De-Localization” (211).

priority, is useful for understanding the context of a wide range of colonial symbolic production, including Jesuit hagiographic and natural histories, which were often at the center of polemics on the rights of conquest and the duties of both the colonized and colonizers. I argue that these works founded their authority (narrative, political and spiritual) upon an ascetic ideal, a form of self-possession, for which the mission frontier was a space of symbolic action.

In his contribution to this same debate on the function of literary approaches in the study of colonial Latin America Walter D. Mignolo proposed the concept of “colonial semiosis,” whereby actors make sense of their social environment by interpretation and representation through sign systems, as more accurately portraying the dynamics of cultural production in a variegated colonial society than the concept of “colonial discourse.” According to Mignolo, this concept covers non-alphabetic and non-verbal systems of meaning, and emphasizes the negotiations between cultural traditions by subjects within specific contexts particular to Spanish-American colonialism (“Colonial” 127). In *The Darker Side of the Renaissance*, Mignolo argues that the task of the researcher is to practice a “pluritopic hermeneutics” that understands texts (oral or written, alphabetic or non-alphabetic) as performances by subjects that enact their social world through representation (332-33). By viewing symbolic production from all sides of the colonial encounter as performatives, Mignolo’s “pluritopic hermeneutics” is meant to reveal the role of culture in sustaining or undermining relations of power that are in the last instance enforced by violence.<sup>22</sup> In *The Darker Side*, Mignolo maintains that the Renaissance concept of writing and the book was central to establishing, enforcing and preserving the authority of Castilian culture by marginalizing modes of communication and cultural objects that

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<sup>22</sup> Importantly, “pluritopic hermeneutics” also shares a pervasive concern among Mignolo’s generation with the conditions of production of knowledge within U.S. academia. This concern is of course symptomatic of cultural theory’s critique, from Adorno and Horkheimer to Foucault, of the complicity of knowledge and power; but, as Mignolo recognizes, it is also a reflection of his position as a Latin American intellectual working in the United States where his language and culture are marginalized (312-13).

were not readily expressible in alphabetic script. This understanding of the text as performative and writing as an ideology for establishing hegemony is further developed in my analysis of Jesuit narrative as preserving and activating value orientations that lead to action in the world, particularly the exercise of power over the self and others. Jesuit hagiography and missionary chronicles were not only enactments of colonial authority but they also coordinated action on both the mission frontier and the urban center by mediating colonial crises through the tradition of the Western ascetic ideal. Furthermore, the particular form that the Jesuit ascetic ideal took on the Spanish-American mission frontier was transmitted back and adapted to the metropole through techniques of ascetic self-control, theories of governmentality and the procedures natural history.

This theoretical and methodological repositioning of Latin Americanism was complemented by the work of the South Asian Subaltern Studies Group, which served as a model for a similar collective of interdisciplinary inquiry into Latin American history and culture. The Latin American Subaltern Study Group's "Founding Statement" outlines a program for analyzing the modes with which hegemonic cultures have represented the subaltern throughout Latin American history while also revealing the strategies with which insurgencies (Amerindian, African, *mestizo*, *mulato*, proletarian, lumpen) have developed their own cultural logic.<sup>23</sup> The overriding aim of this project, which in many ways continues to hold sway over contemporary Latin Americanism, was to reveal forms of subaltern agency that have been relegated to the margins of colonial and national-bourgeois discourses where historiography has traditionally served as a handmaiden to projects of social control (137). In recognizing emerging

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<sup>23</sup> As the "Founding Statement" states, this same project is outlined in Ranajit Guha's "The Prose of Counter-Insurgency." The founding members of the Latin American group were Robert Carr, Ileana Rodríguez, Patricia Seed, Javier Sanjinés, John Beverley, José Mazzotti, José Rabasa, Roger Lancaster, Robert Conn, Julio Ramos, María Milagros López, Carol Smith, Clara Lomas, Norma Alarcón and Monica Szrumurk.

forms of subaltern agency at the margins of a concept of nationality that was eroding in the era of globalization, the subalternist project also emphasized the importance of turning to “both pre-Columbian and colonial forms of prenational territorialization” (143). While this subalternist project has produced original scholarship in colonial Latin American studies, particularly in its application to the study of the liminal spaces of colonial society such as the mission frontier, it has also revealed the fundamental aporias upon which contemporary Latin Americanism rests.

While the dialogue between literary studies and historiographic approaches seemed to blur disciplinary boundaries, the theoretical suppositions and methodological practices of subalternism revealed a fundamental tension between the two. In an article that criticizes the Latin American Subaltern Studies Group’s overemphasis on literary approaches, the historian Florencia Mallon described this disjuncture as “the tension between technique and political commitment, between a more narrowly postmodern literary interest in documents as ‘constructed texts’ and the historian’s disciplinary interest in reading documents as ‘windows,’ however foggy and imperfect, on people’s lives” (1506). While Mallon recognizes that historical research in the archive and the field has benefitted from the tools of textual analysis developed in literary studies, she claims that a reliance on these techniques leads to a reification of the concept of the subaltern and a methodological bias towards colonial discourses preserved in the written record and published sources. The historian’s work, according to Mallon, is conditioned by an archive that was constituted as a means of preserving power relations that historical research is meant to undermine; nevertheless, through archival work, “getting one’s hands dirty,” the historian discovers a ‘subject’ beyond the representativity of colonial discourse (1507). This subject remains, however, an ephemeral presence that flashes across the historian’s purview as an intuition whose representability in the language of historiography is called into question by

the very ethical-political commitment the researcher has assumed. Thus, the “real” work in the archive is the occasion of an experience (the historian’s experience of subaltern difference) that can only be explained “in theory”; yet this theory is constantly in danger of subjecting the subaltern to another elitist cultural discourse.

Mallon’s concerns are symptomatic of more than a simple “disciplinary turf war,” as John Berveley suggests in his rebuttal (20). As both Mallon and Beverley point out from their respective disciplinary perspectives, these aporia were first advanced in Gayatri Spivak’s essay “Can the Subaltern Speak?” In her critique of Michel Foucault and Gilles Deleuze’s inability to address the issue of subaltern agency in colonial and postcolonial contexts, Spivak turns to a central concern of Jacques Derrida’s *On Grammatology*:

The question is how to keep the ethnocentric Subject from establishing itself by selectively defining an Other. This is not a program for the Subject as such; rather it is a program from the benevolent *Western* intellectual. For those of us who feel that the ‘subject’ has a history and that the task of the first-world subject of knowledge in our historical moment is to resist and critique ‘recognition’ of the Third World through ‘assimilation,’ this specificity is crucial. (292)

The idea, then, is to address the intellectual’s implicit alliances, despite her good intentions, with a hegemonic discourse at the moment of rendering the subaltern recognizable, or representable, in historiography. Yet, as Derrida claims, there is no transcendental ground from which to base a theory that would resolve these questions prior to the empirical work of the historian (*Grammatology* 49-50). Spivak ends her own essay with just such a deconstructionist reading of “sati,” or widow sacrifice, in colonial and postcolonial historiography of India, which concludes with an anecdote on the suicide of a young Indian woman in 1928. Bhuvanewari Badhuri’s



suicide was a “puzzle” because it bowed to the heteronormative discourse of sati-suicide at the same time that it undermined this discourse with revolutionary intent: unable to carry out the political assassination with which she was entrusted as a member of an underground insurgent group, Badhuri took her own life during her menstrual cycle to insure that her act would not be confused with an pre-marital affair and unplanned pregnancy (307-08). As a woman and a member of an anti-colonial insurgency, Badhuri was caught in an interstice with no legitimate way of affirming herself through traditional or revolutionary practices. Spivak emphasizes the indeterminacy of Badhuri’s act, which is additionally transmitted through “unreliable” registers (family histories, anecdote and rumors), and concludes that “The subaltern as female cannot be heard or read” (308).

Spivak’s anecdote seems to confirm the Hegelian interpretation of suicide as a form of *manifesting* freedom by directly appropriating one’s own death and overcoming mere biological survival, but not as an act that *realizes* the freedom of an historical subject that seeks recognition through participation in society (Kojève 248). The message to subalternist approaches to Latin American colonial history and literature is that the subaltern will only manifest itself in intellectual work through its death, a death which is always an incomplete manifestation of freedom. The subaltern, according to Spivak, does not speak; or at least it will never realize its real freedom to speak through the discourse of historiography.<sup>24</sup> In this sense, subalternist approaches often fall into what Habermas calls the “performative contradiction” of a critique of reason that must necessarily borrow its tools from that same authoritarian reason: it attempts to

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<sup>24</sup> In a retrospective account of the genesis of her essay, Spivak revisits the case of Badhuri: “The focus of subalternity in the essay remained the singular woman who attempted to send the reader a message, as if her body were a ‘literary’ text. The message of the woman who hanged herself was one of unrecognisable resistance, an unrecognisable refusal of victimage by reproductive heteronormativity. As already mentioned, I had learnt the importance of making unrecognisable resistance recognisable from ‘The Eighteenth Brumaire’, a rather different recognition from the one touted by today’s liberal multiculturalism” (“Scattered” 477-78).

undermine an elite academic discourse inherited from an archive complicit with imperialism and from the very locus of that elite academic discourse (*Philosophical* 185). Through its reliance on deconstructive literary technique, subalternism works itself into a seemingly unresolvable disjuncture.<sup>25</sup>

These disjunctures continue to be a focus of subalternist approaches to Latin American literature, particularly on those concerned with the colonial frontier. In his study of representations of violence on the northern frontier of New Spain, José Rabasa examines the different epistemologies that coexisted in colonial Latin America and the strategies employed by subaltern subjects, which he terms “plural world dwelling,” in negotiating with the hegemonic culture. Rabasa shows that Spanish law recognized the existence of other cultural and political orders, under the rubric of *usos y costumbres*, at the margins of colonial hegemony and attempted to adapt to them insofar as they did not threaten Spanish political domination (*Writing* 11). In his examination of colonial narratives of the northern frontier of New Spain, Rabasa analyzes how violence is represented in these works and how the act of representation is also a kind of violence that can insinuate itself into contemporary readings.<sup>26</sup> Even in the use of terms such as “frontier,” which connotes a topographical valorization from the colonizer’s perspective, the critique of colonial discourse is in danger of replicating this “symbolic violence” (22). Rabasa claims that his goal is to “examine how writing produces subalternity, rather than offering a more accurate representation of subalterns,” and not even the project of subaltern studies itself is exculpated of the inherent violence of a historiography that makes undue claims

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<sup>25</sup> On the one hand, subalternism rests on the classic “liar’s paradox” (i.e. “all historians are liars”) whereby the truth-value of the statement (negative or positive) is suspended by the speaker. On the other hand, it is a form of Magritte’s “The Treachery of Images,” a gesture which draws attention to the medium of representation and the spectator’s position before the work: in their attempts to trace a subaltern presence in the archive, the subalternist historian or literary critic is only able to perpetually repeat a self-negating message (i.e. “This is not the subaltern”).

<sup>26</sup> See, for example Rabasa’s critique of Adorno’s reading of Cabeza de Vaca’s *Naufragios* (*Writing* 31-83).

on subaltern agency (279). Nevertheless, Rabasa attempts a way out of this cycle of (writing) violence by looking behind the curtain that the Enlightenment drew over the origins of its epistemology in colonialism and revealing its latent paradoxes, such as the concept of “peaceful conquest,” as well as the traces that subalterns leave in colonial discourse. Despite pointing out unconscious complicities with this epistemic violence in contemporary historiography and literary studies, Rabasa’s approach ultimately does not resolve the “performative paradox” inherent in subalternism. That is, it cannot explain how his work is exempt from the radical critique of reason.

Ivonne del Valle’s *Escribiendo desde los márgenes: Colonialismo y jesuitas en el siglo XVIII* brings together the archival research of historiography and the theoretical orientations of literary studies that at times seem at odds in Latin American subalternism. In her examination of Jesuit writing from and about the mission frontier in eighteenth-century New Spain, del Valle describes the disintegration of the evangelical mission in the face of, on the one hand, an irreconcilable Amerindian lifeworld and, on the other, a prevailing mercantilistic economic system. Like Rabasa, del Valle attempts to unveil the violent origins of Enlightenment reason by turning to texts and documents from the Spanish-American colonial frontier that more transparently render the conflicts between missionaries and their would be catuchumens. Del Valle compares documents (principally private letters written by Jesuit missionaries) that reflect the failure of the missionary enterprise with published Jesuit natural histories that, as her analysis conveys, functioned as a form of coping with the indomitable environment and inhabitants of the frontier (189). A literary reading (“la imaginación poética”) permits an approximation of subaltern difference preserved in these texts (33-34). In del Valle’s interpretation, there was no place for the missionary ideal on an already “disenchanted” frontier dominated by economic

interests and refractory Amerindian cultures (136); thus, natural history provided a way of eliding the missionary's inability to adapt (physically or culturally) to the frontier as well as the evangelical enterprise's increasing subordination to the secular economic order.

In her adoption of the subalternist's totalizing critique of historical reason, del Valle is wary of any analysis that may subordinate the Amerindian perspective to a "Western-Christian epistemology" (21). The voluminous corpus of Jesuit hagiography, while portraying a manifestly distorted view of the mission frontier by emphasizing the ascetic heroism of the missionary, is nevertheless key to understanding the impact of Jesuit practices and symbolic production in the urban colonial center and metropole. A mode of Jesuit writing that proliferated in the decades leading up to the order's expulsion, missionary hagiography performed the essential function of connecting the expansion and control of the colonial frontier to an ideal order in the colonial center. Furthermore, the ascetic ideal of the Jesuits' hagiographic discourse is not only present in "Edifying Letters" and *Vidas* published in New Spain but also in works with an emphasis on natural history written for a more secular-minded reading public in Europe. From this perspective, the question is not only why the Jesuits abandoned outdated forms of writing missionary history in favor of a more scientific mode of history that would appeal to a secular European reading public, but also how their hagiographic writings embody an ascetic ideal that persisted in the writing of natural history both within and outside the order. While I concur with post-structuralist and postcolonial critiques of the brutality underlying colonial reason, of which there is ample evidence even in the Jesuits' idealized accounts, my focus is on the concomitant process of rationalized self-control and social control that arose in response to this violence and

in turn influenced forms of governmentality in the colonial center and the metropole, often no less symptoms of an “indefensible” civilization.<sup>27</sup>

As del Valle demonstrates, the Jesuits’ accounts of their evangelical mission are often stories of failure, yet the Jesuit ascetic ideal, a form of what William James described as “absolute moralism,” also posited these failures as trials of faith that restored social and moral order to their universe. As a trope in Jesuit narrative that oriented the inner-worldly action of the Jesuit missionary, the frontier became a space for creating the “lonely emergencies of life” that would affirm the rationality of the order they represented through the narrative of self-sacrificing apostles: “Resistance then, poverty, martyrdom if need be, tragedy in a word, such are the solemn feasts of his inward faith” (105). In narrating their apostolic enterprise as the trial of a moral and social order, the Jesuits drew upon a millennial tradition of Christian hagiography and adapted it to their work on the Spanish-American colonial frontier. Eighteenth-century Jesuit missionary narrative likewise assumes a unique form that indicates the order’s changing role on the missionary frontier, colonial society and the metropole. The question then becomes how the order’s “absolute moralism” mediated between the ideal and material interests of colonial society and established an inner-worldly ascetic ideal that resonated beyond the mission frontier in the production of secular scientific knowledge from the colonial periphery. By focusing on the development of the Jesuit ascetic ideal in these works it becomes clear that the Jesuits did not happen onto an already disenchanted frontier, but rather were active agents in the disenchantment of the frontier both through their role as agents of colonization as well as their contributions to Enlightenment natural history. This approach permits us to compare the Jesuit

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<sup>27</sup> The classic expression of this postcolonial critique of an “indefensible” European civilization as viewed from the colonial periphery, which is both directly and indirectly present in contemporary Latinamericanism, is Aimé Césaire’s *Discourse on Colonialism*.

ascetic ideal, as performed and contested on the Spanish-American frontier, with parallel forms of ethical rationalization and objectification of nature that are fundamental to our definitions of modernity. Far from presenting a rupture between a religious tradition and a secular-scientific worldview, we find that the Jesuit ascetic ideal was both a precursor and contemporary to the eighteenth-century upheaval in philosophy, science and society.

This focus does not elide the agency of Amerindians who resisted and transformed the missionary and his culture; on the contrary, it is my goal to demonstrate how the performance of the ascetic ideal paradoxically reaffirms this refracted presence through writing. Examining the ascetic ideal through Jesuit narrative is more than simply describing the discourse with which the colonizer justified his actions to himself. I believe this approach will reveal an instance of ethical rationalization on the colonial frontier at a key moment in the history of Europe and New Spain, which was marked by a virulent – and somewhat paradoxical – reaction against the Jesuits that ultimately led to the order’s suppression. While I argue that the Jesuit’s ascetic ideal influenced the very inner-wordly value orientations that would ultimately turn against them, I am likewise wary of extending this limit-case of ethical rationalization to a totalizing critique of Western reason. Beyond a very weak symbolic gesture, it is unclear how the aporetic reasoning of deconstructionist readings does any more justice to the Amerindian victims of colonialism and state violence, both past and present. Furthermore, these approaches often fail to recognize that they are part of a very long tradition of colonial critique of which there is a significant corpus even in the eighteenth century.

In addition to the irresolvable performative paradox inherent in this radical critique, it cannot account for how Jesuit natural history was not only used as a model for modern ethnographic and scientific practices complicit with mercantilist colonial policies but also was

used to substantiate eighteenth-century critiques of European imperialism from metropolitan intellectuals such as Denis Diderot and Johann Gottfried Herder.<sup>28</sup> As Sankar Muthu argues, these European thinkers used accounts of the “New World” to develop a philosophical anthropology that vindicated the cultural agency of peoples subjected to colonization and criticized European discourses that justified imperialism with claims to cultural superiority. Muthu takes Clifford Geertz to task for his monolithic understanding of Enlightenment thought regarding the non-European subject:

As I have argued [...] , there are important strands of eighteenth-century thought that take humans to be intrinsically cultural agents who partly transform, and yet are always situated within, various contexts. Strikingly, anti-imperialist political theories in the Enlightenment era were almost always informed by such understandings of humanity.

(69)

It is important to keep Muthu’s comments in mind before overextending an analysis of eighteenth-century Jesuit writing to wholesale critique of Western reason. Although Jesuit natural history was a strategy for reproducing colonial relations of power on the Spanish-American frontier, like any text it could not control all the uses to which it was put, particularly when these texts circulated far beyond the Society of Jesus and New Spain.

Drawing from the approaches outlined above, the first chapter of this dissertation provides the conceptual and historical frame for an examination of Jesuit missionary narratives in eighteenth-century New Spain. I first examine the ascetic mastery of self that was unique to the Society of Jesus both through Nietzsche’s critique of the ascetic ideal and Weber’s sociology

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<sup>28</sup> Consider that the Diderot worked closely with the french Jesuit Guillaume-Thomas Raynal on the *History of the Two Indies* and that Herder’s defense of cultural autonomy cited the work of Jean Jacques Baegert, an exiled Jesuit missionary who worked for thirty years among the Guaycura of Lower California,. In the case of Herder there is a radical transformation in Baegert’s intent in describing the customs of the Guaycura.

of religion. Focusing on the rationalization of religious worldviews in the formation of modern subjectivity, this approach will examine those aspects of Ignatian spirituality that provided orientations for inner-worldly action beyond the activities of the order's members. This analysis will focus on Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises* as well as forms of Jesuit cultural production in the seventeenth century that represent what Anthony Cascardi terms "subjects of control" through which the ascetic will to power over the self is closely linked to political control (*Ideologies* 111). Though originating and expressed in European cultural forms, the Jesuit ascetic ideal depended upon a field of apostolic action at the edges of Iberian empires where the subject could reaffirm his identity and the order he represented. It could be more properly stated that the Jesuits' ascetic ideal developed in tandem with the expansion of the colonial frontier, which was not only a space of symbolic action but also became a literary topos repeated in Jesuit narrative as a constituting element of the order's corporate identity.

Of course, the Jesuits' primary mission on the Spanish-American colonial frontier was to bring Amerindian subjects within the fold of Christianity and Castilian political hegemony. The practice of colonizing and acculturating these subjects was generally referred to by the term *reducción*, which came to be almost exclusively associated with the Jesuits due to the fame (and for many of their contemporaries, the infamy) of their Paraguayan missions. Before it became a defining characteristic of Jesuit identity, *reducción* had a history as a specific form of "pastoral power" that emerged from Iberian expansion in the Atlantic, where the Christian pastorate uniquely combined with forms of political control exercised over non-European subjects. If, as Foucault argues, this "pastoral power" was "a prelude to governmentality through the constitution of a specific subject, of a subject whose merits are analytically identified, who is subjected to continuous networks of obedience, and who is subjectified through the compulsory



extraction of the truth,” then the practice of *reducción* may point towards the origin of modern political subjectivation on the Spanish-American colonial frontier (*Security* 184-85). The goal of this first chapter is to demonstrate the relation of the Jesuit “subject of control” to the practice *reducción*, which submitted both missionary and Amerindian catechumen to a regime of reciprocal discipline and an economy of faults and merits.

The second chapter will describe the history, structure and tropes Jesuit missionary hagiography in a series of *vidas* dedicated to seventeenth and eighteenth-century Jesuit missionaries in New Spain and published in the decades leading up to the expulsion of the order in 1767. Jesuit hagiography in New Spain performed a deeply rooted tradition of Christian ascetic writing in which the concept of the desert as a spiritual trial was actualized by both the missionary and the hagiographic text. These texts not only reflect the millennial tradition of the ascetic ideal but also the formation of a modern subject through disciplinary procedures and the rationalization of religious worldviews. Jesuit missionary hagiography demonstrates a fundamental relationship between the frontier, the text and a subject whose identity is fashioned in a necessary confrontation with resistance in a colonial context. Through a typological hermeneutic that interpreted history as the fulfillment of a prophecy prefigured in a previous sacred text, Jesuit hagiographic works portrayed the mission frontier as stage upon which the exemplary colonial subject would perform the ascetic ideal preserved in the Christian tradition. These narratives demonstrate that *reducción* was not only a practice of forming ideal subjects out of the colonized other, but also reciprocally acted upon the colonizer’s definition of self.

One of the fundamental elements of these texts is the trial of the missionary’s chastity on the colonial frontier. In eighteenth-century missionary hagiography the female Amerindian is portrayed as either a willing or accidental agent of demonic intervention against the Jesuit’s

evangelical campaigns, an unintentionally ironic portrayal given the texts' references, both allusive and candid, to the sexual depredation to which these very same women were subjected at the hands of European colonizers. These Jesuit missionary narratives not only portray the frontier as the locus of a foreclosed desire but also describe temptations in urban settings where the missionaries represent a strict social order threatened at every turn. Following the work of Pablo Gonzalez Casanova on the eighteenth-century clash between a popular folkloric culture and the clerical culture of the Criollo elite, I argue that the Jesuit missionary hagiographies that proliferated in New Spain were part of a centripetal discourse that sought to counteract the popular carnivalesque and unorthodox religious cultures that were the target of the Holy Office. My analysis of this genre will conclude with an examination a Jesuit hagiography on the life of Salvadora de los Santos, a female Otomí from Querétaro whose life challenged the conventions of the genre. This work, one of the only Jesuit-authored *Vida y virtudes* to be republished in New Spain after the order's expulsion, paradoxically presents a case of subaltern agency through the order's ascetic ideal.

Chapter 3 examines pedagogical scenes in the hagiographies and natural histories that were occasioned by the experience of Jesuit *reducción* in New Spain. *Reducción* was above all posited as an educational apparatus in which the "errors" of the Amerindian would be corrected under the tutelage of the missionary. In this sense, *reducción* was developed not only as a more civil and Christian method of *conquista* and *pacificación* but also a more efficient process for producing obedient subjects, that is, subjects who would identify themselves with the colonizers' culture to the point of viewing their subjection as natural and desirable. Nevertheless, the Jesuit chronicles of *reducción* in the northwest of New Spain, and in particular the missions of Lower California, more often than not reflect an unstable hierarchy of teacher and pupil. In reproducing

the frontier as a limit between colonizer and colonized and as a trial for the subject of hagiography these narratives also reveal the latent contradictions of the colonial ideal performed by the missionary. Just as the ascetic hero must confront temptation so that his will to power over the self may be tested – that is, probe his fallen nature so that his virtue may triumph – the missionary narrative likewise reveals the fundamentally corrupt nature of colonial society so that writing may assert the triumph of the ascetic will. Thus, Jesuit narrative portrays the instability of the tutelary hierarchy so that it may be reestablished as the victory of the ascetic subject and the moral order he represents.

The most common test of the missionary's mastery over his catechumens is his submission to the "rudo y penoso magisterio de un indio" (an oxymoronic "brutish mastery") in order to learn the languages of his catechumens so that he can translate Christian doctrine. In these cases the missionary's authority, already established as an exemplary student and professor in the Jesuit colleges, is fundamentally undermined in a context in which the Jesuit subject lacks the institutions that guarantee his mastery. The Jesuits' linguistic heroism, that is, their much-vaunted command of non-European languages and ability to communicate with subjects at the edge of Europe's empires, was put to the test and often found lacking in a context where they could not understand their interlocutors nor make themselves understood. Ultimately, Jesuit narrative resolves the missionary's manifest inadequacy in adapting to the conditions of the frontier and establishing his mastery over Amerindian cultures by falling back a time-honored allegory of writing and orality whose moral nevertheless remains uncertain.

Chapter 4 traces the evolution from the *Criollo* Jesuit Miguel Venegas' manuscript history of the Jesuit missions in Lower California, *Empresas apostólicas* (1739), to the Spanish Jesuit Andrés Marcos Burriel's rewriting of the work, published in Madrid as *Noticia de la*

*California* (1757). Burriel, a Spanish historian versant in the proliferation of eighteenth-century natural histories published throughout Europe, transformed the original into a work that would have been unrecognizable to Venegas, a professor of moral theology from México. In this reformulation of the original one can trace the shift from a providential history of self-sacrificing apostles to the more empirical, skeptical mode of natural history advocated by Spain's most prominent eighteenth-century intellectual, Benito Jerónimo Feijóo. Although new emphasis is placed on geographic, botanical, zoological and ethnographic information, the *Noticia* nonetheless remains largely a history of the Jesuits' campaign to Christianize and civilize the inhabitants of the peninsula, but without the frequent references to providence and the constant citations of scripture that bloat Venegas' text.

Burriel's rewriting of Venegas' chronicle was the most widely translated and disseminated text on California during the eighteenth century, yet the history of its production and its relation to the original remain largely unstudied. In addition to both Venegas' manuscript and Burriel's *Noticia*, I will also examine the latter's unpublished correspondence with fellow Jesuits in New Spain. This correspondence not only reveals Burriel's motives for rewriting the original but also demonstrates how the order's ascetic-apostolic ideal was adapted to the production of knowledge about the nature and peoples of the colonial frontier during the eighteenth century. Burriel is an exemplary case of how the Jesuits' vocation was exercised through the writing of natural histories that abandoned the model of the "Edifying Letter" in order to reach a reading public that was increasingly hostile towards the order.

The performance of the Jesuit ascetic ideal on the Spanish-American frontier bridged the temporal and spatial dimensions of early modernity. Through missionary chronicles and natural histories, the Jesuits united the religious tradition of the West with the secular ends of Spanish-

American colonialism while also linking the contingency of the frontier contact zone to the global designs of European imperial expansion. This perspective includes spaces far from the European centers of cultural production as well as actors (both Jesuit missionaries and Amerindians) not traditionally considered in the historiography of modernity. The Jesuits' contribution to the rationalization of religious worldviews through their evangelical and intellectual labor on the Spanish-American mission frontier demonstrates that modernity was a global, ecumenical project in which the distinctions between religious and secular orientations were not always clear-cut. The representation of the ascetic ideal through Jesuit narrative was not only key to the disenchantment of the mission frontier for a European public, but also reaffirmed the moral order of the viceroyalty by portraying the process of *reducción* as a trial of the core virtues of the colonial hegemony embodied through the enactment of the Jesuit subject's self-sacrifice. While these texts were foremost a means of reproducing these ascetic virtues within the Society of Jesus, they were likewise held up as an example to all strata of colonial society, especially those whose submission, obedience and perseverance were important for maintaining the colonial order. Thus, during the eighteenth century the Jesuits linked the Spanish-American mission frontier, the colonial center and the metropole through the reproduction of the Society's ascetic ideal in missionary chronicles and natural histories. These works reached a wide audience beyond the Society's members in both New Spain and Europe and some continued to circulate even after the order's expulsion from the viceroyalty in 1767 and dissolution by Papal decree in 1773.

## 1. The Jesuit Ascetic Ideal and the Spanish-American Mission Frontier

In my approach to the textual representations of the Jesuit missionary enterprise in eighteenth-century New Spain the central question is how a missionary's actions were meaningful not only for his co-religious but also for the colonial order as a whole. This meaning is found first in the tradition of the Christian asceticism for which the mission frontier became a symbolic backdrop for the performance of an ideal of self-denial and discipline. In the context of colonial Spanish America, the Jesuit subject's exercise of ascetic self-control was directly linked to the transformation, administration and surveillance of the colonized subject's conduct, a relation that was explicit in the practice and discourse of *reducción*. As a technique of colonization and acculturation, *reducción* consisted of gathering semi-nomadic or sparsely populated Amerindian communities into permanent settlements whose organization was intended to reinforce a Castilian-Christian hegemony. While the concept of *reducción* covered a wide range of practices and involved many secular and ecclesiastic officials, it was in principle founded on both an urban model of political order and a monastic model of moral discipline; thus, the *reducción* was a space where the institutions of the Spanish-American colonial order were reproduced and within which the conduct of Amerindian subjects could be observed and regulated. As this process was subjected to an increasingly rationalized set of laws and techniques in the second half of the sixteenth-century it also became tied to a rationalized ascetic ideal for the religious involved in the expansion of the Spanish-American missionary frontier. Jesuit missionary narrative was a medium for reproducing this ascetic ideal within the order itself, among the Amerindian subjects of *reducción*, and in the urban colonial center.

The Jesuits distinguished themselves as enthusiastic and able agents of the colonial order on the Spanish-American marchlands, and through the representation of this activity in Jesuit-authored narratives the mission frontier in turn also became a defining aspect of the Society's corporate identity. The order's unique expression of traditional monastic virtues oriented towards practical, inner-worldly pursuits, as reflected in San Ignacio's *Ejercicios espirituales*, found a complementary field of action in the practice of *reducción* on the Spanish-American frontier. Thus the disciplinary regimes imposed on Amerindian subjects were not a simple transfer of the colonizer's culture, but rather a dialectic process in which the self-discipline of the colonial agent (the missionary), and hence his ontological value, was put to the test. Moreover, in his strict adherence to an ascetic ideal in the hostile context of the colonial frontier, the missionary became an important symbol for the moral order of the viceroyalty. Jesuit writing is not simply a reflection of this dialectic but more importantly itself a key apparatus of this self-disciplining tendency characteristic of Western civilization as a whole. The Jesuit ascetic ideal represents the convergence of the intellectualization of ethical conduct, the rationalization of colonial discipline and the differentiation of spheres of knowledge produced on and about the colonial frontier.

The exercise of asceticism, self-control and social control that are extolled in Jesuit works are also central themes of several twentieth-century theories of modernity beginning with Max Weber's sociology of religion. According to Weber, the rationalization of conduct in the West is not merely a function of material relations of production manifest in a specialized capitalist economy, but more importantly the result of a religious worldview that demanded of the subject an inner-worldly asceticism that subsumed his or her whole life. Although Weber claimed that the most complete expression of this inner-worldly asceticism was found in Calvinism, he nevertheless recognized the importance of the Jesuits in the rationalization of religious

worldviews in the West. While Michel Foucault departed from Weber in his methodology, he shared with the German sociologist a view of modern techniques of social control as inherited from the monastic tradition of Christianity.<sup>29</sup> If for Weber the modern subject left the monastery to practice an inner-worldly asceticism in the marketplace, for Foucault it was the monastery, through the exercise of “pastoral power,” that came to encompass the modern state. In addition to the theories of Weber and Foucault on the legacy of Christian asceticism, I will also consider Norbert Elias’ analysis of the “civilizing process.” Like Foucault, Elias recognized that the most rationalized forms of self-discipline appear first in the upper strata society before they are applied as techniques of social control. Though Elias traces this process of “psychogenesis,” or the internalization and depersonalization of discipline, within the culture of seventeenth-century court society, he notes that the Jesuits were important contributors to this cultural sphere. In the following I will show that ascetic ideal performed by the Jesuits on the colonial frontier was a key development in the rationalization of religious worldviews in the West and an early application of the techniques of social and self-discipline that these theories attribute to European modernity.

### **1.1 The Ascetic Ideal and Colonial Theodicy**

Each of the aforementioned theories of modernity can be traced back to Friedrich Nietzsche’s metaphysical critique of the ascetic ideal. In *On the Genealogy of Morals*, Nietzsche observed that, as seen from a distant star, the earth would appear to be a thoroughly “ascetic planet,” by which he meant that a universalist concept of rational progress, and even the metaphysical foundations of the subject, could be traced back to a will to power redirected

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<sup>29</sup> As Dreyfus and Rabinow observe, Weber deductively worked out “ideal types” of asceticism and looked for the historical forms that most closely approximated these types, while Foucault focused on concrete, empirical programs for exercising social control and self-discipline in early modernity (132).



against the self (117). From the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries the Society of Jesus forged its own brand of “planetary asceticism” through a unique rationality of self-control and social order that spread across the globe through a missionary network linked to the expansion of European empires. Though the Spanish-American mission frontier was a kind of theater for the performance of a Western ascetic ideal throughout the early modern period, it has yet to be subjected to the philosophical, sociological and historical critiques that have followed from Nietzsche’s *Genealogy*. Notwithstanding this reticence, the critique of the ascetic ideal in the West is indispensable to understanding the early-modern mission frontier and the work of the Jesuits in Spanish America and the metropole.

As the model for his own critical-historical project, Michel Foucault explains that in Nietzsche’s concept of “genealogical” history, “Humanity does not gradually progress from combat to combat until it arrives at universal reciprocity, where the rule of law finally replaces warfare; humanity installs each of its violences in a system of rules and thus proceeds from domination to domination” (“Nietzsche” 65). Thus, morality and law are neither expressions of a transcendental ethical norm nor a standard of social utility, but rather a malady, a frustrated desire for uninhibited dominance redirected against the subject in the form of the conscience: “this instinct for freedom pushed back and repressed, incarcerated within and finally able to discharge and vent itself only on itself: that, and that only, is what the bad conscience is in its beginnings” (*Genealogy* 87). For Nietzsche, the priestly ascetic ideal, characterized by self-sacrifice and an irrational renunciation of pleasure as ultimate virtues, is not a model of goodwill and charity but rather the expression of a will to power redirected against the self. As Nietzsche quips in one of the aphorisms from *Human, all too Human*, “The ascetic makes a necessity of virtue.” That is, the ascetic not only turns virtue into an external compulsion (as

opposed to an inherent quality) but also converts a state of suffering and misery into the highest attainable virtue (60).<sup>30</sup> The effect of the rise of a priestly ascetic morality against the nobleman's free-reigning will was a progressive depersonalization and internalization of power which, according to Nietzsche, resulted in the exercise of domination over greater numbers. "One must indeed grant something even more unpalatable," writes Nietzsche in the *Genealogy*, "that from the highest biological standpoint, legal conditions can never be other than *exceptional conditions*, since they constitute a partial restriction of the will of life, which is bent upon power, and are subordinate to its total goal as a single means: namely, as a means of creating *greater* units of power" (76). Thus, the ascetic will to power over the self, embodied in legal and moral imperatives, is for Nietzsche directly connected to political control.

Nietzsche argues that cities and states were founded not by contract but by brute force and that the law and morality are nothing more than a habit of compulsion:

*Force* precedes morality; indeed, for a time morality itself is force, to which others acquiesce to avoid unpleasure. Later it becomes custom, and still later free obedience, and finally almost instinct: then it is coupled to pleasure, like all habitual and natural things, and is now called virtue. (*Human* 69)

Here it seems as if the ascetic ideal were a strategy for perpetuating a relationship of power originating in violence, an institutionalization of the conqueror's will to which the conqueror must himself eventually submit; this, however, does not explain how the will to power is restrained by morality, and there is no doubt that for Nietzsche the ascetic ideal has chained down the "blonde beasts of prey" (*Genealogy* 85). If indeed the priestly ascetic ideal is the

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<sup>30</sup> In reversing the old German adage, "eine Tugend aus der Not machen" ("to make a virtue of necessity"), Nietzsche plays on the meaning of "Not" which can signify both "necessity" and "misery." I thank Manfred Engelbert for this explanation of the play on words in Nietzsche's aphorism, which is otherwise inaccessible in the English translation.

expression of a “slave revolt in morality”, that is, a desire for power by the powerless, how does it impose this ideal upon the superior force of the nobleman? In other words, why does the nobleman feel compelled to submit to the “slave morality”?

Geoffrey Galt-Harpham has described this ambivalence in Nietzsche’s *Genealogy* as purposefully woven “strategic forgetfulness” that allows the work to undermine its own critique (214). After denouncing the priestly ascetic ideal as irrational suppression of the will, Nietzsche suggests that a certain “will to the desert” is necessary for the philosopher or artist whose “dominating spirituality had first to put a check on an unrestrained and irritable pride or a wanton sensuality” in order to realize his own vocation (*Genealogy* 108-9). Thus, in a classic expression of the “performative contradiction,” Nietzsche claims that asceticism predicates even the critique of asceticism. Nietzsche does not provide a simple fable or conjectural history of the social contract but rather a complex critique of the conditions of a subjectivity grounded in historical relations of power. For Nietzsche, there is no subject outside of history nor a Spirit that moves history along towards a rational world order of nation-states; on the contrary, an aleatory and violent history determines value, and this is why the ascetic ideal is important to being. Just as in James’ “moral absolutism,” the ascetic ideal gives meaning to history even if this meaning is found in suffering, for the nobleman could scarcely stand an absolute unity of being and action. As Nietzsche puts it: “*That* the ascetic ideal has meant so many things to man, however, is an expression of the basic fact of the human will, its *horror vacui: it needs a goal-* and it will rather will nothingness than *not* will [...]” (97).

The result of this “basic fact of the human will” is the internalization and depersonalization of power: the ascetic ideal splits the subject through the creation of a conscience that holds the will accountable for its deeds. Thus, for Nietzsche the subject begins

life with a debt of guilt paid for by submission to the law. As the ascetic ideal splits the conscience from the will, the saint becomes an important symbol, separated from the mass of humanity but reflecting its common predicament. “It is not what the saint *is*,” writes Nietzsche, “but what he *signifies* in the eyes of non-saints,” the saint reaffirms ascetic self-renunciation as the most powerful expression of the will, the means to enter an ordered cosmos beyond the world of experience (*Human* 101). Through ritual and a narrative tradition, either oral or written, the figure of the saint reproduces and adapts this ascetic ideal to the needs of the community. The saint’s self-abnegation paradoxically becomes an affirmation of the will as a means of embodying virtue and restoring moral order to the cosmos: the holy man or woman’s action is, in essence, a willful subjection of the will.

Ignacio de Loyola drew from the deep wells of the Christian tradition in formulating an ascetic ideal that not only applied to a priestly class that would answer to the spiritual and worldly demands of the sixteenth century but also provided a means by which the layman could understand his own inner-worldly pursuits as a form of submission to a God-willed vocation. First printed in 1548, San Ignacio’s *Ejercicios espirituales* provided the framework for enacting the Jesuit ascetic ideal and expressing the fundamental “will to the desert” in religious and layman alike. The *Ejercicios* brought together elements of Christian spiritual guides from Ludolph of Saxony’s *Vita Jesu Christi* to Erasmus of Rotterdam’s *Handbook of the Christian Soldier* in a unique format that indicates the Church’s changing role in the religious orientation of its flock’s innerworldly affairs (O’Malley, *First* 46-47). The *Ejercicios* were first intended as a manual for conducting a retreat in which an exercitant, under the direction of a spiritual advisor, would subject his or her conduct to scrutiny in comparison with the example of Christ and his apostles in order to make a decision that would determine the course of his or her life (e.g.

whether to join a religious order, whom to marry, what vocation to exercise). When administered to non-religious, these exercises were meant to subject the laity to the conditions of a religious' contemplative life during the course of a month, in which the exercitant would withdraw from his or her worldly contacts and business in order to contemplate the life of the apostles (Loyola, *Ejercicios* 25). Even in their original formulation, however, the *Ejercicios* allowed for flexibility in working around the lives of exercitants involved in important business or affairs of state, and in their development after the death of the founder they became a rough guide for a wide range of contemplative techniques applicable to many classes of exercitant and circumstances (O'Malley 127). While the life of Christ and his apostles, as well as the lives of the saints, are the focus of these contemplations, the goal of the exercises was not to induce the exercitant into taking vows and directly imitating the conduct of these models, as in the life of the religious, but rather to internalize an omnipresent judge of his inner-worldly conduct. The guided meditations that are detailed in the *Spiritual Exercises* are oriented towards choosing a course of action in this world that not only glorifies God and assures the salvation of the exercitant but that is also carefully and dispassionately reasoned (Loyola 58-59).<sup>31</sup>

As José Luis Villacañas has shown in his study of the place of the Jesuits in Max Weber's sociology, the *Ejercicios* are a method for disciplining the imagination to exclude any idle reflection that could be used by the "enemigo" to confuse the exercitant's reasoned decision with regard to his earthly conduct (445). The exercitant is "trained" by the exercises to internalize an omnipresent judge of his conduct by imagining while he dresses each morning that he is a nobleman who has offended the sovereign and must appear before the his court, or that he is a man condemned to death for his crimes called before a judge (Loyola 40). Another exercise

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<sup>31</sup> J. Michelle Molina argues that the *Exercises*, particularly in their application in Spanish America, are a "modern practice of the self" that emphasizes self-regulation through rationalized techniques of social control (148).

calls upon the exercitant to imagine a man “que nunca he visto ni conocido, y deseando yo toda su perfección, considerar lo que yo le diría que hiciese y eligiese para mayor gloria de Dios nuestro señor y mayor perfección de su ánima, y haciendo yo asimismo, guardar las reglas que a otro pongo” (59-60). This technique is a special case of Nietzsche’s concept of the ascetic subject emerging by “doubling the deed,” or imagining all acts of will as “conditioned by something that causes effects, by a ‘subject’ ”; moreover, this subject posited as the cause underlying the effects of the will is posited as something that can be willed for or against (*Genealogy* 45). An abstract rule of conduct completely separated from the will and desire of the exercitant is projected onto an imagined other as if the will could choose against itself through the ruse of choosing or willing for another. This example also illustrates how the desire for the “perfection” of the other is the condition for the subject’s own will to realize itself in an action directed towards salvation; thus, the will to power over the other and the will to power over oneself are deeply connected in an ascetic ideal focused on innerworldly conduct. In his “General Examen” from the *Constituciones*, St. Ignatius explicitly explains the dialectic implicit in the *Ejercicios*: “El fin de esta Compañía es no solamente atender a la perfección de las ánimas propias con la gracia divina, mas con la misma intensamente procurar de ayudar a la salvación y la perfección de las de los prójimos” (*Constituciones*, 48).

The *Ejercicios espirituales* emphasized a priestly discipline in innerworldly conduct partly because the Jesuits themselves were in constant contact with the world through their pastoral work and related enterprises. Because of the Jesuits’ multiple activities in Europe and abroad, their daily lives were not routinized to the extent of the religious living in a monastery; thus, the Jesuit subject depended on himself for discipline outside the direction and surveillance of a cloistered community. The society, in the works of its principal apologists, was posited as an

ideal religious community existing outside of the monastery and active in secular spheres; consequently, the *Ejercicios* became a bridge linking the conduct of the Jesuit to society as a whole. Just as the Jesuit practiced his ascetic self-discipline in the world, so too could lay society conduct its affairs more like a monastery.

Juan Eusebio Nieremberg's *Honor del gran patriarca San Ignacio de Loyola, fundador de la Compañía de Jesús*, written to commemorate the first century of the order, reflects how the Society of Jesus distinguished itself from other religious orders principally due to this active role in the world. Citing Thomas Aquinas, Nieremberg distinguishes first between those orders dedicated purely to contemplation and those dedicated to "la vida mixta," or a combination of contemplation and action, to which the Jesuits clearly belonged. Furthermore, these religious rejections of the world are divided into those that organize themselves into a community and the "religión de los solitarios," or those that are free to carry out their activities individually beyond the cloister. In combining the "vida mixta" with "la religión de los solitarios," the Jesuits, according to Nieremberg, were the superior type of religious order:

La razón es clara, porque se han de bastar a si mismos, sin que aya quien cuide de ellos, ni gobierne, ni guarde: esta misma razón, y mucha mayor hay en los misioneros de la Compañía de Jesús, porque también es necesario que se basten a si, y no solo esto, sino que sobren para otros, que no solo sean suficientes para conservarse a si en virtud, pero que les sobre virtud para comunicarla a otros, como dice el Santo en el Opusc. 18 cap. 17 *Cosa es manifiesta, que más perfección se requiere para que uno comunique a otro la perfección, que para que sea en si perfecto.* (139)

The Jesuit's ascetic ideal was to be exercised in the world, not by isolating himself from the world of temptation, but rather by confronting and triumphing over that world. However, the

external discipline of the monastery had to first be internalized and reinforced by the exercises that every Jesuit had to perform at least once a year. This “perfection” of discipline, as Nieremberg points out with a citation of Thomas Aquinas, was to serve as a model of virtue for those whom the Jesuits served in their educational and missionary activities. Furthermore, through his or her own performance of the *Ejercicios* the layman could experience this internalization of discipline and turn to his or her tasks in the world with the assurance of carrying out a vocation affirmed in communion with God.

Although Max Weber focused on the inner-worldly asceticism of the Puritan as determinant of a disenchanted modern world, he nevertheless recognized in the *Ejercicios* and the Jesuit vocation a contemporary development in the rationalization of religious ethics:

Christian asceticism in its highest manifestations exhibited this rational character as early as the Middle Ages. It is also the fundamental reason for the importance in world history of Western monastic life, in contrast to Eastern monasticism. In the rule of Saint Benedict, even more strongly in the Cluniacs and Cistercians, and, finally, most markedly in the Jesuits, it is free of arbitrary withdrawal from the world and virtuoso self-torment. It has become systematically formed method of rational living, its aim being to overcome the *status naturae*, to release man from the power of irrational impulses and from dependency on the world and nature, to subject him to the supremacy of the purposeful will, and to subordinate his actions to his own continual control and to the consideration of their ethical consequences. The aim was thus to train the monk – objectively speaking to be a worker in the service of the kingdom of God, and so also – subjectively speaking – to ensure the salvation of his soul. This absolute self-control, like the aim of the



*exercitia* of Saint Ignatius and the highest forms of all rational monastic virtues, was also the decisive practical ideal of Puritanism. (*Protestant* 81)

Just as Nietzsche, Max Weber likewise viewed forms of asceticism in the West as the catalyst for the modern subject's self-understanding, although he shifted in focus from the concept of "resentment" to "theodicy" as central to religious ethics ("Social" 270). For Weber, theodicy, or the problem of the unequal distribution of fortune, was the central problem of all religions, but this dilemma was uniquely confronted in Christianity with the rejection of a debased and sinful world and the concomitant valoration of suffering as a sign of election; asceticism, therefore, became an increasingly rationalized set of techniques for mastering nature and oneself in order to assure salvation. As Jürgen Habermas has noted in his extensive examination of Weber's contribution to sociology and philosophy, this process of ethical rationalization sets up the world as a trial of the subject's moral principles, but only some religious orientations "objectify" the world through an active asceticism directed towards the mastery of nature (*Theory* 1: 206-08). While this process was similar for both the Christian monk and the Puritan, as noted in the citation above, Weber claims that only in the case of the latter did the this ideal of conduct spread into extra-religious spheres and become a truly inner-worldly ascetic ideal. Despite his assertions about the Society of Jesus, Weber maintains a sharp distinction between the otherworldly oriented "aristocracy of monks" in Catholicism and the innerworldly asceticism of the Protestant Reformation, which strode into "the market place of life, slamming the doors of the monastery behind it, and set about permeating precisely this secular everyday life with its methodical approach, turning it toward a rational life *in* the world, but neither *of* this world nor *for* it" (*Protestant* 105).

For Weber, the Lutheran “vocation” was a pivotal shift in the focus of spirituality which, when combined with the Calvinist’s rigid adherence to a doctrine of predestination, isolated the individual in a state of profound loneliness. The individual could not appeal to ritual or to good works in order to assure salvation, nor could he be certain of his place among the elect except in very rare cases of individual revelation. The result was a pervasive disenchantment of the world in which the only spiritual consolation was to be found in an abnegated acceptance of one’s lot and an innerworldly asceticism dedicated to fulfilling one’s role in a social organization and economic activity ordained by God to serve the utility of the human race. Worldly actions characterized by self-discipline, sacrifice, submission and the repression of pleasure for economic gain became “the technical means, not of purchasing salvation, but of getting rid of the fear of damnation” (*Protestant* 115). The absence of sacramental ritual, however, was not an absolute condition for the ethical rationalization of inner-worldly pursuits, as the Jesuits’ contributions to the maintenance of a secular social order and their work in various scientific fields demonstrate. Weber’s concept of inner-worldly asceticism is undermined by his insistence on a decisive rupture between the “lax” discipline of the Catholic hierarchy and the all-pervasive discipline of the Puritan, which he posits as determinate of the Protestant Reformation’s break with a medieval worldview (*Protestant* 36). The idea of a simple turning point in the history of the West beginning with Martin Luther is complicated by the Jesuits, who are presented in Weber’s work as both a limit case of Catholic monasticism and as an exception to the Protestant ideological dominance of modernity. Weber even admits that the “gradual rationalization of asceticism into an exclusively disciplinary method reached its apex in the Jesuit order,” which became an important tool for a centralized Church bureaucracy principally

through an educating mission that spread the order's ideal of conduct (*Society and Economy* 1172-73).

Notwithstanding the limits of Weber's thesis, his emphasis on the religious origins of European modernity provides a conceptual framework for understanding the role of the Spanish American mission frontier in a Jesuit ascetic ideal that shaped important aspects of a modern worldview. Perhaps more important than his "Protestant thesis," Weber's understanding of how religion shapes a secular, instrumental worldview through the actualization of value orientations in cultural objects (such as the *Spiritual Exercises* or missionary hagiography) is a key contribution to the study of the Jesuits' ascetic ideal and its relation to the order's worldly pursuits. While attempting to undermine both Weber's methodology as well as emphasis on Protestantism, critics from both economic and intellectual history have actually made a strong case for the Jesuits' role in providing the ethical orientations for the inner-worldly action of the modern bourgeois subject. H.M. Robertson, perhaps one of Weber's most lapidary critics from the field of economic history, attempts to demonstrate the Jesuits' moral casuistry was much more permissive of the capitalistic spirit than Calvinism. This, according to Robertson, was due to the order's immersion in the affairs of the lay world, where they were forced to accommodate an already established capitalist spirit of secular origin (109-10). For Robertson, the Churches, both Catholic and Protestant, simply reacted to and assimilated forms of economic conduct that were already generalized among their flocks and which they were largely powerless to counteract. This explanation, however, reduces culture to a merely accidental role in a history that, according to Robertson, is best understood by material economic relations. There is no denying the importance of external factors in the the process of ethical rationalization, but the secular

economic interpretation cannot explain why anyone would want to understand his or her worldly activity as a vocation nor how the ascetic ideal translated into purposive action.<sup>32</sup>

Weber's critics either implicitly or explicitly fall back on the conundrum of a pervasively opportunistic and cynical spirit behind the religious cultures of modernity. This view ultimately denies not only culture's power to orient action in the pursuit of interest but also the legitimacy of pursuing ideal interests that may in fact run counter to material interests. The Jesuit missionary, who subjected himself to the privations of the mission frontier and often loss of life, is a paradigmatic case of the latter. The subject implied by the materialist approach would seem to contradict Nietzsche's "basic fact of the human will," that is, the unbearable unity of being and action for which the subject must legitimate action through culture and institutions even if this legitimation leads to self-annihilation. The alternative is a will without object and a universe without meaning. As Habermas explains in his analysis of Weber's sociology, "interests have to be tied to ideas if the institutions in which they are expressed are to be lasting; for only through ideas can an order of life acquire legitimacy" (*Theory* 1: 189). Weber's sociological approach to religious ethics was partly intended to overcome this quandary of economic determinism, which

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<sup>32</sup> Bernhard Groethuysen's work on the emergence of the French bourgeoisie, which Robertson cites at length, presents a more ambivalent critique of Weber's thesis while also demonstrating the importance of the Jesuits in forming an emerging secular ideal of self-control and social order. Focusing on the sermons of seventeenth-century French Jesuits, Groethuysen demonstrates how the Catholic Church approached an emerging bourgeoisie that increasingly differentiated the spheres of ecclesiastic authority and those spheres where its own authority was sufficient or even superior to the Church's (60). No longer able to appeal to the tradition and ceremony that held sway over the more credulous masses, the Church, according to Groethuysen, was forced to shape a doctrine that would orient the inner-worldly conduct of this new subject, not through theological dispute but by direct entreaty from the pulpit. Jesuits such as Jean Crasset and Louis Bourdaloue preached that strictly regulating daily conduct and performing one's duties within the social order was a kind of devotional exercise, which appealed to the bourgeois subject's economic ethic (281-92). The *Spiritual Exercises* had already anticipated this ideal in two ways: first within the retreat by providing a model for regimenting the minute details of daily life in the service of God, and secondly in providing the exercitant with assurance that upon completing the exercises he or she would set out upon a vocation whose performance was an act of submission to God's will. While convincingly demonstrating the role of the Jesuits in promoting an inner-worldly ascetic ideal outside of Puritanism, Groethuysen nevertheless fails to account for how the Jesuits' particular model of conduct – enacted through the *Spiritual Exercises*, the order's missionary activities, and a prodigious cultural production – was translated into socially meaningful action beyond the sphere of religious authority. On the one hand Groethuysen portrays the Jesuits as adapting religious norms to an already self-consciously bourgeois subject, while on the other hand he credits the Society with "educating" this subject to understand his role in the social order (269).

cannot account for action beyond a simple calculus of self-interest or, for that matter, account for the calculation of self-interest as a rationalized inner-worldly ethical orientation.

In his “Social Psychology of World Religions,” Weber argues that changes in religious ethics are first and foremost the result of the religious needs of community and not simply a function of “interest-situations” (270). The most basic “religious need,” according to Weber, is the demand of the theodicy problem, or the ethical inquiry into the unequal and unjust distribution of fortune among God’s servants, which is at root a need to justify human suffering and mortality. Both Nietzsche and Weber claim that not even the socially dominant strata are exempt from this need. As Weber explains in relation to redemption religions, this is not a form of idealism, as it allows for a dynamic interplay of interests and ideas:

The conception of the idea of redemption, as such, is very old, if one understands by it a liberation from distress, hunger, drought, sickness, and ultimately from suffering and death. Yet redemption attained a specific significance only where it expressed a systematic and rationalized “image of the world” and represented a stand in the face of the world. For the meaning as well as the intended and actual psychological quality of redemption has depended upon such a world image and such a stand. Not ideas, but material and ideal interests, directly govern men’s conduct. Yet very frequently the “world images” that have been created by “ideas” have, like switchmen, determined the tracks along which action has been pushed by the dynamic of interest. ‘From what’ and ‘for what’ one wished to be redeemed and, let us not forget, ‘could be’ redeemed, depended upon one’s image of the world. (280)

The question for Weber is how the increasingly intellectualized sphere of religious ethics, merges with the rationalization of practical activity, or the increasing mastery of calculation and

technology as a means of manipulating nature and man. This connection is most complete in those redemption religions that profess an “emissary,” or “missionary,” prophecy demanding of the elect that they act not as “vessels” of the divinity but rather as “tools” for God-willed action in the world (284-85). Putting aside Weber’s insistence that this fusion of ethical and practical action is only fully realized in the Calvinist, the question for the Jesuits in Spanish-America is how the order’s intellectualization of ethical conduct merged with the rationalization of colonial techniques of political control, particularly at the outer reaches of the empire’s sovereignty. In other words, what was the Jesuits’ answer to the problem of *colonial* theodicy? In a world of manifest injustice, the Jesuit ascetic ideal legitimated action in the colonial context where both the recalcitrant Amerindian and the corrupt colonial were obstacles to be overcome in a trial that would ultimately reaffirm the providential order of the colony.

Weber’s sociology of religion falls victim to an emphasis on ideal, or “pure,” types of religious rejections of the world, which, as Weber himself recognized, tend to break down in the examination of empirical cases (“Religious” 326). While the Protestant’s ascetic “virtuosity” and the bourgeoisie’s economic ethic remain paradigmatic for the modern subject’s self-understanding, the study of other forms of ethical rationalization in early modernity (i.e. Catholic or Jesuit) suggest that this subject came into being on several fronts. To borrow and expand on Weber’s metaphor, the Jesuits embodied ideas that acted as “switchmen” along a select few of the multiple tracks to Western modernity. Villacañas argues that the strictly regimented production of spiritual consolation carried out between a director and exercitant in the *Ejercicios* reflects the Jesuits’ contribution to the ethical rationalization of the modern worldview, not through an economic ethic but rather through relations of power (428). As the Jesuit subject was both director and exercitant, he embodied both the ideal of charismatic direction of the

conscience as well as submission to authority and the exercise of an inner-worldly vocation: “Hombres que a la vez,” explains Villacañas, “son directores soberanos y siervos dirigidos y que, en uno y otro caso, reconocen una decisión sobre lo concreto, propia o ajena, asentada en la buena conciencia y en la certeza de ser instrumentos de Dios encaminados a su gloria” (457). The Jesuits, as ideal practitioners of the *Ejercicios*, represented models of conduct able to perform tasks in the world with the assurance of being an instrument of God while at the same time adhering to a vow of obedience. The Jesuits’ colonial theodicy implied a rigid discipline of the conscience, a methodical conduct in daily affairs, the assurance of a God-willed vocation, and a thoroughgoing respect for hierarchies as means to worldly ends that were in the last instance pursued for the greater glory of God.

In his analysis of the discourse of the Spanish baroque, Anthony Cascardi traces the development of the “subject of control” emerging within the literary, theological and political discourses to which the Jesuits contributed in both Spain and Spanish America. As with the ascetic ideal embodied in the *Spiritual Exercises* and the Jesuit order, this concept not only addresses the question of who controls, but more importantly “Who is controlled? and Why does the subject desire to be controlled?” (*Ideologies* 112). In approaching the Jesuit subject of control in Spanish America, a further question can be added this inquiry: How is this desire to be controlled connected to a reciprocal desire to control? This is the primary question regarding the ascetic ideal that the Jesuits performed on the Spanish-American mission frontier. It was not only on the mission frontier and related cultural production, however, that this Jesuit subject of control emerged, as Cascardi demonstrates in his analysis of the seventeenth-century Spanish Jesuit Baltasar Gracián’s ideal courtier.

Norbert Elias was the first to recognize the rationalization of conduct in court society as one of the pathways to the social and psychological formation of the modern subject. In his particular amalgam of Marx and Freud, Elias overcomes Weber's limited focus on Protestant asceticism by analyzing the relation of sociogenesis and psychogenesis, or the processes by which societies experience a growth in number and complexity with a concomitant individualization and psychologization of conduct. For Elias, civilization and rationalization are value-neutral terms used to describe the monopolization of violence, the growth in numbers, the multiplication of functions, the increase of social restraints, and the intensification of self-restraint in the modern state.<sup>33</sup> While Elias does not directly address forms of religious asceticism, his analysis points to a pervasive secular ascesis in which individual conduct is increasingly subject to unceasing vigilance and calculation. As feudal societies are gradually brought under the political dominance of the absolutist state and the connections between dispersed individuals expand, multiply and intensify through economic activity, the individual undergoes a process of psychologization in which observation of the conduct of others, calculation of the social outcomes of behavior and a rigorous self-discipline are keys to social success. Unlike Weber, however, Elias sees the bourgeois subject's ideal of self-control emerge not in a Protestant asceticism founded on the Lutheran "vocation" and the doctrine of predestination but rather in European court society:

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<sup>33</sup> Just as Weber, Elias defies an orthodox Marxist explanation of ideology: "Civilization, and therefore rationalization, for example, is not a process within a separate sphere of 'ideas' or 'thought'. It does not involve solely changes of 'knowledge', transformations of 'ideologies', in short alterations of the *content* of consciousness, but changes in the whole human make-up, within which ideas and habits of thought are only a single sector. We are here concerned with changes in the whole personality throughout all its zones, from the steering of the individual by himself at the more flexible level of consciousness and reflection to that at the more automatic and rigid level of drives and affects. And to grasp changes of this kind, the pattern of thought summoned to mind by the concepts of 'super-structure' or 'ideology' is not enough" (486).



It is particularly within the circles of court life that what we today call a ‘psychological’ view of man develops, a more precise observation of others and oneself in terms of longer series of motives and causal connections, because it is here that vigilant self-control and perpetual observation of others are among the elementary prerequisites for the preservation of one’s social position. (478)

While this focus on court society might seem to take us far afield of religious ascetic practice or the missionary frontier, we are nevertheless again within a sphere of cultural production in which the Jesuits made significant contributions in the seventeenth century, most famously in Gracián’s widely translated and disseminated manuals for courtiers. Referring to Gracián’s rules for courtly conduct, Elias notes their secular, social character:

Over and again in these precepts recurs the argument based on the regard for other people, on the necessity to preserve a good reputation, in a word, an argument based on *this-worldly*, social necessities. Religion plays a small part in them. God appears only in the margin and at the end as something outside the human circle. (539)

Likewise, Cascardi perceives a deep current of asceticism in the Spanish baroque through which the authoritarianism of the Catholic Reformation is transferred into principles of self-discipline characteristic of social regulation in the modern state (*Ideologies* 131). The ascetic triumph over the self, exemplified by Calderón’s Segismundo or Gracián’s ideal courtier, was also celebrated in Jesuit missionary hagiographies, and it is not at all surprising to come across a figure who possesses both the virtues of an ideal apostle as well as those of a successful courtier and man of letters, such as Juan de Ugarte (the subject of a hagiography studied at length in chapters 2 and 3) who was described as, “[...] educado con regalo en el siglo [que] lograba en México dentro y fuera de la religión los mayores aplausos” (Burriel 2:115).

In Gracián's *Oráculo manual* there is a passage that seems to bridge the Jesuits' inner-worldly activities in colonizing and acculturating Amerindian subjects on the mission frontier and the subject of control that emerges in court society: "87. *Cultura y aliño*. Nace bárbaro el hombre; redímese de bestia cultivándose. Hace personas la cultura; y más, cuanto mayor. En fe della pudo Grecia llamar bárbaro a todo el restante universo" (395). Gracián effectively translated the Jesuit ascetic ideal performed on the mission frontier into the culture of court society: one's ontological worth is measured in the social esteem of her cultivation, that is, her distance from and control of the barbarian within. Indeed, a whole society's worth is likewise established by measuring itself against a barbarity projected onto the world outside its borders. In a colonial society dominated by a minority elite the imperative to "be more" through the cultivation of knowledge and command of social dynamics is perhaps even greater, as indicated by the celebrated Criolla poet Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz in her *Respuesta a Sor Filotea*, in which she insinuates, paraphrasing Gracián, that the attacks against her are motivated by an envy of the superior breadth and depth of her culture because everyone knows that "las ventajas en el entendimiento lo son en el ser" (463).<sup>34</sup> Refinement in the viceregal court of New Spain was thus entangled with the discourse of *reducción*; the rigid and exploitative hierarchy of civilization and barbarity in the colony depended on both.

Elias suggests that his description of the civilizing process in court culture has implications for the history of colonialism in the West. The complex division of functions characteristic of a society with a highly developed court culture leads the ruling strata to attempt to rule over others not through brute force but by teaching them to rule themselves "through the moulding of their super-egos" (509). Though hardly couched in terms of Freudian

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<sup>34</sup> The passage that Sor Juana refers to is from the *Oráculo manual*: "4. *El saber y el valor alternan grandeza*. Porque lo son, hacen inmortales. Tanto es uno cuanto sabe y el sabio todo lo puede. Hombre sin noticias, mundo a oscuras. Consejo y fuerzas, ojos y manos: sin valor, es estéril la sabiduría" (360).

psychoanalysis, the process of *reducción* had as its end the “moulding of the super-ego” with a thorough restructuring of social organization and an intensive pedagogical regime. This formation of a subject of control was reciprocal, however, as it demanded a concomitant discipline of the colonial agent as a legitimation of the colonial order. Thus, the Jesuits’ colonial theodicy framed the experience of the missionary within a narrative that could be repeatedly performed as an affirmation of the moral and political order of the viceroyalty, either as a text that transmitted legitimate knowledge about the frontier and its inhabitants or as a model to be emulated by subsequent missionaries. In response to the violence of the colonial frontier, these narratives evoked images of the primitive Christianity whereby Novohispanic society itself came to be a monastic city in the desert legitimated by the ascetic regime of the missionary.

## **1.2 A Genealogy of *Reducción*: The Ascetic Ideal and Pastoral Power on the Spanish-American Mission Frontier**

As the practice of gathering Amerindians on the colonial frontier into permanent settlements for the purposes of acculturation and conversion, *reducción* originated during the early Iberian expansion in the Atlantic basin, but by the seventeenth century the Jesuits had won world-wide notoriety for the application of the concept in their semi-autonomous Paraguayan missions. Although *reducir*, or *reducción*, was broadly applied to a variety of colonial practices that sought to organize and regulate the social, economic and private lives of Amerindian subjects, it was the apostolic enterprise of the Jesuits, as chronicled in the order’s prolific writings, that became a paradigmatic exercise of the concept in which the imposition of an ideal colonial order also implied a model of conduct for the colonizing agent.

In his early seventeenth-century Spanish lexicon, Sebastián de Covarrubias defined the verb *reducirse*, derived from the Latin *reducere* meaning to “to gather or lead back,” as to submit to an order or to be convinced of a superior order: “reducirse es convencerse. Reducido, convencido y vuelto a mejor orden.” This definition already reflects the use of the word in the context of colonization and acculturation in the Americas, in which *reducción* assumed the Amerindian’s supposed dispersion and lack of civility before subjection to an ideal civil order established by the colonizer. As consistent with the mid sixteenth-century semantic shift in the discourse of conquest, the term likewise implies a dialectic process (“to be convinced”) without direct reference to the violent means often employed to achieve this end. Of course, the term also connoted the religious aims of the practice as an echo of Jesus’ proverb of the good shepherd: “And other sheep I have, that are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice, and there shall be one fold and one shepherd” (John 10:16). Finally, posited as the gathering of dispersed hunter-gatherers into urban political structure, *reducción* alluded to the classical locus of the wise orator who first convinced the scattered, warring, and nomadic ancestors of the polis to come together to form sedentary communities, a fundamental standard by which the West has measured the value of other civilizations. The most famous expression of this trope among early modern humanists was Cicero’s *De inventione*, which extols the virtues of the “great and wise man” who transformed beasts into men through the power of eloquence and wisdom (Cicero 5-7; Tuck 33).<sup>35</sup> Among their Amerindian catechumens, the Jesuits fashioned

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<sup>35</sup> In Richard Tuck’s influential study of early-modern rights theories he contrasts this humanist Ciceronian picture of rights born of eloquence and civic association with the Vitorian and Jesuit views on *ius naturae* and *dominium*. While Tuck’s explanation holds for the theologians’ and jurists’ position on liberty and property, the Jesuits’ *practice of reducción* was much closer to the humanist ideal than a study of only their theological and juridical work (particularly the more radical Molinist conclusions on liberty) would admit.

themselves as just such emissaries of civilization where their religious message and example of virtue would, in principle, be a sufficient means of establishing a well-ordered Christian polis.<sup>36</sup>

As in the title of Antonio Ruiz de Montoya's early history of the Paraguayan missions, the Jesuits sometimes called their apostolic mission a "conquista espiritual" in order to contrast their methods with the direct violence of the first wave of conquest and colonization in the Americas. Nevertheless, the term *reducción* was most commonly used to denote the political and evangelical program undertaken by the Society's missionaries, particularly in official discourse. For example, the 1697 document authorizing the Society of Jesus to colonize and evangelize the Californias, which granted the missionaries far-reaching secular control over both their Amerindian catechumens as well as other non-religious colonizers, describes the missionaries' undertaking as follows: "Se concede licencia a los Padres Juan María Salvatierra y Eusebio Quino de la Compañía de Jesús para la entrada a las Provincias de California y que puedan *reducir* a los gentiles de ellas en la forma y con las calidades prevenidas en este despacho" (emphasis added, Henestrosa 25). The use of *reducir* is in part a result of the general semantic turn in Spanish colonization that was reflected in Juan de Ovando's 1573 *Ordenanzas*: "Los descubrimientos no se den con título y nombre de conquistas pues haviendose de hazer con tanta paz y caridad como deseamos no queremos que el nombre dé ocasión para se pueda hazer fuerça ni agrauio a los Indios" (Morales Padrón 495).<sup>37</sup> This semantic shift is related to the debates over

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<sup>36</sup> In *On the Greatness of Cities* (1588), the ex-Jesuit Giovanni Botero refers to Cicero's fable of first orator who drew people into cities by the power of rhetoric and declares that a similar origin of civil order based on wisdom, eloquence and authority can be observed in his own time through the work of the Jesuits in Brasil: "The like thing is daily at this time put into practice in Brazil. Those people dwell dispersed here and there in caves and cottages (not to call them houses) made of boughs and leaves of the palm. And forasmuch as this manner of life, to live so dispersedly, causeth these people to remain in that same savage mind of theirs, and roughness of manner and behaviour [...] the Portuguese and the Jesuits have used extreme diligence and care to reduce and draw them into some certain place together more convenient for their purpose, where living in civil conversation they might more easily be instructed in the Christian faith and governed by the magistrate and ministers of the King" (228).

<sup>37</sup> José Rabasa argues that this semantic turn began with the 1526 *Ordenanzas sobre el buen tratamiento de los Indios*, in which the oxymoronic ideal of "peaceful conquest" was first promulgated (*Writing* 31-83).

the use of violence in the evangelization of the Americas, which culminated in the public disputation between Bartolomé de las Casas and Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda in 1550 and 1551.<sup>38</sup> The result of Las Casas' advocacy was the nominal commitment by the Crown to reform the egregious abuses occurring in the Americas and undertake sincere measures for the acculturation and evangelization of its Amerindian subjects. While the use of "reducir" was related to these debates and the subsequent ordinances issued by the Crown and viceregal authorities, it also reflected important changes in the focus, methods and agents of colonization in the Americas. As seen under the mandate of Francisco de Toledo in Peru, it indicated a more meticulous organization of Amerindian urban settlements in order to reform the abuses of colonial officials and assure the extirpation of any residual prehispanic religious practices and other taboo cultural remnants such as polygamy. It also reflected an expanding colonial frontier that encompassed semi-nomadic societies among which the members of religious orders assumed an active role as both evangelizers and colonizers.

This pastoral discourse of conquest was used as early as the mid-fifteenth-century Iberian colonization of the Canary Islands where *reducir* (or *reducere* in Latin documents) was employed to describe conquest as a gathering, or shepherding, of the non-Christian subject into the fold of the universal Church. Pope Nicolas' V 1455 bull *Romanus pontifex*, which granted Portugal exclusive rights of conquest along the coast of Africa, opens with the invocation of the

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<sup>38</sup> In his summary of the debate, the Dominican jurist Domingo de Soto claimed that this was the central question: "El punto que vuestras señorías, mercedes y paternidades pretenden aquí consultar, es, en general, inquierir e constituir la forma y leyes cómo nuestra sancta fe católica se pueda predicar e promulgar en aquel novo orbe en que Dios nos ha descubierto, como más sea a su sancto servicio, y examinar qué forma puede haber cómo quedasen aquellas gentes subjectas a la Majestad del Emperador nuestro señor, sin lesión de su real conciencia, conforme a la bulla de Alejandro. Empero, estos señores proponientes no han tratado esta cosa así, en general y en forma de consulta; mas, en particular, han tractado y disputado esta cuestión, conviene a saber: si es lícito a Su Majestad hacer guerra a aquellos indios antes que se les predique la fe, para subjectallos a su Imperio, y que después de subjectados puedan más fácil y cómodamente ser enseñados y alumbrados por la doctrina evangélica del conocimiento de sus errores y de la verdad cristiana" (Las Casas, *Tratados* 229).

Church's duty to the individual souls of its flock and its responsibility to support imperial expansion "so that the sheep divinely conferred upon it could be gathered back into the one true Lord's sheepfold" ["per que oves sibi divinitus creditas ad unicum ovile Dominicum *reducat*"] (emphasis added, García Gallo 765). As James Muldoon has argued, European expansion along the coast of Africa presented a new category of subject that could not be accounted for within struggle between Christendom and Islam: the Canarians were not viewed as hostile to Christianity as were the Saracens of North Africa, and thus the Christian prince's rights and duties with respect to the islands and their inhabitants remained unclear (124). The competing Castilian and Portuguese claims to the islands led to the intervention of the Pope and to the early development of a new category of colonial subject defined in terms of the juridical and theological rights and responsibilities of the colonizer and the colonized. In the Iberian debates over the fate of the Canaries, the conquest of overseas territories, until then seen through the perspective of Christian and Muslim holy war, first took on the spiritual and temporal pastorship of the conquered.<sup>39</sup>

This early development in European colonial expansion through the Atlantic basin is an important step in the history of what Michel Foucault termed "pastoral power," or the knowledge and techniques by which people are taught to govern the temporal and spiritual lives of individuals in preparation for the afterlife and by which these individuals learn to let themselves be governed. As in Max Weber's sociology of religion, Foucault's late work traces the rationalization of modern social organization and the scientific knowledge back to Christian

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<sup>39</sup> This change in the paradigm of conquest and colonization is evident in the Catholic Monarchs' policy of freeing Canarian slaves brought to the peninsula and returning them to their native soil. Upon settling their dispute with the Portuguese Crown over the rights of conquest in the islands, the monarchs determined that the freedom of the Canarians could not be alienated as they were neither Muslim nor apostates (Azcona 663-67). The emphasis on evangelization and the protagonism of religious in the Castilian conquest of the Canaries would carry over to the Americas after the initial wave of conquest and colonization and the irrefutable evidence of its excesses.

monasticism and ascetic practices, but whereas the former was interested principally in economic conduct the latter attempts to demonstrate how the subject became an object of a power-knowledge apparatus that linked political control to the production of knowledge. As Foucault states, Christianity placed an emphasis on the scrupulous accounting of conduct that would lead rationalized techniques of political control:

[...] in Christianity the pastorate gave rise to an art of conducting, directing, leading, guiding, taking in hand, and manipulating men, an art of monitoring them and urging them on step by step, an art with the function of taking charge of men collectively and individually throughout their life and at every moment of their existence. (*Security* 165)

Influenced by Aristotle and Aquinas, the exercise of pastoral power in the West traditionally focused on the perfection of human nature through a well-ordered political structure, with a special emphasis in Christianity on preparation for eternal salvation. For Foucault, the “threshold of modernity” is reached when man is no longer considered simply an animal with the capacity for political life, but rather as the object whose life becomes the problem of politics (*History* 143). In their approach to the problem of rationalizing the colonial practices of conversion and acculturation, the Jesuits explored, if not entirely breached, this threshold by developing procedures and fields of knowledge aimed at conducting Amerindian life within the structure of the urban settlement.

In Foucault there is no clear rupture between a Catholic, otherworldly asceticism and a Protestant innerworldly asceticism. Rather, both represent aspects of the pastorate in the West, the latter hierarchical and the former meticulous, the one emphasizing direction from without while the other focused on self-control (*Security* 149). Indeed, the concept of “pastoral power” would seem to overcome the limits of Weber’s “disenchantment” by eschewing the problem of



tradition versus rationalization and examining the pastorate as a permanent exercise in the West with the Christian confessional subsumed into a “confessional science,” or bio-politics, that includes secular strategic relations and scientific discourse in the modern state (*History* 65).

Although in the first volume of his *History of Sexuality* Foucault claims that what is involved in this process is not asceticism per se but rather an “affirmation of the self” – a proliferation of discourses revealing the pleasures of the subject and managing desire through a triad of power-knowledge-pleasure – he nevertheless traces the origins of the modern subject to the Christian pastoral tradition and the rules of the first religious orders (*History* 123; *Security* 166-69).

According to Foucault this monastic tradition informed the ideal of “police” that was promulgated by numerous treatises on reason of state from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries:

We are in the world of the regulation, the world of discipline. That is to say, the great proliferation of local and regional disciplines we have observed in workshops, schools and the army from the end of the sixteenth to the eighteenth century, should be seen against the background of an attempt at a general disciplinarization, a general regulation of individuals and the territory of the realm in the form of a police based on an essentially urban model. Making the town into a sort of quasi-convent and the realm into a sort of quasi-town is the kind of disciplinary dream behind police. Commerce, town, regulation, and discipline are, I think, the most characteristic elements of police practice as this was understood in the seventeenth century and the first half of the eighteenth century. (340-41)

As a form of organizing and administrating communities based on an urban-monastic ideal, the Jesuit practice of *reducción* becomes a kind of limit-case for examining the origin and function

of “police” in the state.<sup>40</sup> It was as if, to invert Weber’s metaphor, the doors of the monastery were not shut behind the modern subject but rather the monastery came to encompass society with an increasing self-discipline and vigilance of conduct through secular power-knowledge apparatuses.

Foucault’s perspective on discipline and regulation parallels an insight suggested in Elias’ analysis of sociogenesis and psychogenesis, that is, that the most meticulous forms of self-regulation are imposed on the elites themselves before they become generalized norms of conduct. For Foucault, the “repressive hypothesis” does not explain how techniques of discipline and observation are most rigorously applied to the socially and economically powerful before they ever become strategies for the reproduction of labor power.<sup>41</sup> Here we come back to Nietzsche’s critique of the ascetic ideal: even the powerful need to create the conscience, to double the event, in order to find meaning in an aleatory and violent history. Furthermore, in his formulation of a theory of pastoral power, Foucault recognized that in the Western-Christian tradition the merits of the shepherd were bound to those of his flock in a dialectic of sins and merits:

Moreover, between each sheep and its shepherd Christianity conceives a complex exchange of sins and merits. The sheep’s sin is also imputable to the shepherd. He’ll have

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<sup>40</sup> In one of the few references to colonial Spanish America in his work (or for that matter European colonialism in general), Foucault cites the Paraguayan *reducciones* as an example of *heterotopia*, or “a kind of effectively enacted utopia in which the real sites, all the other real sites that can be found within the culture, are simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted” (“Different” 178). As a “heterotopia of compensation,” the *reducciones* attempted to create a rigorously ordered and regulated space to compensate for the chaos of all other social spaces (184).

<sup>41</sup> “On the contrary, the most rigorous techniques were formed and, more particularly, applied first, with the greatest intensity, in the economically privileged and politically dominant classes. The direction of consciences, self-examination, the entire long elaboration of the transgressions of the flesh, and the scrupulous detection of concupiscence were all subtle procedures that could only have been accessible to small groups of people. It is true that the penitential method of Alfonso de’ Liguori and the rules recommended to the Methodists by Wesley ensured that these procedures would be more widely disseminated, after a fashion; but it was at the cost of a considerable simplification.” (*History* 120)

to render an account of it at the Final Judgement. Conversely, by helping his flock to find salvation, the shepherd will also find his own. But by saving his sheep, he lays himself open to getting lost; so if he wants to save himself, he must run the risk of saving others. (“Omnes” 308)

Notwithstanding this powerful insight into the relation between the exercise of power and the reciprocal formation of subjectivities at both ends of a social and economic hierarchy, Foucault’s critique of the repressive hypothesis does not account for colonialism, in which methods of discipline and regulation are intricately connected to the social differentiation necessary for the reproduction of an economically exploitative system. In considering the implications of Foucault’s work, we must be mindful of Edward Said’s criticism of the French theorist’s analysis of power and subjectivity in the West as failing to account for how disciplinary regimes were employed in the colonization of the non-European world (222). The development of pastoral power and governmentality in Europe did not just determine forms of colonialism practiced in the Americas: in the case of the Jesuit practice of *reducción* these forms of control also depended significantly on the experience of the colonial frontier. *Reducción* was the exercise of pastoral power on the Spanish-American colonial frontier wherein the ascetic ideal became a knot tightened by pulling in both directions, imposing strict regimes of discipline and regulation on both the colonized and the colonizer.

After 1492, Iberian colonizers in the Americas employed and developed Western traditions and fields of knowledge in the service of a universal Christian pastorate. In addition, new techniques of gathering, circulating and archiving information provided a medium for their implementation across a trans-Atlantic empire. It is through the development of these knowledges within the context of attempted reforms of colonial brutality that a new relationship

between ruler and ruled, or colonizer and colonized, emerges. On an expanding colonial frontier, the missionary also increasingly embodied a colonial ascetic ideal, that is a will to power over the self and others through disciplinary regimes supported by the production of knowledge from and about the frontier. As early as 1503, the *instrucciones* from the kings of Castile to their colonial officials in the Americas demonstrate that the gathering of subjects into the universal Christian flock also implied the administration of these new subjects' lives on a more intimate level, for which it would be necessary to draw them into towns where they could be instructed and observed, "para que se vistan y anden como hombres razonables, y que para ello los informe de todo lo que les convenga" (Konetzke 11). This was deemed the only efficacious means of extirpating practices not sanctioned by the Church and ensuring the permanence of new institutions.<sup>42</sup> In these early decades this responsibility fell to the religious orders who were charged with choosing an appropriate site for a new settlement, laying out the familiar grid pattern of the colonial urban center, overseeing the construction of a church, jail and hospital,

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<sup>42</sup> The problem of Christianizing the morisco population of the Iberian Peninsula, whose conversion to Christianity and loyalty to the Spanish political hegemony were a constant source of anxiety in early-modern Spain, must have also informed these techniques. After the conquest of Granada, Hernando de Talavera, the confessor of Isabela la Católica, embarked upon a pedagogical program for the Christianization and acculturation of the Moriscos, which foreshadowed some of methods used by missionaries in the Americas, particularly his insistence on translating the catechism into Arabic and the foundation of schools for the thorough conversion and acculturation of Morisco children (Fernández 214-19). In his *Memorial y tabla de ordenaciones dirigidas por Talavera para la comunidad morisca*, Talavera addresses the conduct of the inhabitants of the Albaicin, or Morisco section of Granada, who are exhorted to respect Christian religious sacraments, observe Christian fast days, see to the Christian education of their children, and adopt Christian diet and dress. For their conversion to be judged sincere under the scrutiny of their Christian neighbors, Talavera recommends a thorough acculturation and internalization of the probing gaze: "Más para que vuestra conversaçion sea syn escandalo a los xpianos. de naçion y no piensen que aun teney la seta de Mohoma en el coraçon es menester que vos conformeys en todo y por todo a la buena y onesta conversaçion de los guenos y onestos xpianos. y xpianas en vestir y calçar y afeytar y en comer y en mesas y viandas guisadas como comunmente las guisan y en vuestro andar y en vuestro dar y tomar y mucho y mas que mucho en vuestro hablar olvidando quanto pudieredes la lengua araviga y faziendola ovlidar y que nunca se hable en vuestras casas" (cited in Azcona 763). Although Talavera's gradualist approach to the conversion of the Granadine Moriscos is often contrasted to Francisco Ximenez de Cisneró's inquisitorial methods, both nevertheless reflected the early reform of the religious orders as well as a concern for the thorough conversion and acculturation of the non-Christian population after the Reconquest (Fernández 236-45; Azcona 575-76). In the event, the analogy between the case of Granada and the Americas is limited by the prolonged transculturation between Muslim and Christian cultures in the Iberian peninsula and the fact that at least immediately after the conquest of Granada the Moriscos were nominally allowed to practice their religion.

and undertaking the religious and linguistic instruction of their catechumens (Solano 43).

Cardinal Cisneros' 1516 *instrucciones* to the Order of Saint Jerome, an attempt to rationalize the encomienda system in the Antilles, addresses the layout of space as well as the regulation of sexual and economic reproduction, condemning adultery and recommending the teaching of trades "para el servicio de la República" (Konetzke 67).

It was not just conversion that was at stake in the work of these missionaries, as they were also responsible for the foundation of new societies and the formation of subjects based partly on the model of Christian monasticism. This rationalization of conquest included utopian projects that were proposed as reforms to the violence of Spanish colonization of the Americas and as a means of properly educating and administering Amerindian subjects.<sup>43</sup> Utopian schemes in Spanish America, however, went beyond mere philosophical reflections on an ideal social order and were earnestly implemented as regulations for tangible colonial institutions. In 1531 the *oïdor* and later Bishop of Michoacán, Vasco de Quiroga, applied this modern concept of utopia – with direct reference to Thomas More's eponymous work as well as Plato's *Republic* – in his *hospitales*, a self-sustaining network of towns where Amerindians would be instructed to live under a temporal and spiritual regime, or "policía mixta," in order to facilitate their transition into civilization and assure their salvation (77). In addition to creating one of the clearest antecedents to the Jesuit *reducciones*, Quiroga was also one of the first colonial officials to advocate sending members of the newly founded order to New Spain, and due to his influence the second Jesuit college in the viceroyalty was established in Pátzcuaro, Michoacán (Moreno 93-97).

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<sup>43</sup> As Frank and Fritzie Manuel outline in *Utopian Thought in the Western World*, the "utopian propensity" in the West finds expression in several currents that converge in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries: a classical tradition based on Plato, Aristotle, Lucian and Aristophanes' philosophical and literary musings on the perfect society; the Christian millenarist undercurrent identified with the twelfth-century Cistercian monk Joachim of Fiore; and the monastic tradition embodied in the rules of Saint Benedict of Nursia (33-114).

Quiroga's schemes, similar to what the Jesuits would later practice, were based on a tutelary model of colonialism for which the Dominican jurist Francisco de Vitoria provided a theological, philosophical and legal rationale in his *Relectio de indiis* (1532). Refuting that the Amerindian subject's *dominium*, a concept that includes the right of property and self-government, could be justly abrogated due to sinful acts or lack of rationality, Vitoria instead argued for a strong paternalism in which the Spaniard would teach the Amerindian how to live as a Christian and a fully rational human subject (Tuck 48-9). Vitoria rejected the Aristotelian category of "natural slave," opting instead to assign the Amerindian subject the legal status of a child and thus grant the Spaniard the role of caretaker and pedagogue. As Anthony Pagden explains, Vitoria attributed the same rational potential to all human beings but maintained that the Amerindians had committed gross "category mistakes" (cannibalism, sodomy, idolatry, etc.) by failing to recognize man's proper place in the hierarchy of nature. According to Vitoria, Amerindian customs could only be corrected under the prolonged tutelage of the Spaniard (*Fall* 57-108).

In his *Relectio*, Vitoria arrived at the following conclusion with respect to the Amerindian: "[...] aunque parezcan carentes de uso de razón y tan torpes, pienso que en su máxima parte viene esto de su mala y atrasada formación, pues también entre nosotros se ven muchas personas rústicas que en poco se diferencian de los brutos animales" (116). The statement has important implications in the history of *reducción*: Vitoria affirms that the apparent civilization, or lack thereof, of a given society is not inherent and that its customs can be reformed by proper direction. Furthermore, the pedagogical hierarchy of schoolmasters and pupils implicit in Vitoria's statement is universal, for even in the metropole there are rustic subjects in need of reform. As Pagden argues, by redefining the Amerindian as a child under the

tutelage of the Spaniard, Vitoria effectively brought the “barbarian” into society and into the European historical and evolutionary vision of the world (105-06). The emergence (or creation) of an object of pastoral power in the Spanish American colonial context redirects the gaze back to a subject “entre nosotros” that is likewise subject to this tutelary order of civilizing schoolmasters and rustic or barbarian pupils. This is one sense in which the colonial order of the Spanish-American frontier was reciprocal: the universal hierarchy of those chosen to direct the conduct of others and those in need of tutelage to realize their human potential was reflected in the metropole.

This reciprocity of colonial discipline comes increasingly to the fore as *reducción* develops into an amorphous set of techniques originating from Aristotelian and Thomist political theory and tested on the colonial frontiers of the Americas. Paradoxically, the expanding colonial frontier crept closer to the metropole as it occasioned a theory that explained all political subjectivation. The Amerindian, even in the absence of what a European would recognize as civilization, possessed the same rational potential that all humans share, although unrealized through political institutions, and thus the foundation of a civil order through *reducción* would appear to reflect its own remote origins. There is, however, another sense in which *reducción* was reciprocal, as it implied a more rigorous discipline of the agents of colonization and acculturation, above all the missionary. This is not to say that colonizers successfully or universally restrained the abuses that continued even in the missions themselves, but rather that an ascetic discourse increasingly came to define the subjectivity of the colonizer, even if only as a symbol embodied by the missionary and disseminated in the prodigious corpus of hagiographic texts produced in the Spanish-American colonial period.

In the face of the abuses of the encomendero system and setbacks in evangelization after

the conquests of the Aztec and Incan empires, the problem of conversion became increasingly a problem of pastorship, that is, a more meticulous guiding and monitoring of conduct with the goal of forming ideal Christian republics and subjects. The development of *reducción* as a strategy of colonization and acculturation can be observed by comparing the works on evangelization by Bernardino de Sahagún and Juan de Focher, two contemporary Franciscans active in the apostolate of New Spain in the wake of their order's initial millennial fervor (Kobayashi, 248). In this comparison we can observe the transition between a view of evangelization as an idealized dialectic between apostle and catechumen and a vision of the missionary regime as a more rigorous program of reorganizing Amerindian societies and educating new subjects under constant vigilance, likewise demanding of the missionary the stringent regulation of his own conduct.

Sahagún's *Coloquios y doctrina cristiana* (1564), an idealized narrative of the first twelve Franciscan missionaries' apostolate after Cortés' conquest of Tenochitlan, portrays conversion as a classical dialectic framed within the *ratio* of the colonizer's culture. There is no outside of the colonizer's worldview – no possibility of multiple perspectives – in Sahagún's depiction of the dialogue between the Franciscans and the Nahuatl religious authorities. The logic of the Christians' interlocutors is foreclosed by a universalizing discourse that places Rome at the center of the world and accounts for Nahuatl beliefs in Christian Scripture. The missionaries argue that the truth of their doctrine is unassailable given that their cosmogony accounts for the existence of the Nahuatl "idols": "[Dios] hizo a todos los hombres del mundo y también hizo a todos los demonios, a los quales vosotros tenéis por dioses y los llamáis dioses" (83). In Sahagún's idealized dialogue even the Nahuatl authorities realize the self-evident truth presented by the Franciscans – withheld from their understanding until then by the malevolence



of Lucifer's agents – and are left to defend their beliefs with a Machiavellian logic, adducing the political expediency of allowing their Nahuatl subjects to continue in their beliefs: “mirad que no se levante contra nosotros la gente popular, si los dixéramos que no son dioses los que hasta ahora an tenido por tales” (89).

Sahagún's narrative of the Franciscans' first catechesis betrays his nostalgia for a bygone golden age of evangelization in New Spain. The *Coloquios*, both a declaration of catechitical principles and tool for catechesis, resist any possibility of a dialogic exchange, even portraying the first Franciscan missionaries as explaining to their catechumens the futility of traveling to Rome to verify the truth of their doctrine. For Sahagún and his confrères, the universal truth of Christianity spread out in only one direction, resisting any engagement that might displace it from the center of the world.<sup>44</sup> David Boruchoff has suggested that Sahagún's text was partially inspired by medieval treatises and accounts of the conversion of Gentiles, such as Aquinas' *Contra gentiles* (1258-64) and the *Disputa de Tortosa* (1413), in which Christians similarly avail themselves of reason to vanquish their enemies (86-87). Though no less fictions for explaining a reality that was far from a civil dialectic, these earlier portrayals of conversion through dialectic reasoning represent two parties with a common intellectual tradition (passed down to the Christians by the Jews and Muslims they were attempting to convert). To Sahagún's later dismay, this idealized dialectic was impossible in the New World where the centrifugal force of

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<sup>44</sup> As Thomas Bremer writes, “The monological ideals of Christian evangelism prevented Sahagún and his missionary colleagues from attaining a pervasive dialogical consciousness” (27). While admitting this general premise, there is an undeniable degree of dialogism in the extant Nahuatl text of the *Coloquio* translated by Miguel León-Portilla. Furthermore, the Nahuatl translation makes explicit reference to the brutality of the conquest whereas Sahagún's only alludes to the Nahuatl gods' failure to come to their worshipers' aid. Notwithstanding these reservations, Sahagún's text (and the Nahuatl translation) clearly frames the dialogue between the Franciscans and their catechumens within a Christian ratio that encompasses and contains the Nahuatl cosmogony in order to reveal their beliefs as nefarious deceptions.

the colonized cultures threatened to overwhelm Christian orthodoxy.<sup>45</sup>

Writing at about the same time that Sahagún composed his *Coloquios* with the help of his students at Santa Cruz de Tlatlelolco, Juan de Focher, a fellow Franciscan occupied with the missionary frontiers opening up to the North, presents a far more realist-pragmatic approach to conversion and acculturation that is indicative of the future of Jesuit *reducción*. Whereas Sahagún represents conversion through an idealized depiction of his predecessors' early efforts among the Nahuatl elite, Focher's *Itinerario de un misionero*, compiled and published posthumously by his mestizo colleague Diego de Valadés in 1574, focuses on the contemporary missionary enterprise among the Chichimecas and outlines a program for confronting the challenges that his Franciscan confrères encountered on an expanding missionary frontier. In the first place, Focher explicitly defends the use of violence in the evangelization of the Chichimecas. Focher argues that there was often no other means of engaging peoples who apparently lacked any organized social and economic structure: "Son éstos una clase de Indios que no trabajan, sino que vivan de la caza y de cuanto les proporciona la naturaleza por su cuenta; no adoran a Dios ni a otros ídolos; andan desnudos y manejan las flechas con singular maestría desde su niñez" (348). According to this view, the pedagogical ideal of Spanish colonialism could only follow the initial use of violence to subject the unbridled and undisciplined will of the Amerindian. This ambivalence about the use of violence in the missionary enterprise would continue in the practice of *reducción* where the means of violent conquest were never wholly separated from the ideal of *spiritual* conquest.

Execrating the practice of en masse baptisms previously employed by his order, Focher

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<sup>45</sup> Boruchoff notes that Sahagún's later pessimism is particularly acute in the prologue to *Arte adivinatoria*, written twenty years after the *Coloquio*, in which the Amerindians are pejoratively compared to the moriscos of Granada as only cynically adopting Christianity to appease their new masters while continuing to practice their own beliefs (90-91).

insists on the need for constant vigilance and pastorship of the newly converted. Focher is particularly concerned with establishing Church-sanctioned marriages, eliminating polygamy and controlling consanguineous unions. Another focus is the prolonged education of children outside of the family, for which Focher advocates separation from their pagan parents arguing “son estos niños más propiedad de Dios” (70). The strategy for assuring the permanence of the missionaries’ efforts is the formation of well-ordered towns and cities:

Una vez captada su amistad and tenerlos benévolos y sumisos, el segundo cuidado pastoral es concentrarlos a todos, formando pueblos and ciudades. Viviendo en su plan primitivo, dispersos por los montes, podían volver al vómito de su gentilidad. Por eso, creo que es esto de todo punto necesario, no tan sólo para poderles instruir mejor y más provechosamente en la fe, sino también para que la buena semilla, prendida todavía con débil raíz, no sea arrancada de sus corazones siguiendo su vida vagabunda. Resulta pues, ventajosísimo el congregarlos por pueblos de lugar en lugar. Debe también conseguirse que se ayuden unos a otros en la edificación de los pueblos, para que así surja en ellos el amor a la comunidad y vean los más pudientes la obligación de ayudar a los necesitados. Así se obtendrá también, sin duda algún, el que vaya aumentando de día en día la sumisión y reverencia de los neófitos hacia los misioneros, cuando por una experiencia inequívoca comprendan que les asisten así en lo espiritual como en lo temporal.<sup>46</sup> (372-73)

Focher’s missionary manual is not only indicative of new developments in *reducción* but also the change of evangelical focus after the conquest of Tenochitlan: nomadic and seminomadic

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<sup>46</sup> Focher’s choice of metaphor to describe the Amerindian’s return to pre-Hispanic beliefs is telling. “Volver al vómito” (literally “to return to the vomit”) is an idiomatic phrase whose metaphoric origin is provided in the 1739 *Diccionario de autoridades* as follows: “Phrase metáforica, que vale recaer en las culpas, u delitos, de que alguno se había apartado. Tomáse la alusión de los perros, que vuelven a tragar, o comer lo que han vomitado. Lat. *Ad vomitum redire.*”

peoples far from the urban colonial centers. In contrast to the idealized dialectic of Sahagún's *Coloquios*, Focher establishes an unbridgeable gap between cultures and accordingly recommends a thorough, long-term reform of customs through resettlement and intense vigilance.

Focher also focuses on the aptitude of the missionary, interpreting Matthew 5:13 as a guide for the conduct of apostles among the Chichimecas. Missionaries must be as pure and resplendent as salt in their virtue, taking special care to maintain their chastity among infidels that often do not cover their bodies; furthermore, the missionary must shine like a ray of light in the execution of his vocation, for “no se excusa de pecado al que emprende la tarea de curar enfermos, ignorando la medicina”; lastly, the missionary will be a “city on the hill” calling out to the prodigal sons of the Church and embracing them with paternal protection (28-30). In the practice of *reducción* the conduct of the missionary comes increasingly to the fore, a fact that is reflected in missionary manuals and a vast corpus of hagiographic texts extolling the ideal virtues of an apostle. Though the Franciscans were pioneers in the practice and discourse of *reducción*, the Society of Jesus was the order that most profited from this early missionary experience, which was nowhere more evident than in their Paraguayan missions in the Viceroyalty of Peru.

These developments in the ideology and practice of *reducción* coalesced in the viceroyalty of Perú under Francisco de Toledo (1569-1581), where *reducción* was codified as a practice of forced resettlement or sedentarization of Amerindian peoples into spaces designed for optimal acculturation and, of course, economic exploitation. Toledo's *ordenanzas* detail the process of *reducción*, which was principally aimed at severing the Amerindian's ties to the prehispanic past by eradicating the social organization of the *ayllu* and the religious devotion to

*huacas*. Resettlement was considered an especially effective means of acculturation in the context of the Andes because the *ayllus* and *huacas* were intimately bound with features of the landscape that represented the mythic origins of its inhabitants (Mills 46-47). These decrees detail a strict regime of sexual, economic and political relations, even determining the punishment in number of lashes for the offense of extramarital intercourse (Lohmann Villena 2: 226).

*Reducción* was one of the first orders of business for Toledo upon arriving in Lima, and in 1570 he issued an *ordenanza* to the *visitadores* of Huamanga, in the present day department of Ayacucho in the south of Peru, mandating that they consolidate the number of *pueblos de indios* from sixteen to eight, “Por ser una de las cosas más importantes para el buen gobierno de estos reinos, bien y conservación de los naturales de ellos y que con más comodidad puedan ser doctrinados y enseñados en las cosas de nuestra santa fe católica, ley natural, y buena policía” (Lohmann Villena 1: 65). As reflected in the many decrees issued by the Viceroy, Toledo’s administration was based on an ad hoc, pragmatic bureaucracy charged with executing not only the colonization and acculturation of Amerindian subjects but also the reform of corrupt and ineffectual colonial agents. In 1573, apparently due to the *visitadores*’ failure to enact his first decree, or simply due to his impatience with their progress, Toledo created the position of *reducidor*, who would focus solely on the effort of concentrating Amerindians into permanent settlements (1: 245). In addition to having wide-reaching authority to execute their orders, the *reducidores* were to be fed and housed by the subjects they were charged with reducing; only after completing the *reducción*, which was to be inspected by competent authorities, they additionally received a salary levied from the “reduced” Amerindians. The *reducidores* were to insure that the new town was rigorously constructed according to plan with a proper church,

*cabildo* and jailhouse all displaying the symbols of royal and ecclesiastic authority. To insure the permanence of these settlements, Toledo ordered these officials to employ a “scorched earth” policy with regard to the old settlements: the *reducidores* would oversee the immediate construction of the new settlements and within ten days the old homes were to be razed and any contents destroyed (1: 246).<sup>47</sup>

It seems that Toledo was aware that in addition to the “vicios e idolatrías” of his Amerindian subjects the corruption of colonial officials out to enrich themselves through the exploitation of Amerindian labor was also a major obstacle to the project of *reducción*. On the same day that the Viceroy created the position of *reducidor* he issued another *ordenanza* explaining the “Normas sobre promoción de la doctrina” in which he explicitly blamed *encomenderos*, large estate holders entitled to exact labor from Amerindians and originally charged with their Christianization, for the failure of the colonizers’ culture and religion to take root among the native inhabitants of Peru (1: 252). In his “Alocución de Cuzco” (1575), read to the Amerindian leaders of Arequipa, Cuzco and Colloa, Toledo also addresses the abuses of colonial administrators and explains to his Amerindian subjects that he is well-informed about the pervasive corruption:

[...] la causa de andar entre ellos el que ahora lo es es por quitar los agravios que muchas personas les han hecho, así visitadores y otras personas y oficiales reales que acudan al acuerdo de las tasas a dar razón de esto y al tesorero de Lima de lo que tocara a los

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<sup>47</sup> It is indicative of Toledo’s pragmatic and meticulous administration that in 1575 he issued yet another decree conferring these same tasks upon the *corregidores*, instead of the *reducidores*, of the Charcas region, present day Bolivia, due to the fact that they were already familiar with the terrain and would not have to levy any onerous taxes upon the Amerindian population. His instructions for the construction of new towns were likewise exacting: “que se entienda hechas todas las casas y calles, casas de cabildo, tambos, hospitales, cárceles e iglesias, sin que de los susodicho falte cosa alguna, y derribados y asolados los pueblos antiguos y hecho pasar a los nuevos los dichos naturales y enviándome testimonio de ello de los sacerdotes de la doctrina y de los escribanos de los dichos Corregidores” (2: 86).

oficiales reales para se les haga justicia y que así pidan luego el tiempo que Su Excelencia estuviere aquí para que la alcancen. (2: 95)

The “Alocución” is also remarkable as it documents the Viceroy’s performance of the Ciceronian myth of the wise orator, which was a key cultural precedent informing the practice of *reducción* in Spanish America. Toledo literally gathered together his dispersed Amerindian subjects, or at least their “curacas,” or leaders, in order to explain to them the benefits of congregating into urban centers, the first of which was their Christianization. In a passage that repeats the leitmotif of the Ciceronian myth, Toledo explains,

Que principalmente lo que les faltaba era la doctrina y religiosos que se la diesen y que esto era imposible poderse conseguir estando ellos tan esparcidos y derramados en distancia de tantas leguas por tantos guaicos y quebradas y que para esto se habían mandado reducir a pueblos como habían visto. (2: 91)

As in Focher’s *Itinerario*, here the Amerindian’s life before the arrival of the European is dismissed as randomly dispersed and near the state of nature, for which the colonizer invites him into civil institutions under the threat of violent reprisal.

Of course, the possibility of retributive violence is also broached, particularly with regard to idolatry and drunkenness (2: 95). After four decades of brutal colonial rule it was likely unnecessary to remind these Amerindian leaders of the consequences of disobedience. Despite this interpellative violence, Toledo’s “Alocución” also emphasizes that his reforms to colonial practices intended to improve the lot of Amerindians suffering under forced labor levies, onerous taxation and exploitation by malfeasant officials. In this sense, Toledo’s *ordenanzas* reflect the general trend of colonial administration during the second half of the sixteenth century, of which *reducción* was meant to be a key strategy. A colonial bureaucracy was created in order to address

the excesses perpetrated against Amerindians, especially those of the colonial marchlands recently subjected to Spanish rule, while also submitting them to increasingly rigid regimes of conduct and surveillance. Toledo's "Ordenanzas Generales para la vida común de los pueblos de Indios" (1575) meticulously address all aspects of life in the "Pueblos de Indios" including sexual conduct and domestic hygiene. Importantly, the Viceroy's decrees restrict movement between towns as well as contact with the corrupting influence of Spaniards and Mestizos, thus isolating these communities as a strategy for thorough indoctrination and acculturation. The *ordenanzas* likewise regulate the election of Amerindian officials in the towns, outlaw gambling and mandate the strict rationing of chicha (2: 264). Despite the earnestness of Toledo's reforms, the corruption and abuses of colonial officials were never eradicated from the administration of Amerindian life and labor; in fact, all evidence points to the gradual worsening of the lot of the Amerindian in the Viceroyalty of Peru during the next two centuries. In their secret report (1759) to the Charles III, Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa excoriate the conduct of *corregidores* and *visitadores* in Spanish America and lament the fate of the Amerindians who "sin otro delito que el de la simplicidad, ni mas motivo que el de una ignorancia natural, han venido a ser esclavos, y de una esclavitud tan opresiva que comparadamente pueden llamarse dichosos aquellos Africanos" (230).

The same fate was met by the Viceroy of New Spain, the Count of Monterrey Gaspar de Zúñiga, in his attempts to consolidate the dispersed settlements of the Valley of Mexico into *congregaciones* in 1601. In his *Monarquía Indiana* (1615), the Franciscan missionary and chronicler Juan de Torquemada, discloses that the *comisarios* entrusted with surveying sights for new towns and transferring Amerindians from their *rancherías* to well-ordered urban dwellings were more often than not motivated by self-interest when executing the orders of the viceroy.



These *comisarios* used their power to move Amerindians, mostly Otomíes living in the Valley of Mexico, from land that they could use for their own benefit, justifying the usurpation with a strict interpretation of the viceroy's mandate:

El intento de su magestad fue por informaciones, que tuvo, de que estos Indios estaban derramados en muchas partes, sin concierto, ni policia, que los que estuviesen, se congregasen, y viviesen con orden, y en Pueblos formados; pero sacando de su natural esta raçon, la interpretaron de manera, que no solo pusieron mano en lo dicho, sino en los Pueblos mui concertados; porque si una Casa desdecia un poco de el derecho de la Calle, la derrivaban, y mandaban hacerla de mui a compás de esotras, como si fuera pared, que avia de ser sacada a Esquadra, y sin torcimiento de un Cabello, y si se daba voces sobre ello, era respuesta ordinaria, la instrucción lo dice (687).

Torquemada characterizes this perversion of justice as “añadiendo inteligencias a razones,” that is, interpreting a well-founded law in an unjust and self-serving manner (687-88). Although Torquemada chronicles the corruption of the viceroy's campaign, the Franciscan nevertheless defends the underlying logic of the Conde de Monterrey's decree; the accidental interpretation of the principle, he argues, does not change its essence as a just measure, thus revealing the degree to which the logic of *reducción* had become self-evident even in the face of its dire consequences for Amerindian subjects.<sup>48</sup> According to Torquemada, the Count of Monterrey could not be blamed for wishing that the inhabitants of the *congregaciones* “se humanasen” (689).

Torquemada's chronicle is a reminder that ideal of *reducción*, or *congregación*, remained an

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<sup>48</sup> Torquemada explains his reasoning with recourse to Canon Law: “Verdad sea, que si dicta una cosa justa, y buena la razon, y debe hacerse, que se ha de dexar poner en execución, porque de ella suceda algun desastre, o mal acontecimiento, como también lo cita el Derecho Canonico, cuias palabras formales son las siguientes: Si de las buenas cosas, que hacemos, resultare algun mal a la Persona, por quien las hacemos (el qual mal no nace de nuestra voluntad, ni es hecho a sabiendas) no debe imputarsenos, porque se seguiria de aqui, que muchas cosas, que son hacederas, y justas, no se harian, temiendo en ellas algun mal, o daño, que podrian causar [...]” (688).

unquestioned principle of colonization even while corrupted in practice.

### **1.3 Jesuit *Reducción* in Theory and Practice: José de Acosta's *De procuranda* and Antonio Ruiz de Montoya's *Conquista espiritual***

It is in the context of these deeply rooted abuses and attempts to more rigorously manage Amerindian conduct in well-ordered towns that the Jesuits emerged as crucial agents of colonization and acculturation on the Spanish-American colonial frontier. Not coincidentally, it was in Toledo's Perú that the Jesuit José de Acosta began his monumental works on ethnology and missionology, the *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* and *De procuranda indorum salute*, which would not only influence his order's missionary practice up to its expulsion in the eighteenth century but also the policies and practices of the Spanish empire on the expanding colonial frontier. The comparative ethnology outlined by Acosta went hand in hand with this expansion of the colonial frontier; just as in Focher's *Itinerario*, Acosta created a subject at the low end of human development that was both the object of academic inquiry and a civilizing mission. As David Brading has observed, Acosta's stadial theory of civilization provided a way to determine the level of force permitted in the Jesuits' evangelizing mission (188). According to Acosta, those peoples at the low end of his hierarchy were more like a mixture of "hombre y fiera" due to their lack of a recognizable culture; correspondingly, some coercion would be necessary in order to establish communication between the missionary and his would be catechumens:

Pues los bárbaros, compuestos de naturaleza como mezcla de hombre y fiera, por sus costumbres no tanto parecen hombres como monstruos humanos. De suerte que hay que entablar con ellos un trato que sea en parte humano y amable, y en parte duro y violento,

mientras sea necesario, hasta que superada su nativa fiereza, comiencen poco a poco a amansarse, disciplinarse y humanizarse. (1.339)

This would seem to contradict Acosta's critique of excessive violence against Amerindians as a counterproductive means of attracting them to the Gospel, yet he is consistent in advocating for the *strategic* use of coercion as a means of establishing the civil foundation upon which the missionary would build a "república cristiana" (1: 397). On this point Acosta is unambiguous:

Atraer, pues, a estos hombres salvajes y enfierecidos a géneros de vida humana, y acomodarlos al trato civil y político, éste debe ser el primer cuidado del gobernante. Será en vano enseñar lo divino y celestial a quien se ve que ni siquiera cuida ni comprende lo humano. (1.539)

In separating the colonization of the frontier in two stages (first focusing on the temporal regulation of Amerindians and only then on their Christianization) Acosta could accept the strategic application of state violence along with his insistence on a voluntary submission to the Christian faith.

This rationalization of the evangelization enterprise, however, was leap ahead in the disenchantment of the mission frontier as it was an implicit recognition that religion, the ostensible reason for the universalist claims of the Spanish empire, in fact depended on non-religious cultural foundations without which the missionary could not make his message understood. These foundations must be layed, by force if necessary, in order for the work of spiritual conversion to begin. For Acosta, the establishment of a temporal colonial regime, under violent coercion when necessary, is still a means to the more important end of propagating the faith, but it increasingly becomes an end in itself for which the Jesuit missionary is an agent. While the Jesuits hailed their missions as "spiritual conquests" and eulogized the sacrifices of

missionaries as models of rational self-control, they none the less availed themselves of coercive means when it suited their overall aims. Already in *De procuranda* Acosta refers to the “new mode of evangelization” in which soldiers would accompany missionaries, if only as an interpellative reminder of the consequences of disobedience (1: 309). In fact, Acosta goes as far as claiming that the “old mode of evangelization” (without the option of coercive force) is no longer valid and those missionaries who insisted on preaching without the protection of soldiers would not be considered martyrs but rather condemned for their “extrema estupidez” (1: 309). The “irrational” sacrifice of the the “old method” was discarded as an inefficacious means of establishing the temporal and spiritual regime of *reducción*. In practice, the Jesuits adapted the use of soldiers to varying contexts. For example, in Paraguay soldiers were almost never used and the Jesuits generally ventured into the un-reduced territories of the upper Paraná without arms; in the case of Lower California, on the other hand, Juan María Salvatierra and Francisco de Piccolo were accompanied by 30 European, criollo, mestizo, mulato and Filipino soldiers in their undertaking.

Repeating the tropes already familiar in the discourse of *reducción*, Acosta refers to Toledo’s campaigns as an important and innovative practice for the total acculturation of the Amerindian:

Además la reducción de los indios a determinados pueblos, que durante tanto tiempo se ha venido deseando y que no hace mucho tiempo ha quedado establecida, con el fin de que no anden dispersos como las fieras, sino que vivan comunitariamente en pueblos, no se puede decir de cuánta utilidad va a resultar para ir modelando la vida de los bárbaros en todos sus aspectos. (167)

*Reducción* on the colonial frontier seemed to provide a glimpse into the origin of all societies by

seeking out subjects who were thought to live at the margins of political order. Just as in Vitoria, this civilizing mission redirected the gaze of the ethnographer to frontiers closer to the metropole:

Y a la verdad no hay nación, por bárbara y estúpida que sea, que no deponga su barbarie, se revista de humanismo y costumbres nobles, si se le educa con esmero y espíritu generoso desde la niñez. Vemos incluso en nuestra misma España hombres nacidos en plena Cantabria o en Asturias, a quienes se tiene por ineptos y paletos cuando se quedan entre sus paisanos; se les pone en escuelas o en la corte o en mercados, y sobresalen por su admirable ingenio y destreza, sin que nadie les aventaje. (Acosta 1:151)

The challenge of civilizing the least developed Amerindian peoples in Acosta's hierarchy also called for a rigorous discipline and highlighted the reciprocal economy of sins and merits between the Jesuit shepherd and his Amerindian flock.

Citing St. Ambrose, Acosta claims that the ministers chosen to govern both the civil and ecclesiastic spheres in Spanish-America should be carefully vetted for their Christian virtue, as they are all "pedagogues" to the Amerindians through their example (1: 403). As the success of the evangelical mission in the Americas depends upon the success of establishing a civil order, Acosta argues that virtuous officials are crucial. This is especially so in the Americas, according to Acosta, due to the lack of a tradition or institutions to guide the conduct of both colonizer and colonized: "Todo es nuevo. No hay costumbres asentadas. Las leyes y el derecho, excepto el natural, no son firmes casi en absoluto. Las tradiciones y ejemplos de los tiempos pasados o no existen o más bien son detestables" (1: 407). Acosta even imagines a scene in which Amerindians ironically evoke a biblical verse in relation to the misconduct they observe in their Spanish overlords:

El mismo profeta Ezequiel, aunque parece que habla de su pueblo de Israel, con más verdad podría creerse que se refería a los hombres de nuestra edad, cuando pone en boca de Dios aquel lamento lleno de dolor y queja: *Y entrando a las gentes adonde fueron, profanaron mi santo nombre, diciéndose de ellos: éstos son pueblo del Señor, y de tierra de El han salido*. Estas palabras llenas de ironía, testimonio de asco y de desprecio, los gentiles nos las aplican con gran frecuencia cuando hablan entre sí de nosotros y aun nos las echan en cara cuando se les reprende con excesiva acritud, porque nos ven haver las mismas cosas que reprendemos en ellos. (1: 411)

It is not only the fact that Spaniards are the focus of the scrutinizing gaze of the Amerindian subject that makes the election of virtuous officials so important; the distance from the controlling gaze of both the sovereign and the pontifex also offers “ancho campo al libertinaje y pasiones bajas” (409). The Americas then became a symbolic space for the exercise of self-discipline and control where the Amerindian would be edified by the example of his or her secular and ecclesiastic authorities, and where the very justification of Spanish rule was put on trial against the backdrop of customs and cultures that required an absolute reform. In assuming the representation of both civil and ecclesiastic authority on the mission frontier, the Jesuits put these principles to the test; and if they were not always successful paragons of Christian virtues, they at least ensured the reproduction of an ideal subject of control through the prolific production of chronicles and hagiographies that heralded exemplary Jesuits and their function within colonial society.

According to Acosta, the missionary proves his worth by seeking out the most debased peoples on the colonial frontier in order to exercise his apostolate, but in order to “sintonizarse con los humildes” the missionary must have already proved his virtue among peers (1: 137). This

missionary ideal is reflected in a supposed dialogue, included in *De procuranda*, between Acosta and an unnamed priest from Callao. In this dialogue, Acosta criticizes the priest for his ignorance of the language spoken by his catechumens and for the poor example set by his avarice and lust, concluding that Amerindians may be condemned for their infidelity but that a much more severe judgment awaited this remiss apostle (1: 389). Acosta impugns not only the priest's lack of virtue but also his ignorance: he has not taken the time to observe, study and master the language of his catechumens in order to draw them into fold. Just as in Focher's *Itinerario*, the missionary is also expected to conform to an ideal of conduct, that of the ascetic who achieves a perfect mastery over himself in order to exercise a will to power over others. The prolific Jesuit missionary hagiographies and histories published by the order throughout the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries document this self-mastery, which includes the willingness to suffer the dangers and deprivation of the colonial frontier while remaining a model of virtue and intellectual discipline.

Beginning in the late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries the Jesuits assumed a key role in the practice of *reducción* at the colonial periphery of Spanish America, where other secular and ecclesiastic authorities had failed due to the overwhelming distances, hostile terrain, Amerindian resistance or their own endemic corruption. Following a pattern that soon lead the order into conflict with competing colonial authorities, the Company of Jesus adapted royal and vicerojal mandates on this practice to the ends that it deemed "ad majiorem Dei gloriam." This trend perhaps most clearly played out through the missions in the province of Paraguay, where over the course of 150 years the order established a network of semi-autonomous *reducciones* intended to implement a regime of ideal conduct among both colonized Amerindians and European missionaries. Although the Franciscans had previously achieved moderate success in founding three *reducciones* in the province of Paraguay, the Jesuits were granted the *regio*

*patronato* in 1609 for their missions between the Paraná and Uruguay rivers and eventually established 30 densely populated and self-sustaining *reducciones*. The special status conferred directly by Felipe II granted the missionaries civil authority and exempted the Guaraníes from taxes and labor levies as they were considered direct vassals of the king (Armani 49-50).<sup>49</sup> In what would become a characteristic practice of the Company of Jesus, members of the order produced a prodigious body of reports, missionary biographies and histories that portrayed *reducción* as a heroic-apostolic endeavor undertaken by missionaries who often evoked the age of primitive Christianity. Antonio Ruiz de Montoya's *Conquista espiritual hecha por los religiosos de la Compañía d Jesús en las provincias del Paraguay, Uruguay y Tape*, published in Madrid in 1639, is indicative of Jesuit writings on *reducción* and the order's apostolic mission throughout Spanish America until their expulsion in 1768.

The social and economic organization of the Paraguayan *reducciones* achieved a level that was not repeated anywhere else, but this did not deter the Jesuits from attempting to emulate the model. Among the many factors that determined the success of the missions of the Upper Paraná, the most important were perhaps the rapacious European colonialists sandwiching in the Guaraníes: to the West the Spanish *encomenderos* and to the East the Portuguese *bandeirantes*. The Jesuits offered a refuge from these two equally intolerable options. Moreover, the land between the Uruguay and Paraná rivers was ideal for the kind of collective farming and husbandry the Guaraní practiced in the *reducciones*, propitious conditions that were not to be found elsewhere in Spanish America. According to Ruiz de Montoya, by 1636 the *reducción* of San Cristobal contained 10,000 inhabitants, and the total number of baptized Guaraníes reached

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<sup>49</sup> The royal patronage of the Jesuit *reducciones* was largely a practical measure for the administration of Felipe III. The Jesuit incursions into Guaraní territory were cheaper than a military expedition, the new subjects would eventually pay tribute directly to the crown, and the *reducciones* would form a defensive frontier against Portuguese incursions from the East (Armani 65-66).



94,990 (90v). At the height of the Jesuit system in the early eighteenth century the 30 Paraguayan *reducciones*, known for their well-organized urban layout and regimented daily routine, each contained a population of between 1500 and 7000 (Armani 96-102). Conforming to a grid pattern distributed around a central plaza, the settlements included underground plumbing, public fountains, mills, workshops and printing presses. Living quarters were designed with moral concerns in mind: the adjacent houses distributed in long rows were designed for a single monogamous family in order to avoid the taboos of polygamy and sodomy (Armani 101). While many public officials were Guaraníes elected by a cabildo of their peers, the two or three Jesuit missionaries in each *reducción* chose the *corregidor* and intervened as arbiters in most disputes. The schooling of children was a priority within the *reducciones* and both boys and girls were occupied from early morning till late afternoon in the study of the catechism, trades, music, and both the Castilian and Guaraní languages. According to Alberto Armani, the percentage of children in the Jesuit schools per *reducción* was well above any country in Europe at the time (142).

More than an application of a utopian model, Armani has demonstrated that the Jesuits adopted a collectivist economy as a more efficient and culturally recognizable mode of production for the Guaraníes only after the failure of private farming (120). Yerba mate became the cash crop of the Jesuit mission system and was sold in Buenos Aires in order to pay the royal tribute (one gold peso per head) and buy any supplies that could not be manufactured within the *reducciones*, often leading to conflicts with the encomenderos that were forced to compete with the Jesuit production supplied by a large labor pool. Despite the wealth produced by the Jesuit system, the subject of much hyperbole in eighteenth-century anti-Jesuit discourse, even some of the Society's detractors were impressed by the austerity of the order's members. In his "Informe"

on the order from 1731, Mathias Anglés de Gortari notes that in Jesuit College of Asunción, where much of the profit from the Yerba trade was remitted after paying tribute, “Lo demás de la comida y vestuario corre con la misma rígida y menuda escasez, porque la fundamental basa y política de los Padres de aquella provincia que comprende las tres de Paraguay, Buenos-Ayres y Tucumán se reduce a adquirir mucho, y a gastar poco” (85). The Jesuit faced what Weber called the “paradox of all rational asceticism,” that is, the fact that communities organized around a principle self-denial and rejection of worldly ends inevitably become “the very loci of rational economies” (“Religious” 332). The Jesuit *reducciones* throughout Spanish America exemplified this fundamental axiom of disenchantment, and throughout the eighteenth century their auxiliary economic, political and scientific functions eventually became self-justifying ends pursued by the order’s members.

Ruiz de Montoya wrote his work with the express purpose of exalting the order’s efforts and soliciting the intervention of the Spanish crown to stop the slaving expeditions launched against the Jesuit *reducciones* from the Portuguese entrepôt of Sao Paulo. Despite the specific context of Ruiz’s *Conquista espiritual*, the text displays many of the elements that would become typical of Jesuit historiography in the eighteenth century. From the first page of the history, Ruiz de Montoya portrays his three decades of missionary experience as a reenactment of the early Christian apostles’ feats of ascetic self-denial in the service of Church and Crown: “He vivido todo el tiempo dicho en la Provincia de Paraguay, y como en el desierto, en busca de fieras, de Indios bárbaros, atravesando campos, y trasegando montes en busca suya, para agregarlos al aprisco de la Iglesia Santa, y al servicio de su Magestad” (1v). In an arcane reference to a fourth-century Syrian eremite, Ruiz de Montoya compares his journey to Madrid to advocate for his missions with the journey of “aquel gran Padre del yermo Afraates” to

Antioch to combat the apostasy of the emperor Julian, a rather bold analogy considering that the king of Spain was the addressee of his text (1r).

The *Conquista espiritual* portrays the Spanish-American mission frontier as unique among the world-wide network of Jesuit colleges and missions. While Ruiz de Montoya respects the sacrifices of his confrères in Japan, he is quick to point out the arduous conditions under which the missionaries worked in Paraguay:

Y si en el Japón ay cuchillo que haze Martires, no faltan acà saetas que lo forman, hallo menos acà las casas, y Palacios, la policia, las sedas, los vestidos Japoneses, la variedad de comidas y regalos, no digo que los usen los Apostolicos varones; pero al fin su vista atrae, y entretiene. Acá ay la vestidura y trage que al nacer concede la naturaleza a los humanos, siendo fuerça que va solícito cuidado de los Padres haga cubrir lo que puede ofender a ojos castos, con cuidado necessario [...] (63r)

If the missionary in Japan runs an equal risk of martyrdom, he is at least compensated by the relative level of civilization; in Paraguay, however, there is nothing to “entertain” the eyes. In fact, the very penury that the Jesuits must endure among their Paraguayan catechumens, manifest in their nudity, is at the same time a dangerous provocation of the sense of sight and the missionary’s virtue. In direct contrast to the Asian missions, the Spanish-American frontier, then, becomes an unsurpassed space for forging and affirming the order’s ascetic ideal.

Ruiz de Montoya’s text abounds in references to the Jesuit missionaries’ sacrifices and self-denial among their Guaraní catechumens, which he claims he embraced with zeal: “tuveme por dichoso de verme en su compañía; la choça, las alahajas, y el sustento decían muy bien con los Anacoretas, pan, vino, y sal, no se gustó por muchos años: carne alguna vez la veíamos de caça, que bien de tarde en tarde nos traían algún pedaçuelo de limosna” (11r). In addition to a

spartan diet, Ruiz de Montoya describes the physical trials that the terrain and distances demanded of the missionaries, many of whom were of advanced age. In one example, the author cites his journey on foot from the *reducción* of San Ignacio de Asunción with an injured knee, which was miraculously healed by contemplating San Ignatius' example of obedience and submission to the greater glory of God (18r-18v).<sup>50</sup> The Jesuits' activity is presented as a concatenation of trials that test their ascetic virtues and zeal to meet the death of a martyr after the example of the orders' illustrious forerunners. In one example, Ruiz de Montoya describes the death of his fellow missionary Martín de Urtasun, who bitterly complained that after so many "fervorosos actos de martirio" he was destined to die in his crude bed. The author reminds the reader that San Francisco Xavier, the order's proto-martyr and one of its first saints along with the founder, died in similar circumstances far from home and attended to by his humble catechumens (19v). In the case of Cristóbal de Mendoza, the violent martyrdom so zealously sought was granted: the missionary was kept alive over the course of two days while a group of Tupis cut off his ears, nose and tongue, flayed the skin from his torso, disembowled him and finally pulled his heart from his chest (89r).

As the purpose of Ruiz de Montoya's text is to defend the Company's *reducciones* against the slave raiders of Sau Paulo, the most dramatic scenes of the *Conquista espiritual* describe the merciless acts of murder, rape and plunder committed by the Paulinos, which culminates in the massacre at Jesús María in 1637 where not even the missionaries were spared injury and mistreatment by the aggressors. The Jesuits' ascetic conduct is evoked in these scenes

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<sup>50</sup> In this episode Ruiz de Montoya's injured knee has a special significance as Ignatius of Loyola's legs were crushed by a canon ball at the Battle of Pamplona in 1521, and the founder was hobbled by a limp for the rest of his life (O'Malley 24). Ignatius' recovery from his injuries in Manresa was the beginning of his transition from worldly to spiritual soldier and the origin of the Society of Jesus.

as a stark contrast to the violent, lascivious and irreligious behavior of the inhabitants of Sao Paulo, described by Ruiz de Montoya as a modern Gomorrah living off the slave trade:

Los moradores de aquella villa son Castellanos, Portugueses e Italianos, y de otras naciones, que el deseo de vivir con libertad y desahogo, y sin apremio de justicia los ha allí agregado: Su instituto es destruir el género humano, matando hombres, si por huir la miserable esclavitud en que los ponen se le huyen. (44v)

The contrast is explicitly drawn in the description of a raid upon one of the Jesuits' *reducciones*; instead of the riches the Paulinos were convinced they would find, there was only evidence of the missionaries' austere existence:

Entraron en un aposento de un Padre, prometiéndose un gran tesoro, hallaron dos camillas hechas pedaços, y una sotana de algodón muy vieja, y en lugar de edificarse de la pobreza de aquellos Apostólicos varones, haciendo banderas de ellas las mostraron a los Indios, diciéndoles, mirad los pobretones que tenéis en vuestras tierras, que por no tener que comer en sus tierras vienen con embustes a las vuestras a engañaros, mirad que camisas tienen, nosotros si andamos bién vestidos, y tenemos muchas cosas que daros, no os conviene tener en vuestras tierras a estos pobretones, y así venimos a echarlos de toda esta región, porque esta tierra es nuestra, y no del Rey de España. Mientras este predicaba andaban los otros matando. (46r)

The slave raiders' irreverence to both the Church and the King of Spain is adduced as further evidence of the Jesuits' strict regime of ascetic discipline within the *reducciones* where poverty, hunger and fatigue were not the only trials of the missionaries' consummate virtue.

As reflected in Toledo's *ordenanzas*, the regulation of sexual conduct within the *reducciones* and *pueblos de indios* was a central concern of colonization and acculturation. On

the one hand, this regulation was meant to enforce Christian taboos against polygamy and sodomy, practices projected upon the Amerindian as signs of a barbarism that could only be refined through a strict disciplinary and pedagogical regime. Yet, beyond the meticulous enforcement of taboos, the control of sexual conduct also implied a disciplinarization of the colonizer's conduct, for which the Amerindian represented a destabilizing object of desire. Acosta had already referred to this dynamic in noting that the distance from the metropole and the controlling gaze of one's peers resulted in libertine behavior. In Ruiz de Montoya's text, this danger is reflected in the behavior of Jesuits' forerunners in the project of *reducción*, who, according to the missionary, were only interested in "de camino salir cargados de Indias, y de muchachos para su servicio, que es el común interés destas entradas" (42r). Likewise, it was not just the greed of slave traders that threatened to abort the project of *reducción* but also their lasciviousness; in the Jesuit's unsettling account of the brutal and indiscriminate violence unleashed against the *reducción* of Jesús María he hesitatingly includes the following detail about the leader of the assault:

Hame hecho la honestidad que calle muchas cosas; pero no quiero dejar decir esta. Las mujeres que en este, y otros pueblos (que destruyeron) de buen parecer, casadas, solteras, o Gentiles, el dueño las encerraba consigo en un aposento, con quien pasaba las noches, al modo que un cabrón en un corral de cabras. (94v)

While nonetheless a moving account aimed at securing the protection of his catechumens from such violence, the foregoing also reveals the importance of the missionary's chastity in legitimating the colonial order he was charged with establishing, which reciprocally legitimated the religious order's ascetic ideal. This passage likewise demonstrates how this ascetic will to self-denial infiltrates Jesuit writing: Ruiz de Montoya tells us that decency ("honestidad")

requires that he silence the scene he is about to narrate, only then to concede that he cannot leave it out. Just as in the practice of asceticism, the object of temptation must paradoxically present itself, or even be sought, in order for the will to exercise its mastery. The ascetic will, as exercised in *reducción* or in the related process of symbolic production, must produce an encounter (even a violent encounter) with the prohibited object in order for its power of self-denial to be affirmed.

In Ruiz de Montoya's narrative, as in all Jesuit historiography of the Spanish-American missionary frontier, the missionary is represented as the inverse of the libidinous soldier or slave raider: his chastity is under assault from the hostile environment of the frontier and its inhabitants. The missionaries were not just exposed to nudity and sexual taboos; according to Ruiz de Montoya, the Jesuits of Paraguay were subjected to specific trials of their chastity by malevolent agents (either corrupt colonial officials or shamans) wishing to undermine their authority, only to celebrate the triumph of their ascetic will over temptation. The missionaries' chastity was meant in part to serve as an example to their catechumens, particularly in the Jesuits' constant struggles to eradicate the practice of polygamy in the Paraguayan *reducciones*. The Guaraní's practice of polygamy was the central obstacle in the Jesuits' attempts to establish a regime of conduct, specifically because of the oddity of the missionaries' vows of chastity in the eyes of their would-be catechumens:

Procuró el demonio tentar nuestra limpieza ofreciéndonos los caciques algunas de sus mujeres, con achaque de que ellos tenían por cosa contra naturaleza que varones sirviesen en las acciones de guisar, barrer, y otras de este modo. Hizoseles muy buena relación de la honestidad de los Sacerdotes, y que por ese fin lo primero en que habíamos puesto el cuidado había sido en cercar un breve sitio de palos para defender la entrada de mujeres

en nuestra casa, acción que les admiró; pero como bárbaros no la tenían por honrosa: porque su autoridad, y honra la tenían en tener muchas mujeres, y criadas, falta muy común en los Gentiles. (15r)

Again, it is not simply the enforcement of a taboo that is at stake here, but also a trial of the missionaries' ascetic will, which in this case is tested by the "demon" acting through caciques. The Jesuits are portrayed as taking extreme measures, even building a defensive structure around their dwelling and prohibiting any domestic contact with women. Despite their precautions, the missionaries were subjected to constant tests of their purity, as described by Ruiz de Montoya in another passage:

Que jamás ni de día, ni de noche entró mujer en nuestra cerca, y dos, que con lascivo intento la entraron a media noche, con ánimo de provocar a mal a un Padre, que solo en una reducción estaba durmiendo, a quien su Angel de Guarda avisó en sueños del veneno mortífero que la deshonestidad le preparaba, y levantándose bien despavorido, dio voces, llamando a unos Indios que en otro aposento dormían, y riniéndoles por descuidados, sin ver quien por el cerco entraba. Buscad (les dijo) que dos han entrado, hallaron dos mujeres, que al ruido se habían escondido en el rincón de un aposento: las cuales despedidas, con harta compunción se confesaron el siguiente día. Que habían de decir? Que siendo solicitados de mujeres aun en parte sacra, las dejaron bien arrepentidas, bien confesadas, y con propósito de vivir bien, como lo hicieron. Dirían, que (como dijimos) les habían ofrecido mujeres, para su servicio de las cosas caseras, y dada a entender a los Gentiles la honestidad, y recato Sacerdotal, las desecharon. (49v-50r)

In this example, the Jesuit subject not only proves his own superlative virtue but additionally converts the interlopers and sets them on the path "de vivir bien." The basic elements of this



scene (the chaste Jesuit, the defensive measures, the Amerindian temptress, the nighttime intrusion, and the narrow escape) are repeated throughout Jesuit missionary narrative as part of the order's aura of apostolic heroism (see chapter 2).

According to Ruiz de Montoya's account, this example of ascetic will was followed by some of the Jesuits' most exceptional catechumens, some of whom met the fate of martyrs for adhering to the strict regime of self-denial promulgated by the missionaries. In one of the most interesting cases offered by Ruiz de Montoya, a young man who is sent by the missionaries to a neighboring village in order to make inroads for its eventual *reducción* is brutally martyred and eaten when he refuses to accept a woman offered to him. The "casto moço," who according to the author was educated from a young age in his *reducción* and had learned well the missionaries' lessons, resists the temptation put before him even in the face of certain death:

para moverle más le pusieron delante una muy escogida moça, que aficionada a la buena disposición del mancebo, deseaba que la apeteciese, el casto moço, ni aun mirarla quiso; instaron los Gentiles a que la mirase, el les respondió, que los Padres enseñaban el no mirar a mujeres: porque por los ojos entraba el pecado en el alma, y que la ley de Dios prohibía la deshonestidad, el adulterio, que él era casado al modo que Dios manda, y que no podía admitir otra mujer: amenazaronle, que si no tomaba aquella le darían muerte: Matadme (dijo) que mi cuerpo solo matareis, y no mi alma, porque es inmortal, y espero, que muriendo yo irá ella a gozar eternamente de Dios. (28r)

As in the foregoing example, the Jesuits' catechumens often competed with the missionaries themselves in their quest for self-mastery. According to Ruiz de Montoya, a couple that was married by a missionary within one of the *reducciones* secretly vowed to live together as "castos hermanos," both remaining virgins until the end of their lives (68r-68v). In another example

described by the author as a “cuento algo gracioso,” a young man was so moved by the sermons of the missionaries on the subject of chastity that he asked to be castrated, to which the missionaries replied that this method of guaranteeing purity was not permitted (84r).

The Jesuits’ unique balance of active and contemplative asceticism likewise demanded of the missionary an earnest and thorough application to intellectual pursuits with practical applications in the order’s evangelical enterprise. The most important of these pursuits, as Acosta emphasized, was the command of Amerindian languages and their subsequent dissemination through Jesuit authored grammars and vocabularies, a particular point of pride for the Society. The missionaries’ fluency in Amerindian languages was touted as a sign of the order’s success in selecting and preparing its members as well as proof of the Jesuits’ indefatigable application to their vocation. Just as Acosta, Montoya evokes St. Paul’s exhortation to learn languages lest the apostle himself appear a barbarian to his interlocutors:

Y suele aver en una ciudad de Españoles Indios de varias lenguas, y ser necesario que los Padres las sepan para su cultivo, y no hay Padre que demas de la nativa, y Latina no sepa por lo menos una lengua estrangera, y muchos dos y tres, de que se imprimen oy en esta Corte algunos libros y la de los negros no ha costado poco desvelo el sacarla a luz, y ponerla en los terminos de la imprenta [...] (63v)

The missionary’s work among the most degraded of his flock, administering sacraments to the Africans who lie anguishing in the hulls of slave ships in the port of Buenos Aires, is rewarded with a mastery of the African’s language as proof of self-mastery. This linguistic heroism becomes a fundamental part of the economy of apostolic compensation that defines Jesuit

identity, and Ruiz de Montoya himself was the author of an authoritative text on the Guaraní language.<sup>51</sup>

The developments in the practice and discourse of *reducción* as a mode of expanding the colonial frontier were compiled and codified in Juan de Solórzano de Pereira's *Política indiana*, published in 1648. An official with decades of experience in colonial administration of Perú and on the Council of Indies in Spain, Solórzano Pereira applied the Aristotelian-Thomist concept of colonial paternalism that had already been used to define the ideal of *reducción*. Just as Botero before him, Solórzano Pereira affirmed that the first cities were founded by Cain, as asserted in Scripture, but that the "Poetas Gentiles antiguos" had explained the origin of political life by the aforementioned fable retold by Cicero in *De inventione* (203). This confirmed that the practice of evangelization and colonial expansion was in line with the natural order of political life: it was the king's duty to bring together the dispersed and savage peoples entrusted to him by the Alexandrine papal donation in order to provide for their religious and secular education. Indeed, this act of civil congregation was essential to the establishment of any political order above the state of animality, even if it was enacted through coercion as opposed to the Ciceronian ideal of eloquence.<sup>52</sup> Following Aristotle, Solórzano Pereira affirms that human beings are political

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<sup>51</sup> Although not an entirely reliable source with regard to the merits and faults of the Jesuits in Paraguay, Mathias de Anglés y Gortari's 1731 "Informe" delivered to the Holy Office of Lima in defense of José de Antequera's defiance of the Crown and the Society Jesus in Paraguay offers some insight into the reality behind the order's ideal of linguistic heroism. In criticizing the Jesuits' policy of sending foreign-born missionaries of advanced age (most not even Spanish) to Paraguay, Anglés y Gortari claims that many not only never mastered the Guaraní language but even had difficulty speaking Castilian (47-48). Despite the author's bias, the reasons he adduces are convincing: the Jesuit missionaries arrived at too advanced an age (30 to 40 years old) to achieve fluency, and Guaraní is particularly difficult to master if not spoken from childhood. Moreover, Anglés y Gortari deflates the claims that the Jesuits had gained fluency from studying their "Arte y Diccionario," arguing that no language, and even more so Guaraní, could be learned by studying a text without practical application. This topic will be taken up again in Chapter 4.

<sup>52</sup> "Y acercandonos más al nuestro, de esto deciendo, que no puede haber gente por bárbara que sea, que se conserve sin policía, y este modo de poblaciones, y compañías, según lo resuelve Navarro, y que por el consiguiente, los Reyes, y Principes, que tienen el gobierno de ella a su cargo, pueden mandar, obligar y forzar a qualesquier vasallos suyos, que viven esparcidos, y sin forma política en los montes, y campos, que se reduzgan a poblaciones: usando y

animals, by which he means that their natural order is sedentary and urban (202). Without the order of the city, without *reducción*, human beings are just animals, which could not be abided by nature: “Y de creer es, que la naturaleza, o el Autor de ella, que los formó, y crió para racionales, y políticos, gustaría darles su ayuda, mediante la nuestra” (210).

Based largely on the *Recopilación de leyes de las Indias* begun by Antonio León Pinelo in 1624 and finally published in 1681, *Política indiana* also includes the vast practical experience of colonizers in the implementation of *reducción* throughout the Americas. Solórzano Pereira commends both the *reducciones* undertaken by Toledo in Perú and what he terms the “agregaciones” attempted by the Count of Monterrey in New Spain.<sup>53</sup> Significantly, Solórzano Pereira cites Acosta as an authority on the need to “reducir estos fieros y silvestres hombres a conocimiento de lo que son, y enseñarles vida política y sociable” as a prerequisite to the teaching of Christian doctrine (205). The Jesuit is also cited on the importance of disciplined and learned apostles capable of communicating in the languages of their catechumens,

Porque en efecto no se puede negar lo que dice el Apostol, que quien no alcanza la fuerza y propiedad del idioma de aquel con quien pretende hablar, será bárbaro para este, y el otro para él recíprocamente. Y el ministerio de la predicación requiere hombres no solo doctos en letras divinas, y acompañados de las humanas, sino tambien entendidos, más

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ejerciendo en esta parte uno de los principales fines para que fueron consituidos; y como buenos tutores, y curadores, dirigiendo, y persuadiendo a los que por su barbarismo, o rusticidad no lo alcanzan, lo mucho que les importan estas agregaciones, y dejarse guiar y gobernar en la forma que les granjea tantos provechos, y es más ajustada a la razón natural, como docta, y advertidamente, lo dejaron escrito Romano, Menchaca, Pedro Petra, Magero, y otros graves Autores.” (204)

<sup>53</sup> Solórzano Pereira’s nomenclature leads to some confusion as to whether *reducción* and *agregación* refer to separate practices. Adding further to this confusion, the latter is a modified form of *congregación*, the more widely used term to refer to the Count of Monterrey’s initiatives. Amy Bushnell suggests that *congregación* was the practice of gathering widely dispersed settlements of already sedentary Amerindians into consolidated cities and towns, while *reducción* was the practice of settling nomadic and seminomadic peoples of the colonial frontier (144-45). It is unclear, however, if these practices were ever strictly codified; indeed, *reducción* refers to both practices in Viceroy Toledo’s *ordenanzas*. In the event, Solórzano Pereira implies that both practices obey the same Aristotelian-Thomist principle of colonial tutelage.

que medianamente en la lengua de aquellos a quien han de Evangelizar, y mejorar con su predicación [...]. (219)

By the mid-seventeenth century, owing in part to Acosta's influence as well as the expanding corpus of missionary chronicles and hagiography authored by the likes of Ruiz de Montoya, this ideal of a missionary that excels in both divine and profane letters, as well as the apostolic virtues of charity and self-sacrifice, had become synonymous with the Jesuits. Solórzano de Pereira's mid-seventeenth-century work already emphasizes the contributions of the Society in the practice of *reducción* as an ideal of colonial tutelage, and the fame (or notoriety) of their Paraguayan experiments would continue to provoke interest in the order's work into the eighteenth century.

*Reducción* was a development in the history of pastoral power in the West in which the representatives of the priestly ascetic ideal were charged with the discipline and regulation of new political subjects. Iberian expansion in the Atlantic basin invented a new subject of colonization that required innovative applications of the colonizer's tradition that would orient a subject of modernity in a disenchanted world. The Jesuit ascetic ideal and the practice of *reducción* developed along parallel courses from a common Western-Christian tradition, but they merged and mutually transformed one another on the Spanish-American colonial frontier during the course of the seventeenth century. Of course, this process cannot be isolated in a single event or protagonist; rather it was the result of centuries of colonial expansion and the unstable dialectic of the frontiers where Europeans and Amerindians encountered one another. The Guaraní missions provided the purest expression of the principles of *reducción* and the Jesuit ascetic ideal, which were pursued wherever the Jesuits performed their vocation. In eighteenth-century New Spain, Lower California presented the greatest hope (and subsequent

disappointment) for repeating the success of the Paraguayan missions. The performance of the Jesuit ascetic ideal, however, was not only relevant to the mission frontier. As the prodigious production of Jesuit *Vidas* and spiritual guides in eighteenth-century New Spain demonstrates, the Jesuits linked the colonial order of the periphery and the urban center through their enactment of the ascetic ideal.

## 2. *Vidas y Virtudes*: Jesuit Missionary Hagiography in Eighteenth-Century New Spain

From approximately 1725 until the expulsion of the order in 1768, members of the Society of Jesus in New Spain wrote and published dozens of missionary hagiographies that reflect the adaptation of the order's ascetic ideal to the changing culture of the viceroyalty.<sup>54</sup> These works ranged from Miguel Venegas' *Vida y virtudes del V.P. Juan Baptista Zappa*, a 600 page manuscript written in 1729, to shorter "Edifying Letters" prepared for publication in Mexico City and Puebla, such as Juan Antonio Balthassar's *Carta de la exemplar vida, religiosas virtudes, y apostólicos trabajos del fervoroso Missionero el Venerable P. Francisco María de Picolo* printed in 1752.<sup>55</sup> Most Jesuit narrative written during this period falls under the category of *Vida y virtudes*, or hagiographic works that focused on the individual lives of exemplary Jesuit subjects and extolled their edifying virtues for both religious and lay readers.

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<sup>54</sup> José Toribio Medina's *La imprenta en México*, the most exhaustive bibliography of works published in New Spain during the colonial period, registers at least 41 works that fit the description of missionary hagiography published during this period. These include very brief *Cartas edificantes* on Jesuit subjects that were prepared for press as well as a two volume menology on the Society's coadjutors penned by Juan Antonio de Oviedo. Some of the works are translations of Jesuit hagiographies written in other languages, such as José María Galluci's *Vida del Venerable Padre Antonio Baldinucci misionero apostólico de la Compañía de Jesús* (translated from Italian to Spanish), and works on non-Jesuit subjects such as Juan José Moreno's *Fragmentos de la vida, y virtudes del V. Illmo y Rmo. Sr. Dr. Vasco de Quiroga*. These works also include an edition of Plácido Spirembergo's *Carta edificante* on Juan Antonio Cantova, a Jesuit who was killed on the mission frontier of the Philippines. Notwithstanding a handful of exceptions, including Antonio de Paredes work on the Otomí nun Salvadora de los Santos studied below, most of the texts focus on the lives of Jesuits who performed missionary work in New Spain during the eighteenth century. I have not included the plethora of sermons on ideal models of ascetic conduct, many of which focus on the lives of nuns, that were penned by Jesuits and published throughout the eighteenth century. While related to the *Vidas y virtudes* studied here, these works demand a different analytic framework. Of course, Medina's bibliography does not include manuscript works such as Miguel Venegas' *Vida y virtudes del V.P. Juan Baptista Zappa*, also studied in this chapter.

<sup>55</sup> For this work I have consulted Venegas' manuscript of the *Vida y virtudes del V.P. Juan Baptista Zappa* (1729) held at the Huntington Library in Pasadena, California. Venegas' work was edited and published with significant changes by the Spanish Jesuit Francisco Javier Fluviá in Barcelona in 1754. Two other manuscript hagiographic works by Venegas were similarly reworked for publication, both dealing directly with the Jesuit apostolate in Lower California: *El Apostol mariano representado en la vida del Venerable Padre Juan María de Salvatierra*, by Juan Antonio de Oviedo (Mexico, 1754), and the *Empresas apostólicas*, by Andrés Marcos Burriel (Madrid, 1757). The latter is studied at length in Chapter 3. The work of Juan Antonio Balthassar, the Provincial of the Society in New Spain from 1750-1753, includes two very brief "noticias" on the martyrdom of Fathers Lorenzo Carranco and Nicolás de Tamaral in Lower California.

On the one hand, these works demonstrate the differentiation of value spheres within Jesuit cultural production: the narrative of the exemplary missionary was increasingly separated out from and subordinated to the Jesuits' contributions to both scientific knowledge and the establishment of a civil order. On the other hand, the genre of *Vida y virtudes* was still important for legitimating a colonial order that depended on the representation of the missionary frontier and the symbolic action of ideal apostolic subjects.

The Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes* exalted an ascetic ideal instilled in Jesuit colleges and tested on the missionary frontier. In concert with the proliferation devotional literature these models of conduct connected the process of *reducción* on the colonial frontier to subject-formation in the colonial center. Jesuit missionary narrative emphasized the virtues of humility and obedience in carrying out one's vocation, values that could be readily understood in the inner-worldly activities of a rigid and repressive colonial hierarchy that bound both upper and lower strata to a strong sense of duty. The values that formed good Jesuit subjects easily translated into values that would form good colonial subjects at all levels of the social and economic spectrum. While *Vidas y virtudes* typically culminate in the apostolic activities of the ideal Jesuit subject, the genre placed increasing emphasis throughout the eighteenth century on the early life and education of the protagonist in the Jesuit colleges. This focus on education made the Jesuit more accessible to a lay public and set up the ideal subject's mission on the colonial frontier as a test of values inculcated in the elite of the colonial center or metropole.

## **2.1 Narrating Jesuit Lives and Virtues**

In a sense, hagiography was responsible for the foundation of the Society of Jesus. While convalescing from wounds suffered in the Battle of Pamplona (1517), Iñigo de Loyola was given



Jacobus de Voragine's (ca. 1230-1298) *Golden Legend* and Ludolph of Saxony's (ca. 1300-1378) *Imitation of Christ* to read in place of his beloved chivalric novels (O'Malley, *First* 24).

As the legend goes, reading these inspired Iñigo to take on the name of one of the Church's early martyrs, Ignatius of Antioch, and to found a community of Christian soldiers. Indeed, throughout the first two centuries of the order, the Company of Jesus established its own hagiographic tradition to rival the classic works of Eusebius and Saint Jerome. During the late sixteenth and throughout the seventeenth centuries, Jesuit hagiographers such as Pedro de Ribadeneira, Daniello Bartoli and Juan Eusebio Nieremberg penned widely disseminated works that implicitly linked the Society's illustrious members to the subjects of patristic hagiography. Jesuit hagiographic production reflected the intent of the founders of the order to return to the apostolate of the primitive Church, and to this end hagiography was used to reaffirm this mission while inspiring missionaries and defending the order against its detractors (O'Malley 67).<sup>56</sup> As in Ruiz de Montoya's *Conquista espiritual*, this budding Jesuit hagiographic tradition found an open field of symbolic action on the Spanish-American mission frontier and in the colonial institution of *reducción*. By the eighteenth century the corpus of Jesuit missionary narrative was so prolific that it even became fodder for an anti-Jesuit discourse that pointed to the excessive promotion of the orders' own members as a cynical strategy employed to cover the Society's misdeeds under the veneer of emulating the primitive apostolate.<sup>57</sup>

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<sup>56</sup> The eighteenth-century Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes* were in part defense of the order from the pervasive anti-Jesuit propaganda that Ramón Kuri Camacho has studied in the context of New Spain, including the republication and circulation of Juan de Palafox y Mendoza's *Verdades sin lisonja*, the Bishop of Puebla's last salvo in his seventeenth-century dispute with the Society (137).

<sup>57</sup> In his *Histoire du Paraguay*, Bernardo Ibañez de Echevarri, a former Jesuit turned vociferous critic of the order, claims that this one of the chief means employed by the Society to establish its rule over the Jesuit "Republic of Paraguay": "Le sixieme moyen a été de les flatter par des éloges excessifs. En effet, e'ils croient mériter les louanges que leurs Généraux & Provinciaux ont donneés dans leurs Lettres, ils doivent paroître à leurs propres yeux & à ceux des autres, bien heureusement nés pour le ciel comme pour la terre" (214). Ibañez de Echevarri further claims that the virtues extolled in the "Edifying Letters" are part of a cynical ploy to cover the Jesuits' misdeeds,

Indicative of a general trend in Christian hagiography from the fifteenth to seventeenth centuries, and in contrast to the medieval tradition of *exempla* and *vitae*, the Jesuit hagiographic tradition was not the expression of popular devotion but rather the product of the highly educated elite that filled the order's ranks (Heffernan 24). The Jesuits' network of written correspondence and archives was the machine behind this prolific hagiographic literature, which was essential to the order's self-definition from its very foundation (O'Malley 62). The *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus* explicitly provide for frequent correspondence and reports flowing up and down the order's hierarchy and back and forth from Rome to Jesuit colleges across the globe. This correspondence included "edifying reports" on exemplary subjects and the progress of the order's ministries (copied in the vernacular of the province and in Latin), which became the primary sources for Jesuit historiography and hagiography in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries (*Constituciones* 292-93). This network of correspondence was a strategy for maintaining cohesion, discipline and morale among widely dispersed and often isolated members of the order (Harris, "Confession-Building" 279; Hsia 15-17). This global corporation, however, was directly tied to the local production of hagiographies in New Spain and specifically to the reproduction of the frontier in the colonial context. The subject of Jesuit hagiography reflected a universal model of conduct that could be transmitted and repeated, but this repeatability was contingent on the experience of the frontier as a ground for the ascetic ideal embodied by the missionary.

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which include sedition and pederasty: "Ceux-ci, à la vérité, n'avoient pas besoin qu'on leur défendit de conseiller des invasions, des vols & des meurtres, de les diriger, & d'y marcher en personnes comme Chefs de Séditieux, de manger au son des instrumens & au bruit de la mousqueterie, d'avoir à leurs portes des pages qui prêtent à la médisance, de se renfermer dans des chambres avec jeunes garçons" (219).

In employing the dualistic structure of *praexis* (“vida”) and *ethos* (“virtudes”), the authors of eighteenth-century Jesuit missionary hagiographies were drawing from a deep well of hagiographic tradition in the West that extended down into antiquity. As exemplified by Eusebius’ (CE 263-339) biography of Origen included in the *Ecclesiastical History*, this tradition divides the biography of the holy man into a chronological narrative of the subject’s exemplary acts from early childhood to death (*praexis*) and a gloss on this biographical narrative that points out his outstanding virtues (*ethos*), thus *vidas* and *virtudes* in the Jesuit works (Cox 8-9). This structure distinguishes Jesuit missionary hagiography from other hagiographic works produced in New Spain, and by strictly adhering to the model of *praexis* and *ethos* the authors of eighteenth-century Jesuit missionary hagiographies implicitly invoked the legacy of the primitive Church.

In the hagiography of late antiquity both the pagan divine philosopher and the early-Christian holy man practice a rigorous asceticism that frees them from worldly concerns in order to focus on the development of their intellectual and spiritual lives (Cox 28). The emphasis on intellectual pursuits and the quotidian exercise of discipline from a young age, as opposed to persecution and martyrdom, also reflected the Church’s transition from marginal cult to powerful institution (De Certeau, *Writing* 261). In Eusebius’ portrayal of Origen, the subject exercises an intense ascetic discipline in study and spiritual reflection from early childhood, demonstrating the essential character of the hero that will manifest itself throughout the narrative. Despite this innate virtue, education still plays an important role in the lives of holy men as the refinement of their saintly potential: it is the aspect of the holy man’s life that makes him accessible to the public. The saint’s dedication to the perfection of his nature through education and self-discipline holds out the possibility of the moral improvement of the entire Christian community (Cox 85).

This is especially true of the idealized portrait of the eighteenth-century Jesuit missionary whose life is contained by two intertwined institutions in New Spain through which the Jesuits aimed to create a society modeled on the tradition of monasticism: the college and the mission.

The particular virtues (*ethos*) exemplified in Jesuit writings from Spanish America could vary depending on both geographical and temporal context. As Jaime Humberto Borja Gómez has shown in the context of New Granada, Jesuit hagiographies and spiritual guides drew from a complex matrix of cardinal virtues (prudence, justice, fortitude, temperance), theological virtues (hope, faith, charity), evangelical virtues (chastity, poverty, obedience), and a host of secondary categories that were opposed to a parallel matrix of vices (39). According to Borja Gómez, eighteenth-century Jesuit writing in New Granada focused on the formation of an obedient and self-possessed citizen-subject who would respond to the needs of the colonial state (52). Beyond their emphasis on submission and perseverance within a given order, these virtues were important to social cohesion because, unlike wealth and power, they could circulate throughout the social structure. This trend is likewise observable in eighteenth-century New Spain, where, as in New Granada, Jesuit narratives focused on the inculcation of specific virtues in the order's colleges. The novohispanic *Vidas y virtudes*, however, linked the ascetic virtues of the Criollo or European citizen-subject to the missionary frontier through the trajectory of the ideal apostle who began his formation in the Jesuit colleges and realized the culmination of his vocation through *reducción*.

In this emphasis on the early life and education of the missionary, the *vidas y virtudes* shift in focus from the most well-known Jesuit hagiographic work from seventeenth-century New Spain, Andrés Pérez de Rivas' *Historia de los triunfos de nuestra Santa Fe entre gentes las más bárbaras del nuevo Orbe* (1645). In her analysis of Pérez de Rivas' work, Maureen Ahern

points out that the life of the Jesuit subject is subordinated to the history of the Society's Province of New Spain, forming a cathedral-like narrative structure in which the subject's life and martyrdom is succinctly retold at the end of each section as if it were an altarpiece adorning the central nave of the chronicle (10-12). Eighteenth-century Jesuit hagiography refocused this architectural metaphor on the individual subject, whose life and virtues are presented to the reader to contemplate and emulate. The metaphor is explicitly evoked in Miguel de Venegas' description of the hagiographer's task, which precedes his work on Juan Baptista Zappa:

Templo místico es un libro historial, que en la bien encadenada narración desubcesos, y la relación de hazañas gloriosas, levanta simulacros a las virtudes y excita en veneración de los Santos a sus devotos. Si observamos la bien trazada fábrica de un Templo, hallaremos en ella una bien ordenada composición de historia. [...] Porque, ¿qué otra cosa es, escribir las vidas de los santos, sino levantar estatuas a sus virtudes, padrones a su memoria, [aras] a su veneración, altares a su santidad y templos al verdadero Dios: para que en sus siervos como en templos místicos de la oración sea alabado y glorificado su Santo nombre? (1r)

Zappa's life becomes the temple that the reader is invited to enter, and his individual virtues become altars of devotional contemplation. Venegas' work on Zappa is unique among eighteenth-century *Vidas y virtudes* in that it portrays the martyrdom of its subject, who was allegedly poisoned by Huasteca shamans. Zappa's death not only reaffirmed his devotion and ascetic indifference to suffering but also confirmed the Amerindian's treachery to a circumspect Spanish and Criollo population. Otherwise Venegas' work is typical of eighteenth-century *Vidas y virtudes*, which emphasize the daily exercise of virtue over the gruesome martyrdom and

veneration of relics narrated, for example, in Pérez de Rivas' account of the life, ministry and death of Gonzalo de Tapia in the *Historia de los triunfos* (133-140).<sup>58</sup>

For Antonio Rubial García there is a clear development of Criollo religiosity in the hagiographic writings in New Spain between 1620 and 1750. During this period, the sacred subject became a reflection of the patria with an increasing emphasis on Criollo subjects and on the exercise of asceticism over the miraculous or thaumaturgic (*Santidad* 76). Indicative of this trend is the Franciscan Baltasar de Medina's *Vida, Martyrio, y Beatificación del invicto proto-martyr de el Japón, San Felipe de Jesús, patrón de México, su patria, imperial corte de Nueva España, en el Nuevo Mundo* (1683), which also demonstrates the displacement of eremitic hagiography by models of asceticism promoted within the mendicant orders and the Society of Jesus.<sup>59</sup> Medina's work on New Spain's only beatified saint during the colonial period, the most famous hagiography among the many dedicated to nation's patron saint, also provides a foil to show how the Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes* were unique in their approach to the ascetic subject. The *Vida* of Felipe de Jesús is a clear example of what Mikhail Bakhtin refers to as a "crisis hagiography," in which the hero strays from the course of virtue and is brought back to his foreordained vocation by revelation (*Dialogic* 115). In Medina's work Felipe abandons his vocation as a Franciscan in New Spain, and his family, disappointed by his lack of constancy,

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<sup>58</sup> It is telling that the Jesuit martyrs of Baja California, Fathers Lorenzo Carranco and Nicolás Tamaral, both killed in an uprising 1734, were only treated in a "Succinta relación" and a "Breve Noticia" respectively, included as appendices to Juan Antonio Baltasar's *Carta* (1752) on the life of Francisco María de Piccolo. Jesuit missionary hagiography in New Spain increasingly focused on quotidian ascetic practice, whether in the Jesuit colleges or frontier missions, as the models of conduct represented in the Jesuit *vidas y virtudes* came to express an individualistic piety and a morality based on social utility. The deaths of Carranco and Tamaral were, however, given a gruesome treatment in the Spanish Jesuit Andrés Marcos Burriel's *Noticia de la California y de su conquista temporal y espiritual*, in which Amerindian rebellion is portrayed as an act of irrationality opposed to the social order established by the missionaries.

<sup>59</sup> The most famous example of eremitic hagiography produced in New Spain is Francisco de Losa's early seventeenth-century work on Gregorio López.

sends him away to the Philippines to find his fortune as a soldier. Amidst the dissipation of a soldier's life, he rediscovers his religious vocation:

Haviendo llegado Felipe a Manila, rico, mozo, y Soldado, rompió en verdores, y lozanía de la edad los ardores del apetito, gastando grande parte del caudal en pasatiempos, y bizarrías de mancebo, hasta que medroso como la higuera, de la última maldición, pidió treguas, y plazo para deshojar la pompa vana del siglo, y solturas de la Milicia [...]. (24-25)

In this passage we see the hero's life brought to crisis and perilously close to perdition, from which providence, aligned with the ascetic will of the subject, brings about his redemption through his shipwreck and subsequent martyrdom in Japan. As model for conduct, the story of Felipe de Jesús also reflects the danger of dissolution inherent in the colonial enterprise and the symbolic importance of priestly discipline in producing and justifying the colonial order.

Medina's work portrays the exercise of secular power and the accumulation of wealth gained in the project of colonization as temptations that are especially dangerous to young men. On the one hand these temptations must be repressed and overcome, yet the subject's resistance to these vices does not reveal any injustice or sinfulness inherent in the colonial order. On the contrary, the ascetic subject's triumph paradoxically reaffirms the superiority, the fitness for dominance, of intimately connected economic and ecclesiastic elites. Juan José de Eguiara Eguren's eighteenth-century work on Pedro de Arellano y Sossa, founder of the Congregation of the Oratory in New Spain (*Vida del Venerable Padre Don Pedro de Arellano, y Sossa, Sacerdote, y Primer Preposito de la Congregación del Oratorio de Mexico*, 1735) is another such crisis hagiography representing the subjection of the Criollo elite's decadence to a regime of priestly discipline, what the author refers to as "vencerse a si mismo" (13). In the case of

Arellano y Sossa, however, the subject is led astray within his vocation as priest, where his gambling and ostentatious dress are directly related to the wealth of that his family has derived from mining. Eguiara Eguren tellingly attributes his subject's reform to two of the most prominent Jesuits of in late seventeenth-century New Spain, Antonio Nuñez de Miranda and José Vidal who assisted the wayward priest in rediscovering his vocation through the Spiritual Exercises. In both Medina's and Eguiara Eguren's works, the ascetic renunciation of the subject of the crisis hagiography justifies the order, both the religious and socio-economic, within which he lives.

In his analysis of the *Prüfungsroman*, or novel of ordeals, Bakhtin describes the basic image of man portrayed in this type of hagiography, "The hammer of events shatters nothing and forges nothing – it merely tries the durability of an already finished product. And the product passes the test" (*Dialogic* 107). For Bakhtin, in the temporality of the biographical novel, applicable also to the hero of hagiographies such as Medina's and Eguiara Eguren's, the protagonist is not the product of becoming or development, but rather he is in the end what he was always destined to be, with obstacles such as Felipe de Jesús' crisis of vocation merely serving as tests to assure the reader of the hero's (and by extension his community's) inherent virtue.<sup>60</sup> De Certeau similarly observes, "The end reiterates the beginning. From the adult we go back to the saint's childhood, which already bears the signs of the posthumous effigy. Saints are

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<sup>60</sup> According to Bakhtin, this image of man goes back to the Aristotelean concept of entelechy: "Here one must note, first and foremost, the influence of Aristotle on the distinctive methods of the ancient biographers, and in particular his doctrine of entelechy as the ultimate purpose of development that is at the same time its first cause. The Aristotelian identification of ultimate purpose with origin inevitably had a crucial effect on the distinctive nature of biographical time. From here it follows that a character at its most mature is the authentic origin of development. It is here that we get that unique 'inversion in a character's development' that excludes any authentic 'becoming' in character. A man's entire youth is treated as nothing but a preliminary to his maturity. The familiar element of 'movement' is introduced into biography solely as a struggle of opposing impulses, as fits of passion or as an exercise in virtue – in order to invest this virtue with permanence. Such struggles and exercises serve to strengthen qualities of character that already present, but create nothing new. The base remains the stable essence of an already completed character" (140).



individuals who lose nothing of what was initially given to them” (277). In this vision of the subject and society any deviation from or threat to the social order in the life of the hero is simply converted into a trial that reaffirms the hero as exemplary of the inherent virtue of that order.

The eighteenth-century Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes* demonstrate an intensification of the hero’s life as the fulfillment of his vocation, where the subject is not tested as much by internal doubts or moral lapses as he is by the social pressures attendant in the formation of an ideal the Jesuit. In these works there is special emphasis on the life of the Jesuit subject in the colleges, where, in the words of Bakhtin, “A man’s entire youth is treated as nothing but a preliminary to his maturity” (140). Returning to Venegas’ metaphor of the hagiographic subject’s life as a temple, we may say that doors of the life of the Jesuit subject are opened up to the community and the public finds no virtue lacking even in the most intimate details of the subject’s biography. Indeed, there is no hint of the dissolution alluded to in Medina’s biography of Felipe de Jesús or the lapses referred to in Eguiara Eguren’s portrayal of Pedro de Arellano y Sossa. The praeternatural virtue of these subjects is proven and strengthened in their formation as Jesuits, and in turn they seek the missionary frontier and the work of *reducción* as an ultimate test and prize. In this sense, the Novohispanic Jesuit Francisco Vidal’s *Vida exemplar y muerte santa de Miguel Omaña* (1682) is a clear antecedent to the structure and themes of the eighteenth-century *Vidas y virtudes*. Vidal’s work is preceded by a dedication to the youth of Mexico and portrays the life of Miguel de Omaña, a model student at the Jesuit college of San Gregorio who died at the age of 18 and was accepted as a novitiate on his deathbed. Vidal, who declares in his dedication “No dudo que la juventud es la edad más aresgada a la perdición,” includes a cautionary tale about a less pious student whose intellectual and material endowments

were untempered by humility and who was unprepared to face an early death (8v). Omaña likewise meets an untimely death by illness, but his life from an early age is presented as a continuous exercise in the ascetic discipline that the Jesuits aimed to inculcate in their students alongside, and often in direct conflict with their intellectual gifts and aspirations.

As a young child, Omaña accompanied his uncle to New Spain from Cadiz and was educated by the Jesuits with whom, according to Vidal, he became a devotee of Saint Ignatius, aspiring to some day imitate the virtues of the founder (38v). Although he had yet to be admitted as a novitiate, Omaña rigorously observed vows of chastity, poverty and obedience, with special attention paid to the first of these in Vidal's text. In what would become a recurring theme in the Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes* (to be treated in greater detail below), Omaña obsessively avoided the company of women lest his purity come in to question. As described by Vidal, Omaña was so extreme in his observance of chastity that he refused to look upon women, and on his deathbed the Fathers had to resort to dressing his female nurses in the habit of the Society, a subterfuge that he was unable to detect through the delirium of his illness (40v-42v).

Another topic in Vidal's work that is repeated in the eighteenth-century *Vidas y virtudes* is the conflict between the subject's vocation as a Jesuit missionary and the opposition of his parents or the misfortune of ill health. In accordance with Jesuit practice, Omaña was obliged to travel to Cadiz to personally seek the consent of his parents in order to enter the Society as a novitiate, and Vidal represents his subject as confronting this obstacle to his vocation with patience, humility, obedience and perseverance. Though he identifies with his adopted home of New Spain and aspires to exercise his vocation on the Spanish-American mission frontier, Omaña resigns himself to enter the order in Spain where his parents wish to have him nearby (57r). Omaña's admission into the order and early death prior to his departure to the metropole is

seen as an act of providence that enabled the young man to realize his vocation in New Spain despite external social pressures.

Although Omaña's life was cut short before he could fulfill his desire for the mission frontier, Vidal's *Vida exemplar* reflects the first part of the trajectory of the ideal missionary in the eighteenth-century Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes*. There is a new emphasis on the early formation of the subject within the family and subsequently within the Jesuit college system, with the apostolic vocation portrayed as the culmination the Jesuit ascetic ideal tested and refined within an educational apparatus. At each stage the Jesuit is defined in relation to his role in the Jesuit educational system: first as a student at the Jesuit colleges, then as teacher of grammar or theology in the same system, and finally as the agent of *reducción* on the colonial frontier where the Amerindian is subjected to a spiritual and temporal catechesis. At each step of this evolution the subject is tested by increasingly demanding contretemps and hardships, and at each stage the student, teacher and apostle passes as an ideal model of conduct. This emphasis on the education of the future missionary is indicative of what de Certeau sees as a transition from religious piety to social morality in the eighteenth century, whereby religious education is increasingly subordinated to the state and viewed as a campaign to extirpate ignorance and inculcate national cohesion (*History* 173).

The eighteenth-century *Vidas y virtudes* vividly represent the internal conflict of the model Jesuit novitiate who is torn between his desire to excel as a student, teacher or scholar and his rejection of worldly recognition for accomplishments that are to be pursued solely *ad majiorem Dei gloriam*. In this regard, Venegas' portrayal of Juan Baptista Zappa is a paradigmatic case of the young Jesuit subject who is constantly on guard to keep his talents in

check with exemplary displays of humility. Zappa manages to hide his considerable intellectual gifts to such extent that,

[...] su mismo maestro en más de cuatro meses que lo había tratado, estaba perplejo, sin atreverse a calificarlo ni por el mejor entre sus discípulos, al verlo poco lúcido; ni por el menos aprovechado, capaz, y talentoso, porque en algunas explicaciones muy difíciles de poetas, lo experimentaba sumamente capaz y desembarazado; Y así dudaba si aquello provenía de superior virtud, que le obligaba a esconder su talento, por no perderlo envanecido; o si sería aquel su natural talento, contenido en los límites de mediano. (14v)

In a variation on this theme, the Jesuit native of Querétaro, Francisco Xavier de Solchaga, was said to have struggled as a student until divinely guided through his studies by Saint Thomas Aquinas in order to complete his education as a member of the Society, later becoming a respected professor and devotee of the Theologian (Paredes, *Carta edificante* 6-7). In the case of Solchaga it is not innate talent that leads to the exercise of virtue through an attendant subordination to authority, but rather virtue which leads to superior understanding; in both cases, however, intellectual pursuits are instrumental in relation to the pursuit of a moral order emphasizing obedience and reverence for tradition.

These works are, of course, as much panegyrics of the Society of Jesus and its educational mission as they are of the subjects themselves. In his work on the life of the Jesuit missionary Juan de Ugarte, Juan José de Villavicencio declares, “¡O dichosa Compañía, que mantienes en tan prodigioso equilibrio las letras con las virtudes, y consigues el tener a tus hijos en el profundo de la humildad, estando en el auge mayor de los aplausos!” (26). These hagiographers aimed to justify the wisdom of a Jesuit educational system designed to discover and promote the most qualified students while avoiding the mortal danger of vanity. The *Vidas* y

*virtudes* thus provide insight into the life of students and teachers within the Jesuit colleges, where ambition and competition for recognition combined with the intellectual gifts sought by the Society required models of obedience and humility in order to maintain cohesion and direct the work of its members to its goals for the order and in society at large. Nevertheless, these virtues could only be truly tested outside of the colleges and the urban centers where the Jesuit subject's ideal conduct encountered trials and temptations that would affirm his exemplarity in the absence of institutional support.

## **2.2 Typology and Performative on the Mission Frontier**

The virtue of the exemplary Jesuit could not be truly put to the test nor would it move the reader if only contained within the confines of the college and the city. The character of the ascetic, and the inherent value of his community, could only really shine forth if it could sustain itself in the absence of his peers' controlling gaze and without the comforts of urban life. The Jesuit subject of the *Vida y virtudes* is accessible to the layman through his dedication to education, yet it is through *reducción* on the colonial frontier that he proves his superlative virtue. The ideal Jesuit apostol is portrayed as fervently desiring the mission frontier and the work of *reducción*, willingly renouncing the life of the colleges for the tribulations suffered among "bárbaros." Bartolomé Braun informs us that despite Francisco Glandorff's "copiosas noticias de literatura" he obsessively longed to imitate the apostles of the primitive Church on the Spanish-American missionary frontier:

Sin duda ya desde entonces le daba Dios a entender suficientemente, que lo havia escogido para Apostol, no como quiera, sino en aquel modo de exercicio, que practicaron los Apostoles Santos en la primitiva Iglesia: Con este caracter tan particular

caminaba gustoso, y en medio de su gran regocijo, apenas se le oía hablar en todo el camino otra cosa, que el preguntar repetidas ocasiones: Donde avia Barbaros? Donde estaban los Gentiles? Donde aquellos, que martyrizaban a los Padres? (4-5)

In a passage that reveals another of the motivations of these hagiographies, Braun also asserts that Glandorff could not tolerate the reputation of missionary work as an honorable exile:

Si acaso llegaba a sus inocentes oídos aquel vulgar rumor, que tal vez suele oírse, y es: que las Misiones son un honrado destierro, y semejantes proposiciones laicas: entonces santamente enardecido, vigorosamente las reprochaba, al modo que pudiera proposiciones heréticas, o blasfemias escandalosas. (6)

Glandorff's indignation indicates that missionary work was not as fervently desired or pursued as the *Vidas y virtudes* portray, and that Jesuit missionary hagiography functioned as internal propaganda to inspire novitiates and to justify their work in Spanish America to skeptics outside the order.<sup>61</sup>

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<sup>61</sup> In the *Noticias secretas de América*, Jorge Juan and Antonio de Ulloa touch on this matter in their examination of the religious orders in the province of Quito. According to the two authors sent to the Americas to inform the Spanish monarch on the state of its colonial possessions, of every twenty religious sent to work on the mission frontier only one or two ever worked in the project of *reducción* (358-59). The principal reason given for this trend was that the European members sent to the Americas were much more useful to the orders in fulfilling urban ministries and administrative posts, which were more profitable. Not even the Society of Jesus, which is otherwise praised by Juan and Ulloa for the success of its missions, was innocent of this charge: if the Jesuits sent more missionaries than other orders to work on the frontier this was only because they brought far more over from Europe to begin with. According to Juan and Ulloa, this was one of the primary reasons for the lack of success in expanding the Spanish-American colonial frontier. The authors further explain that this was actually a bitter experience for many religious who had sincerely aspired to work on the mission frontier only to discover that they would be destined to less glorious tasks in the colonial centers. The authors describe a particular case they witnessed in Quito in 1744 upon the arrival of a group of Jesuits from Spain: "Estos iban persuadidos a que luego que llegasen, los destinarían a los países de infieles para emplearse en predicar el evangelio, y como viesan ue no se promovía este asunto, después de haber pasado algunos meses, todos empezaron a mostrarse descontentos, llegando a tanto su disgusto, que si hubieran tenido arbitrios para volverse a España, muy raro sería el que hubiese querido continuar allí. Ellos decían, que para permanecer en los colegios, les era más agradable y ventajoso el hacerlo en España. Con esta inquietud, y poco sosiego estaban aquellos misioneros conociendo quan distantes se hallaban de obtener el fin que se habían propuesto, cuando se determinaron a pasar a las Indias; y la misma tienen todos hasta que con el tiempo se van acostumbrando al país, y perdiendo el primer fervor de convertir infieles" (360-61). Juan and Ulloa's observations demonstrate the success of Jesuit hagiographic literature and corporate discipline in inculcating an identity based on missionary work; on the other hand, this episode also demonstrates the difficulties of maintaining cohesion within an international order.

In addition to their use as a tool for promoting cohesion and a sense of purpose within the Society of Jesus, the *Vidas y virtudes* were also important to the moral order of the Novohispanic elite by reproducing the concept of the mission frontier as a space that tested and reaffirmed the virtues and providential justification of viceregal society. These works portray the Jesuit subject as performing a millenary tradition of Christian asceticism and as fulfilling the destiny of colonial New Spain within a sanctified order prefigured in holy writings. The experience of the missionary in the trajectory from Jesuit college to mission frontier implies a reading, or hermeneutic, of previous models of a sacred tradition that gives meaning to the life of the individual and to the community. The authors of the *Vidas y virtudes* specifically employ a typological reading, which sees in an earlier text or event the key to understanding the unfolding of contemporary history according to a providential will inaccessible to the knowledge of mortals. In typology a previous “type” prefigures an “antitype” that unlocks the meaning of its antecedent, or as simply stated by Northrop Frye, typology assumes “that there is some meaning or point to history, and that sooner or later some event or events will occur which will indicate what that meaning or point is, and so become the antitype of what has happened previously” (81). This typological hermeneutic is fundamental to the relationship between the Old and New Testaments in Christian theology and is first employed in Paul’s Epistle to the Romans, where Adam is said to be the figure, or type, of the antitype Christ (Rom 5:14). The patristic tradition transformed this hermeneutic into a “theology of history” that Augustine used to read the history of mankind as a providential battle between Jerusalem and Babylon, or between the City of God and the Earthly City.<sup>62</sup> Jesuit hagiography was thus a two-sided act of interpretation: it first

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<sup>62</sup> In the sixteenth century the conflict between the Spanish and Ottoman Empires was seen as the antitype announced in an Old Testament type, a war that would end with the victory of Spain and the establishment a universal Christian kingdom. This reading of the Spanish Empire’s role in the history of Christianity as prefigured in

looked for the exemplary elements in the life of the ideal subject while at the same time demonstrating how these were prefigured by another sacred text or model subject. If the missionary is compelled to light out for the wilderness to preach the Gospel this act is the reflection and fulfillment of a prior model sought out as prophecy.

The *Vida y virtudes* draw from this typological tradition in portraying the history of their missions as a providential struggle between armies of good and evil in which the Jesuit missionary carries the banner of Christ onto the colonial frontier. David Brading points out that the St. Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* likewise drew from the medieval typological tradition in suggesting that the exercitant picture the world as a battlefield divided under the standards of Christ and Lucifer (Loyola 43). Although Brading argues that the Jesuits abandoned this typological hermeneutic for a more allegorical reading of history during the seventeenth century, Jesuit hagiography nevertheless continued to employ typology into the eighteenth century, particularly as a means of connecting the individual lives of the Society's missionaries to an ascetic-apostolic tradition of the Church (32). In the description of the Jesuit *reducción* of Lower California as the fulfillment of biblical prophecy, Miguel Venegas' *Empresas apostólicas* clearly employs a typological reading:

En la conquista de las Californias, por tantos años deseado de muchos Conquistadores emprendida, de grandes Varones Apostólicos procurada, y nunca conseguida en dilatado espacio de ciento y ochenta años; parece se vino a cumplir una parte de aquella insigne profecía conque dio fin al libro de sus vaticinios el Profeta Isaías. Allí, hablando en persona de Dios al fin del último capítulo dize assi: *Ponam in eis signum et mittam ex eis qui salvati fuerint as Gentis, in mare, in Africam, et Lydiam, tendentes sagittas: in*

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Scripture was prodigiously applied to the early-modern historiography of the "New World" (Brading 41; Cañizares-Esguerra 30).



*Italiam et Greciam; ad insulas longe; ad eos. qui non audierunt de me, et non viderunt gloriam meam: et annuntiabunt gloriam meam Gentibus.* (cap. 66. v. 19) Esta profecía, como explica el P. Cornelio, se cumplió en la venida del Hijo de Dios al mundo: el qual embió a sus Apostoles, y Discipulos escogidos por toda la redondez de la tierra, a predicar el Santo Evangelio: *Euntes in mundum universum, predicate Evangelium omni creature.* (Marc. 16. 15) Pero después acá se ha ido cumpliendo en todos los Varones Apostolicos, que, inflamados del zelo de la mayor gloria de Dios, y salvación de las almas han llevado la luz de la fé a las naciones barbaras, que habitan en las más remotas partes del mundo. (53)<sup>63</sup>

Not only does this passage link the Jesuit apostolate in Lower California to a divine will prefigured in the both the Old and New Testaments, but it also reads Scripture as foretelling the nature of the peoples among whom the Jesuits would preach the Gospel on the Spanish-American colonial frontier: nomadic hunter-gathers, or those who “wield the arrow” (“tendentes sagittas”). The expansion of the Spanish empire in the Americas, and particularly the *reducción* of “naciones bárbaras” on the mission frontier is thus presented as the fulfillment of divine revelation. Just as the Jesuit apostolate on the Novohispanic mission frontier is presented as the antitype of a scriptural type, so too is the ascetic trial of the individual missionary in the project of *reducción*. In Villavicencio’s work on the life and ministry of Juan de Ugarte, the Jesuit’s experience on the mission frontier as an exercise of self-abnegation is foretold in Paul’s Second

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<sup>63</sup> The passage from Isaiah reads as follows: “I come that I may gather them together with all nations and tongues: and they shall come and see my glory. And I will set a sign among them, and I will send of them that shall be saved, to the Gentiles into the sea, into Africa, and Lydia them that draw the bow: into Italy, and Greece, to the islands afar off, to them that have not heard of me, and have not seen my glory” (Isa. 66:18-19). The passage from the Gospel of Mark reads: “Go out unto the whole world and preach the Gospel to all” (Mark 15:16).

Epistle to Corinthians, where the first Christian apostle tells of the perils, hunger and solitude endured in preaching the Gospel (127).<sup>64</sup>

As Daniel Reff has pointed out, Jesuit missionary biographies referenced medieval Christian hagiography in reaffirming the providential justification for the missionary enterprise and also in depicting the death and disease that was endemic in the missions of the northern frontier of New Spain (207). The apostolic frontier as a topos of traditional hagiography functioned as the ground for the formation of an ascetic subjectivity that exercised its will by subjection not only to the rigors of the missionary enterprise but also to the textual models of conduct defined by this tradition. Eighteenth-century Jesuit hagiography in New Spain repeats some of the most well-worn topics of Christian asceticism, beginning with Athanasius' *Life of Antony*. In his *Vida y virtudes del Venerable Padre Juan Baptista Zappa*, Miguel Venegas describes an episode in which Zappa supposedly confronted three demons in the town of Sultepec that appeared to the Jesuit in the form of disfigured black children and disappeared in a cloud of smoke, an immediately recognizable reference to the well-known passage in the *Life of Antony* in which the prototypical desert Christian is confronted by the devil in the form of a black child with "an appearance matching his mind" (Venegas, *Vida* 112r-v; Athanasius, 139). The following scene from Juan José de Villavicencio's *Vida y virtudes de el Venerable, y Apostólico Padre Juan de Ugarte* adds a heavy dose of pathos to the parting of the cape episode in Sulpicius Severus' *Life of Saint Martin*, perhaps the most well-known Christian hagiography after Athanasius' *Life of Antony*:

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<sup>64</sup> In his *Vida* of the Francis Xavier, a model for all subsequent Jesuit missionary hagiography, Juan Eusebio Nieremberg likewise cites "aquella relación de penalidades que san Pablo escribió a los Corintios" as a prefiguration of the Jesuit proto-martyr's life and ministry (18). Paul's Epistle reads as follows: "In Journeying often, in perils of waters, in perils of robbers, in perils from my own nation, in perils from the Gentiles, in perils in the city, in perils in the wilderness, in perils in the sea, in perils from false brethren. In labour and painfulness, in much wanderings, in hunger and thirst, in fastings often, in cold and nakedness. Besides those things which are without: my daily instance, the solicitude for all the churches. Who is weak, and I am not weak? Who is scandalized, and I am not on fire? If I must need glory, I will glory of the things that concern my infirmity" (2 Cor. 26-30).

Hasta la camisa parecía que la tenía prestada, y que cada enfermo como acreedor se la cobraba. Un Padre, que fue su testigo, afirma haber visto a los Indios enfermos cubiertos con la camisa del Padre. La única cosa que se podía llamar de su uso era la sotana. Si esta la dio alguna vez, no se sabe; pero si consta, que llegó a dar parte de ella. Estaba por contingencia un oficial del Presidio en la Iglesia, en ocasión que entró en ella el Venerable Padre, y viendo, que un párvulo, que habían traído para enterrar estaba desnudo totalmente, no reparando que había testigo, se retiró a un rincón, y cortando un buen pedazo de la sotana, cubrió con el a el párbulo, y lo puso con alguna decencia para sepultarlo. (Villavicencio 171; Severus 5)

This scene not only repeats Saint Martin's selfless gesture at the gates of Amiens, tearing his cape in two and offering it to a shelterless man in danger of freezing to death, it also highlights the failure of *reducción* through lack of resources and disease; tragically, the death of a small child with no clothes on his back provides the occasion for the Father's performance of the Christian tradition of apostolic and ascetic virtue.

The authors of Jesuit *vidas y virtudes* not only drew their typological readings from the patristic tradition but also from the immense body of hagiographic works that the Society of Jesus produced on the lives of its own illustrious members during the seventeenth century. To commemorate the centennial of his order, the Jesuit polymath Juan Eusebio Nieremberg compiled a four-volume compendium of the Company's missionary hagiographies (1643-47) whose title, *Varones ilustres de la Compañía de Jesús*, is a direct reference to Saint Jerome's history of the early Christian saints. Nieremberg's work reflected the apostolic emphasis of the order as well as its use of hagiography as both propaganda and edifying example. These eulogies of "claros varones" not only provided ideal models for Jesuits in the execution of their duties but

also to hagiographers as they penned subsequent *Edifying Letters* or *Vidas y virtudes*. In his work on Juan Bautista Zappa, Venegas cites Nieremberg's *Vida* of Diego de Saura as a model for his own text, a reference that only becomes clear when the parallels of both lives are revealed at the end of Venegas' work: both subjects were held back from missionary work due to chronic illness and they both died by poisoning at the hands of angry shamans when they finally realized their dream of apostolic work among the infidels (Venegas 2r). In this example we see how Jesuit hagiography provided situations and models of conduct that became familiar through repetition and reaffirmed the vocation and values of the order's members. The ascetic ideal reflected in the Jesuit *vidas y virtudes* is thus a link in a chain connecting the exemplary missionary's life to early models of ideal Jesuit subjectivity, which are in turn modeled after the early apostles whose lives are an iteration of the paradigm for every Christian ascetic holy man, Christ himself. A similar chain of types and antitypes is presented by Vicencio, who declares that Juan de Ugarte embodied the example of St. John who in turn was prefigured by the Old-Testament prophecy of Isaiah:

Aquí verdaderamente dio todo el lleno de perfección a su nombre, y manifestó que con razón se llamaba Juan; pues como otro Precursor en el desierto andaba el Padre Ugarte en aquellas soledades de Californias, hecho voz, que sin cesar clamaba, para que abriesen y preparasen al Señor el camino los corazones de los gentiles, para que entrase su Magestad a hermosear, y adornar sus almas con gracia santísima. Enderezadas ya estas sendas, hizo ver, aun materialmente cumplido, lo que vaticinó Isaías, y predicaba el sagrado Precursor, que había de florecer en los valles la abundancia que habían de humillarse en los montes, y convertirse en caminos llanos las asperezas. (81)

Thus, Jesuit missionary hagiography presents its heroes' lives through a reading of previous hagiography eventually leading back to the lives of Christ and the first Apostles and even the prefiguration of the New Testament in the Book of Isaiah.

The most important example of the Jesuit apostolate was the life of Francis Xavier, the order's proto-martyr and one of its first canonized saints alongside Ignatius of Loyola in 1622. In his *Carta sobre la apostólica vida, virtudes, y santa muerte del P. Francisco Hermano Glandorff* (1764), Bartolomé Braun notes his subject's fervent desire to follow in the footsteps of Francisco Xavier and quotes a Jesuit visitor to Glandorff's mission among the Tarahumaras, "Yo no deseo conocer al Apostol San Francisco Xavier, habiendo tratado al P. Glandorff" (26). Just as in Venegas' *vida* of Zappa, Glandorff is portrayed as consummating the parallel to a previous missionary narrative in his death, which mirrors the Jesuit proto-martyr's last days of illness and solitude on an island in the South China Sea. It is in his exemplary death, highlighted in all of the *vidas y virtudes*, that the missionary achieves his ultimate feat of asceticism, not only through indifference to pain but also through submission to the narrative structure. As in the cases of Glandorff and Zappa, the ascetic subject's death makes his life legible through a typological reading of Scripture, the patristic tradition and previous missionary narratives. The missionary's life is closed off by death and interpretation (or iteration), marking the rupture between the synchronic narrative of the *vida* and the diachronic gloss of his *virtues*, in which his life is reduced to a reaffirmation of the community's ascetic ideal.

In Francisco López *Carta de edificación* (1758) on the life of Joseph María de Genovese we see this frontier asceticism performed through the supplement of self-mortification even in the absence of the mission frontier. The *Vidas y virtudes* often present the Jesuit subject as torn between his desire to prove himself on the most remote and dangerous missions of the colonial

periphery and his obligation to follow the orders of superiors and comply with any task that was assigned to him, even it meant remaining confined to an urban Jesuit college. Due to his fragile health, Genovese was transferred from the missions to a school in the capital and, according to López, was forced to vent his desire for the frontier in violent acts of penance, “no había cosa que pudiera satisfacer el volcan insaciable de su pecho [...] anhelaba por más, y mucho más; y es el caso, que aunque el Padre derramaba mucha sangre con sus rigurosas, continuas penitencias, deseaba derramarla toda de golpe a manos de los bárbaros por la Fe de Jesús Cristo” (11). The case of Genovese demonstrates that the mission frontier as a ground for the exercise of the ascetic ideal was mobile and capable of being performed anywhere, even on the body of the penitent in the colonial center. The mere idea of the mission frontier was enough to inspire the strict application of an ascetic ideal.

In the theology of history implicit in the *Vida y virtudes*' typological hermeneutic, the mission frontier exists outside of time as a space preordained by providence where the missionary confirms the legitimacy of the order he represents by reflecting a model sought out in sacred texts. Erich Auerbach describes the typological representation of history in terms of a vertical relation to a providential will as opposed to the horizontal, temporal succession of causality:

[...] a connection is established between two events which are linked neither temporally nor causally – a connection which it is impossible to establish by reason in the horizontal dimension (if I may be permitted to use this term for a temporal extension). It can be established only if both occurrences are vertically linked to Divine Providence, which is alone able to devise such a plan of history and supply the key to its understanding. The horizontal, that is the temporal and causal, connection of occurrences is dissolved; the

here and now is no longer a mere link in an earthly chain of events, it is simultaneously something which has always been, and which will be fulfilled in the future; and strictly, in the eyes of God, it is something eternal, something omni-temporal, something already consummated in the realm of fragmentary earthly event. (74)

The hagiographer thus presents the life of the holy man as a hierophantic repetition of a universal order. In this sense, the life of the subject of the Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes* rotates about the vertical axis connecting human history with divine providence. This typological reading legitimizes the vocation of the missionary, the category of the frontier and the institutions of *reducción* through a circular logic. In establishing the means to reproduce a tradition preserved in canonical texts this interpretation reaffirms the authority of that tradition through repetition. In this sense, the chain of types and anti-types reproduced in *reducción* and Jesuit textual production are a performance of the mission frontier which produces the reality it names.

As a performative, the reproduction of the concept of the mission frontier is what John Searle calls a “status-function,” or an utterance that realizes the social order that it names. For Searle, every community operates within a “collective intentionality” that produces and perpetuates an institutional reality through performative utterances.<sup>65</sup> Institutional facts, or *factum*, consist of functions that are assigned to nature beyond its givenness, or *datum*, and to relations of power established through institutions (*Construction* 41). Whether defined as a wilderness traversed by apostles in the eighteenth century or as a border between imagined communities in the twenty-first century, the concept of “frontier” is perhaps the best example of the application of an institutional reality to nature and human communities. The “frontier” is not only an arbitrary toponym imposed on a given geographical space but also implies a complex

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<sup>65</sup> Searle understands “intentionality” as “the general term for all the various forms by which the mind can be directed at, or be about, or of, objects and states of the world” (*Mind* 85).

network of institutions and practices, such as the Jesuit colleges, the process of *reducción* and the publication of the *Vida y virtudes*, that rule over the lives of those who live on the “outside” or the “inside.” But this performative is not limited to sustaining the Jesuit’s own institutions, for it also legitimizes the expansionist policies of the colony, the racial and social categories on which the colonial hegemony rests, and the moral order which defines how each member of the society is to fulfill his or her vocation in both the social and economic spheres.

Both the missionary who journeys to the frontier and the hagiographer who chronicles his life in the colonial center are thus mutually sustaining mechanisms within the invention and iteration of the “missionary frontier.” The *Vidas y virtudes* act as performative utterances that tautologically impose and sustain an institutional reality through the repetition of a common model of conduct. Through the tradition of the ascetic ideal, the ideal Jesuit apostle can act within the identifiable space of the mission frontier as a field for the exercise of virtue. Thus, this chain of performatives linking apostolic action and hagiographic writing naturalizes the relations of power implied by the concepts of missionary frontier and *reducción* through repetition. Ironically, it is in the absence of civilization (or through its renunciation or failure to take root), or even converts (many died of disease, starvation or violent retribution before they could complete their catechesis), that the practice of *reducción* succeeds through the experience of the missionary in hagiographic writing. The suffering and persecution of the missionary, sometimes including martyrdom, signified the success of the apostolic enterprise as the repetition of the trials of the apostles of the primitive Church, and provided further proof of the hand of providence in the foundation and expansion of colonial society.

Northrop Frye suggests that we can understand typological reason beyond its application as a historiographic and hermeneutic practice. According Frye, the relationship between text and



reader can be understood as one of type and antitype: “[...] we may perhaps say that every text is the type of its own reading. Its antitype starts in the reader’s mind, where it is not a simple reception but the unfolding of a long and complex dialectical process, the winding of the end of a string into a ball, in Blake’s figure” (226). Hagiography, as both a process of narrating a life and as a process of reading that life as exemplary or revelatory, gathers up the unwound string of history and binds it into a compact unity that leads to, as in the poem by William Blake cited by Frye, the gate “built in Jerusalem’s wall” (Blake 302). The typological hermeneutic not only reveals the meaning of the hagiographic subject’s life but also reaffirms the values of the community to which the text is presented as a pedagogical instrument. The ascetic’s life as narrative thread leads to the gate of an ideal community legitimated through the reproduction of categories such as *bárbaro*, *reducción* and *frontera*.

Juan Antonio Oviedo’s *El apóstol mariano representado en la vida del Venerable Padre Juan María de Salvatierra* (1754) relates an anecdote that reflects the ideal reading experience of this genre as a pedagogical instrument.<sup>66</sup> As a student at the Jesuit college in Parma, where he studied secular letters in preparation for a life as a nobleman and military officer, Salvatierra was touched by providence:

Hallabase bien ocupado en estos ejercicios en el Seminario de Parma, quando quiso Dios que lo tenía destinado a superiores empresas dispuso con admirable providencia, que leyese un libro que trataba de los apostólicos trabajos de los Misioneros, que en las Indias se ocupaban en la conversión de los Infieles. Con esta lección se fervorizó en gran manera, conociendo quanto excedían en valor, y precio estas espirituales Conquistas a todas las que pudiera emprender en la Milicia Terrena, y servicio de los Reyes, y

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<sup>66</sup> Oviedo’s text is a compendium of an early manuscript by Miguel Venegas, whose work was praised for its style and erudition but was deemed too extensive to be published without considerable cost to the Society.

Principes mundanos. Y comenzó a sentir vehementes impulsos de abandonar todas las esperanzas de valer en el mundo, y emplearse en el mejor modo que pudiera en la conversión de la gentilidad. (8-9)

In this representation of the ascetic subject reading hagiography there is a moment of recognition, or *anagnorisis*, that brings the reader of the *vida* into the text.<sup>67</sup> In his analysis of Augustine's *Confessions*, Galt-Harpham recognizes this becoming, or subjection to, the text, whereby the ascetic subject as reader recognizes that he or she was always already imitating the text (97). The portrayal of an ideal reception of the text (the reader reading correctly, i.e. discovering his vocation in the text as already prefigured), creates a double-mirror effect in which the reader reading reflects the life of the ascetic subject. Thus, the narrative's meaning is revealed through the reader's submission to the text, linking him or her to the typological axis of ascetic subjectivity. Thus, a chain of readings connects the ascetic subject, hagiographer, text, and reader wherein each link represents a subordination to narrative, or an imitation, repetition and reaffirmation of the community's values embodied in the ascetic hero.

As Gavin Flood argues, ascetic practices and their representations are performances of a tradition whereby the subject is linked to a community through the discipline of the body and the production of language (15). The Christian ascetic tradition in particular, argues Flood, depends on an "entextualization of the body" wherein the ascetic subject's life is absorbed into collective memory through the production of texts and thus becomes a model for future performances of this tradition (166). Galt-Harpham likewise demonstrates that the ascetic ideal preserved in Christian hagiographic writing depends on successive interpretations of sacred writings through imitation, whereby the subject paradoxically exercises his will by submitting to textual models

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<sup>67</sup> Salvatierra's conversion from secular soldier to a soldier of Christ is, of course, a parallel to the life of St. Ignatius.

(42). The Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes* similarly depend on previous models of frontier asceticism which prefigure the subject's experiences and order his life through narrative. In the context of New Spain, we can think of this reproduction of tradition through ascetic practice and discourse within Mikhael Bakhtin's concept of the centripetal force of secondary speech genres (official written discourse) which act to resist the dispersion of heteroglossia and determine what can legitimately be said, thought and enacted (*Dialogic* 272-73). Jesuit hagiography exercised this ideological control in two ways: first, it provided models of ideal conduct that symbolized and justified the colonial order; and secondly, it reproduced what was considered authoritative knowledge about the indigenous cultures encountered in *reducción*. By portraying ascetic heroes that were shaped in Europe or the colonial center and then tested on the missionary frontier, these texts linked *reducción* on the colonial periphery to the ascetic ideal promoted in the pedagogical apparatus of the urban center, principally the Jesuit colleges and popular ministries. These texts reproduce the missionary frontier as the encounter with the savage, diabolic and perverse as a ground for the continued performance of self-discipline and discipline of the colonial other.

### **2.3 “Let us possess the desert with the mind”**

In his categorization of sacred literature produced in New Spain, Antonio Rubial García notes the wide dissemination of religious chronicles and hagiography not only in literate society but also through sermons, confessions and meetings of the confraternities that attempted to create a sense of collective identity across racial and linguistic boundaries (“Crónica” 363). A closer reading of this sacred literature reveals that hagiography was directly connected to the examinations of conscience and spiritual exercises, such as the Jesuit Gerónimo de Dutari's *Vida*

*christiana, o práctica fácil para entablarla*, which were disseminated among all spheres of viceregal society. Dutari's work is a pocket sized spiritual guide containing a series of dialogues and contemplations meant to instruct and encourage the commoner, child and catechumen in carrying out his or her Christian duties. Dutari was explicit about the intended public of his work:

Nada ofrezco, que no sea vulgar, y acomodado a la mente, y necesidad del Vulgo; y no tengo mas, que advertir: porque los de alguna experiencia, y letras, no dexarán de advertir, por si mismos, que después de movidas las Almas a servir a Dios, necesitan de algún índice pequeño, que les muestre el camino, por el comun hastío, o pereza a mayores volumenes. Que se hallan pocos de estos libros pequeños, en los quales se vea ceñida la práctica, o norma de una vida Christiana; que los breves dialogos o preguntas de este (sobre los puntos más importantes) pueden servir para el uso de los niños especialmente en las misiones, y acaso por mayor gusto, claridad, y provecho de los grandes. Que se repiten, e incultan muchas cosas, según el consejo del Apóstol, (Ad Philip. Cap. 3 v. 1), y se incertan otras, sin orden porque no se busca en las miesses el adorno, y orden, que en las flores. (2-3)

That Dutari's work went through at least eleven editions in New Spain throughout the eighteenth century, including five after the expulsion of his order from the viceroyalty in 1768, indicates the importance assigned to sacred literature in inculcating the traditional values that seemed, at least to an ecclesiastic elite charged with regulating cultural production, to be under threat from secular and popular culture.

In a mock "trial of the books," Dutari explains the importance of reading this sacred literature and shunning the profane entertainment of novels and dramas:

Pregunta: ¿Qué otro pasto podré ser a las almas de gran fruto?

Respuesta: El leer, o hazer leer cada día algún libro devoto.

Pregunta: ¿Podré servir para la familia un libro de estos?

Respuesta: Será como un maestro, y predicador santo, y continuo.

Pregunta: ¿Y otros libros de novelas, o comedias?

Respuesta: Son la peste, son la peste y veneno de las almas. (Dutari 84)

The Chilean bibliographer José Toribio Medina's multivolume works on print culture in New Spain (*La imprenta en México, 1539-1821* and *La imprenta en Puebla, 1640-1821*) demonstrate that the overwhelming majority of works coming off the press during the eighteenth century were sacred and didactic in nature, including sermons, panegyrics, confessional manuals, *artes* and *doctrinas* intended for catechesis in Amerindian languages, hagiographies, and spiritual guides such as Dutari's. While these indexes of printed works do not nearly include all literary production in New Spain (many works written in the viceroyalty were printed in the metropole or remained in manuscript form), the considerable resources required for printing and the strict control of the Holy Office meant that the texts that did make it to press were carefully selected to reflect a priestly ascetic ideal. As Irving Leonard argues in his classic study of the transatlantic book market in colonial Spanish America, the books printed in the Americas were not the only ones consumed, nor were royal and ecclesiastic interdictions of profane literature strictly observed. Increasingly, sacred literature, particularly hagiographic works such as the spate of missionary hagiographies, or *Vidas y virtudes*, published by the Jesuits in the decades leading up to their expulsion, was meant to act as a tool of ideological cohesion in a colonial society whose order was threatened by a popular folkloric culture on the one hand and secular anti-clerical works on the other.

By presenting models of ideal Jesuit missionaries to readers within the order as well as to colonial society at large, the *Vida y virtudes* enacted the concept of frontier and the practice of *reducción* not only as a means of economic and political subjection of Amerindian peoples but also as a crucial component of the identity of colonial elites. What these works portrayed as a journey into the wilderness to form new subjects of God and the Crown was also the process through which the missionary demonstrated his superlative ascetic virtues and reaffirmed the structure of the colonial order. Together with other forms of devotional literature and sermons, these works disseminated the example of the Jesuit missionary as a reflection of the ascetic ideal to which all members of colonial society should aspire through the daily exercise of devotion.

Pablo González Casanova has referred to the eighteenth-century crisis in New Spain as a “kulturkampf” between the religious orthodoxy of dominant groups and a popular culture that mixed the sacred and the profane (in works considered either heretical or explicitly diabolic in nature by the Holy Office) as well as banned philosophical texts from Europe (Voltaire, Montesquieu, Rousseau, et al.) (126).<sup>68</sup> Throughout the eighteenth century, satire and enlightened rationalism slowly corroded the values of a Criollo society whose identity was tied to demonstrations of Christian piety, devotion and asceticism. Agustín de Vetancurt’s description of Mexico City in *Teatro mexicano* (1698) is perhaps the most representative expression of this Criollo patriotism based on Christian virtue. Vetancurt describes the Creole inhabitants of the

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<sup>68</sup> González Casanova eloquently describes the centripetal force of an anonymous and diffuse culture slipping through the controls of the Holy Office: “Como autores, los mexicanos produjeron una literatura contraria al mundo antiguo, que tiene todas las gamas de la conciencia. Esta literatura surgía de entre los criados, los clérigos, los médicos, soldados y gente del pueblo. Unas obras eran de los poetas de los gremios, que de años atrás componían los villancicos y loas para que los ‘echaran’ en las ceremonias religiosas o políticas los agremiados, otras eran de los ‘poetas de baratillo,’ de esos que llevaban en una cesta las canciones, para ponerlas a la venta en los mercados, otras más eran de poetas, montistas, o ensayistas, de alguna cultura académica. La Inquisición los perseguía, los asechaba a veces inútilmente, pues, en su mayor parte, los autores tenían conciencia de sus delitos y ocultaban cuidadosamente su nombre y el origen de su obra. Su obra se volvía anónima, se integraba a los placeres del vulgo y del pueblo, y la Inquisición no podía condenar al autor” (130).

city, with particular emphasis on the religious of both genders, as the most devote in the Christian world, an example which helped to instill devotion in the Amerindian population:

Alábase México de la ciudad más devota que tiene la Cristiandad; sólo quien ha visto tanto número de fiestas, ochavarios, procesiones, y culto podría creerlo; y si atendemos a la edificación, y exemplo que ha causado esta devoción a los naturales indios de esta tierra son multiplicadas las fiestas que hacen, cofradías que tienen, y las imágenes sagradas que veneran, pues en cualquier procesión de letanías, y Corpus tardan en pasar dos horas las imagines, y estandartes de indios. (193-94)

The Amerindian confraternities (“cofradías”) that organized these displays of devotion were modeled after the religious orders with their own set of rules and institutions overseen by the spiritual guidance of an ecclesiastic authority. The presence of Amerindian and mestizo inhabitants of Mexico City, on the other hand, also represented a threatening and destabilizing presence in Vetancurt’s description of Mexico as a monastic republic: “Ay millares de negros, mulatos, mestizos, indios, y otras mezclas que las calles llenan, mucho gentío de plebe, y como dice Arias de Villalobos en su *Mercurio*, ‘Tanto de esclavos número moreno/quento de quento y nada bueno’” (191). In this contrast we can glimpse the reciprocal dynamic of *reducción*: the colonizers’ identity is tied to an ideal of ascetic, monastic discipline that in turn needs the presence of an unruly and perverse other-to-be-disciplined both as foil and as a pretext for self-discipline. In this sense, *reducción* on the missionary frontier is a symbolic act of foreclosure, or an ascetic will to power seeking out the object of desire in order to repress it. This foreclosed desire creeps back into the colonial center in the uncanny presence of mestizo or mulato inhabitants, which necessitates a further tightening of the knot in which the colonizer’s ascetic ideal is intensified in order to distance itself from this all too intimate threat.

In his *Vida* dedicated to Francisca de San José (1729), the Jesuit Domingo de Quiroga repeats this already recognizable commonplace in describing the land propitious in virtue where the nun was born:

Esta providencia tan especial, y tan benigna hace el temperamento Mexicano templado, y especialmente benigno. De esta benegñidad del temple participan mucho los Mexicanos genios, por la mayor parte dociles, y suaves, mas inclinados a la paz, que a la guerra; mas que al ruydo de las armas, a la gustosa suavidad de las letras, para que los dotó Dios de ingenios perspicaces, prompts, y claros. Y aun más que a las letras se deja ver en ellos, desde sus tiernos años, por entre los pacíficos movimientos de su genio, aquella inclinación a la virtud, y a todo lo mejor, y más perfecto, que plantó Dios en el corazón humano. (3)

This description of Mexico City as a rival in letters and virtue to any nation of Christendom was nevertheless undermined by the popular, ludic-parodic works filling the archives of the Holy Office during the eighteenth century. The following salacious stanza, from a contemporaneous “Chuchumbé” included in María Águeda Mendez and George Baudot’s collection of banned verses in eighteenth-century New Spain, demonstrates that the priestly class and the Jesuits in particular, were not always associated with the ascetic ideal that they assiduously promoted:

El demonio del jesuita  
con el sombrero tan grande,  
me metía un zurriago  
tan grande como su padre. (38)

Through a play on words, the ascetic discipline of the self and other exercised by the priest (“zurriago” is literally a whip) slips into a debauched and vulgar exercise of power (“zurriago” is



also a slang term for male genitalia). The erotic, parodic and carnivalesque (“El Chuchumbé” was a popular song and dance) threatened the colonial ascetic ideal disseminated by a religious hegemony, and in reaction it produced an ever greater number of spiritual guides and models of conduct throughout the eighteenth century.

Despite his vivid portrait of the “crisis de la colonia,” Gonzalez Casanova focuses exclusively on the negative function of the Inquisition while overlooking the positive models of conduct, such as the Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes*, produced by authors linked to traditional institutions (religious orders or the Holy Office). The Jesuits were the principle contributors to a mid-century “boom” of sacred literature aimed at a wide audience in the Viceroyalty that began towards the end of the seventeenth century and signaled a turn to a more inward and individual spirituality (Rubial García, *Profetisas* 76). These works included missionary chronicles, hagiographies, prayer books, sermons, and manuals for the individual examination of conscience that were produced by a republic of sacred letters connecting the Universities, the Holy Office, Jesuit colleges and the frontier missions. Of course the Jesuits were not the only participants in this literary production, nor did they limit their participation and support to texts by or about the Society’s subjects, despite the often acerbic disputes that unfolded with other orders. In reading the *pareceres* and *aprobaciones* of the sacred literature produced in New Spain during the eighteenth century it is easy to see how this republic of sacred letters was connected and how it worked in concert to promote its ascetic ideology. Contemporary Jesuit authors of *Vidas y virtudes* such as Juan Antonio Oviedo, Juan Antonio Baltasar, Juan Francisco López or Miguel Venegas, appear as authors of these introductory notes of doctrinal and literary imprimatur to

both Jesuit and non-Jesuit works in their capacity as censors of the Holy Office, their position within the Society of Jesus or their reputation as theologians and men of letters.<sup>69</sup>

A closer reading of this sacred literature reveals that hagiography was directly connected to the examinations of conscience and spiritual exercises, such as Dutari's, which explicitly outline methods for inhabiting and emulating the sacred text in the layman's daily affairs. In Francisco Amadeo de Ormea's *Compendio de la vida de nuestro Padre y Patriarca San Phelipe Neri en forma de meditaci3n para el aparejo espiritual de la Fiesta del Santo* (1714), a work originally written in Italian and translated to Spanish for use in New Spain, Saint Phillip of Neri's biography is divided into two weeks of meditations in which the reader is to reflect on episodes of the Saint's life. The meditations are meant to inculcate the virtues of the holy man (obedience, perseverance, humility, faith, rejection of the pursuit of worldly wealth as an end in itself) in the reader without actual reclusion to the monastery or flight to the desert. Citing Saint Ambrose, the text itself is offered as an ascetic exercise for those who must remain in the *seculum*: "teniendo la conversaci3n en las ciudades, poseamos el desierto con la mente" (4r-v). This distribution of the Saint's life along the calendar for the purpose of meditation and examination of conscience is likewise detailed in the *Practica utilissima de los diez viernes a honor de S. Ignacio de Loyola, Patriarcha de la Compañia de Jes3s* (1749), a work originally written in Italian by Juan Santiago de Leti and translated to Spanish by the Criollo Jesuit Juan Francisco Lopez, a member of the Inquisition and a prolific author of *Vidas y virtudes* of the Society's Province of New Spain. Based on the techniques of the *Spiritual Exercises*, the

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<sup>69</sup> The degree to which these *pareceres* became a genre unto themselves (in addition to their paratextual function) is evidenced in Venegas' *aprobaci3n* to the Agustinian Friar Juan Chrysostomo Mart3nez' panegyric sermon published in 1743. Venegas employs a overwrought conceit comparing the author of the sermon to an architect: "Y aviendo observado con diligencia toda su bien trazada proporci3n, y cimetria, me pareci3 que en la fabrica de este Panegyrico se ha portado su Autor como Art3fice perfecto, y como inteligente Lapidario. Porque por una parte toda esta obra est3 arreglada a las medidas que puede contribuirle a una fabrica el m3s eminente Arquitecto: y por otra tiene todo aquel adorno, que puede aņadirle por fuera con todo genero de piedras preciosas el mas inteligente Lapidario" (11r). Revealingly, Juan Antonio Oviedo also contributed a *parecer* to the same work.

readings from the life of Saint Ignatius are divided among 65 days (the ten Fridays of the title) leading up to the founder's feast. The logic of this structure is based on the life and death of Saint Ignatius, who lived 65 years and died on a Friday. The saint's life, structured by the text, becomes the matrix for the exercitant's own ascetic exercise, which in turn produces a text structuring the will of the reader: after reading each of the 65 chapters the reader is to write down his or her own reflections thus binding his actions to the greater glory of God. As Roland Barthes observes in his analysis of the *Spiritual Exercises*, here the exercitant is contained within a "totalitarian economy" of codes in which the text structures the imagination and conditions the exercise of the will outside of the retreat, whereby the exercitant's life becomes a text molded after the example of the ascetic's life (52).

As they were also models of conduct aimed at structuring the layman's own ascetic practice, these manuals demonstrate the role of hagiography in New Spain beyond its use within the orders as tool for recruiting and inspiring future missionaries. Furthermore, they demonstrate the influence of Ignatius' *Spiritual Exercises* in fomenting an ideal of innerworldly asceticism outside of the monastery or retreat. Although the *Spiritual Exercises* were originally intended to be practiced under the supervision of a director within the confines of a retreat (with certain allowances made for those engaged in important secular business), the manuals for the examination of conscience and ascetic practice written by the Jesuits in New Spain speak directly to the exercitant and encourage him or her, regardless of social station, to incorporate the exercises into the execution of worldly affairs through the constant self-discipline and introspection.<sup>70</sup> These works were written in a more accessible style and were pocket-sized so

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<sup>70</sup> In *Relox despertador de las almas devotas al sentimiento de la passion de los dolores de la SS. Virgen en las Horas consagradas a la memoria de sus Dolores, Angustias, y Aflicciones, para que su devotos la acompañen en ellas* (1688), a devotional guide dedicated to the Virgin Mary, the novohispanic Jesuit Joseph Vidal describes the both the method and target audience of these exercises: "Este modo de Oración mental es, el que enseña N.P. San

that they could be carried on the person of the exercitant as a constant reminder of virtue in the execution of his or her daily affairs.

In his *Soledad christiana* (1752), José María Genovese, a Jesuit who wrote several such manuals in New Spain under the pseudonym Ignacio Thomai, adapted the *Spiritual Exercises* for those who could not participate in retreats. Genevose reduces the *Exercises* to eight days of meditations to be performed at home according to a strict schedule of prayer, meals and sleep, simulating the discipline of the monastery. The purpose of these exercises, as Genovese instructs the reader, is to discover the kind life the exercitant should lead and the “estado de vida,” or vocation, he or she should choose (29). In his *Breve método de la vida espiritual* (1749), another spiritual manual that went through several editions even after the expulsion of the Jesuits from New Spain, Genovese, recommends techniques for the advancement of virtue while remaining in the *seculum*. These include remembering God in all of one’s actions, dedicating the perfection of good works to the glory of God, strictly controlling the senses when one must go out in public, limiting “conversación familiar” lest one’s mind be lead astray by unpious thoughts, and reading “libros espirituales” as guides to perfecting one’s conduct. With regard to this last point, Genovese details how one should read this sacred literature, including hagiographies, “[...] has de leer, no aprisa, y como corriendo con los ojos ni por curiosidad, sino despacio: y de rato en rato, repasando con la mente lo leído, hacer algunos afectos con Dios, y algun propósito, para mejorar la vida y costumbres” (70). This disciplining of the reader’s gaze illustrates de Certeau’s analysis of writing as inscribing a law on the body, both in providing imitable models of conduct binding

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Ignacio en su Exercicios, fácil, seguro y común para todos, sabios, e ignorantes, entendidos y rudos. Porque consiste en usar de las tres potencias naturales en las materias pertenecientes a nuestra salvación, y perfección, a la manera, que usamos dellas en todos los demás negocios humanos. Es a saber de la memoria poniendo delante el negocio de que avemos de tratar, del entendimiento, discurriendo, y razonando acerca dél, en orden a mover la voluntad nuestra, o agena a lo que prentedemos, y de la voluntad, haciendo con ella las determinaciones, y propósitos, y exercitandola en los demás affectos proporcionados con la materia de que se trata” (2-3).

the reader to the community through an ascetic submission to the text but also in literally manipulating and molding the flesh of the subject through self-discipline and disciplinary institutions. In his *Vida christiana*, Dutari provides a vivid example of just how one should submit to the book in avoiding idle pleasures:

Estando oyendo leer la Sagrada Escripura un Santo Hermitaño llamado Eusebio, levantó los ojos por curiosidad a mirar a un campo, y a unos Labradores, que el trabajaban, mas volviendo en si concibió tal dolor de aquella diversión, y culpa tan ligera, que para hazer penitencia, de ella puso ley a sus ojos de que en toda su vida no avian ya de mirar mas aquel campo, ni al Cielo, ni a las estrellas. Ciñóse para esto la cintura con un arco de hierro, y echó al cuello una argolla tan pesada (aferrada también con otro hierro) que le hazia andar encorbado, mirando siempre hacia el suelo. (134-35)

In Dutari's portrayal of ideal submission to the text, the reader is literally bound to the book as a safeguard against temptation. Through reading as an ascetic exercise, the reader becomes a sign himself, or rather, a link in a chain of signs joining text and life.<sup>71</sup>

Demonstrating just how much these spiritual guides, or the practice of reading and writing, were linked to Jesuit hagiography in the Viceroyalty, Genovese himself became the subject of a *Carta de edificación* published in New Spain. The exemplarity of his life was

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<sup>71</sup> De Certeau, a twentieth-century co-religious of Genovese, describes this process as such: "Another dynamics completes the first and interlaces with it, the dynamics that leads living beings to become signs, to find in a discourse the means of transforming themselves into a unit of meaning, into an identity. To finally pass from this opaque and dispersed flesh, from this exorbitant and troubled life, to the limpidness of a *word*, to become a fragment of language, a single name, that can be read and quoted by others: this passion moves the ascetic armed with instruments for mortifying his flesh, or the philosopher who does the same to language, 'recklessly,' as Hegel puts it. But it does not matter who the person is that is moved by this passion, eager to finally have or be a name, to be called, to be transformed into a *saying (dit)*, even at the price of his life. The intextuation of the body corresponds to the incarnation of the law; it supports it, it even seems to establish it, and in any case it serves it. For the law plays on it: 'Give me your body and I will give you meaning. I will make you a name and a word in my discourse.' The two problematics maintain each other, and perhaps the law would have no power if it were not able to support itself on the obscure desire to exchange one's flesh for a glorious body, to be written, even it means dying, and to be transformed into a recognized word. Here again, the only force opposing this passion to be a sign is the cry, a deviation or an ecstasy, a revolt or flight of that which, within the body, escapes the law of the named." ("Scriptural" 172).

illustrated through his ascetic submission to the spiritual guides he authored. In his *Carta de edificación* on Genovese, Juan Francisco López writes that his fellow Jesuit was a living reflection of his writings:

La primera de estas Obras es aquel muchas veces admirable Libro, que intituló: *Método para vivir a Dios sólo*, en el que verdaderamente se pintó, y sacó a sí mismo, tan al vivo, y tan adecuadamente, que se le pudiera poner por título: *Método con que vivió toda su vida el P. Genovese*. Y si los libros son por lo más común las más nobles, y propias efigies de su autor, que grava en ellos su alma con el buril de sus conceptos, quien quisiere reconocer, y admirar la Imagen más viva del P. Genovese quite los ojos de esta carta, y trasládelos a la que el P. formó de sí mismo en sus devotísimos escritos [...] (16).

The Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes* exalted an ascetic ideal first proven in the Jesuit colleges and then put to the test on the missionary frontier. In concert with the proliferation devotional literature, these models of conduct aimed to make a quasi-convent of the colonial center by connecting the process of *reducción* to the discourse of Criollo patriotism through the lives of exemplary subjects.

#### **2.4 Chastity in the City and on the Colonial Frontier**

In their individual struggles to test their apostolic virtues on the mission frontier, these exemplary subjects also reproduced an ideology of self-control that reflected the dynamics of colonial society in the urban center. In the *Vidas y virtudes* the missionary's conduct, and indeed his very body, represents a moral order that is put in a situation of potential dissolution only to reassert itself and claim a triumph for the Christian-Criollo hegemony. The *Vidas y virtudes* portray the life of the missionary as a constant rejection of the flesh, and all of the Jesuit subjects

of these works practiced mortifications, such as the use of cilices, above and beyond the “mortificación continua” that was their life on the mission frontier (Villavicencio 193). As this subject was expected to uphold a moral order in the midst of crisis, both on the frontier and the streets of the colonial center, it was necessary to form extraordinarily virtuous and disciplined subjects to face the temptations, particularly those of the flesh, that threatened to destabilize this order. Thus, the chastity of the missionary takes on heroic dimensions in these works, in which contact with women, especially Amerindian women on the colonial frontier, represents the ultimate trial of the Jesuit ascetic ideal.

Just as the missionary’s ascetic ideal was a paradoxical affirmation of the will, so too the rejection of the flesh was an affirmation of the creaturely, embodied nature of human life, for the special virtue of overcoming this fallen state was something that could only be attained by a corruptible human being. Citing Saint Bernard, the Jesuit hagiographer Juan José de Villavicencio explains that the man of flesh and blood exceeds the angel in virtue “porque lo que éste logra por felicidad de su naturaleza, lo posee aquel a esfuerzos de la virtud, y aunque sea más feliz en su pureza, el hombre en ella hace alarde de fortaleza heroica” (174). Even as children the exemplary subjects of the *Vida y virtudes* exercise a heroic resistance to carnal temptation, above all in their dealings with women. As cited above, the model Jesuit student Miguel Omaña took extreme measures to avoid even the suspicion of temptation, refusing to be attended to by a female nurse on his death bed (42v). Miguel Venegas narrates an early episode in the life of Father Salvatierra that reveals not only the importance of chastity to the Jesuit model of apostolic virtue, but also offers an insight into the psychological makeup of the Jesuit subject and his attitudes towards the opposite sex in adulthood. Venegas writes that at the tender age of seven Salvatierra was punished by his older sister with three days of fasting for the

indiscretion of being seen in the company of a girl of the same age in the street, because “que aunque era niña, al fin era mujer, y que desde su tierna edad se debía precautelar del trato con todo género de mujeres” (5).

This episode from the life of Salvatierra also reveals how the public spaces of the urban center represented the first challenge to the virtue of the Jesuit, which would later be subject to greater trials on the mission frontier. The *Vida y virtudes* detail the curious strategies that the Jesuits developed in order to defend themselves from what are portrayed as the subtle and depraved wiles of the opposite sex. Father Zappa avoided all eye contact with the women that he attended to in both his urban ministry and in the missions: “Con mujeres, dice, ojos bajos, mejor es que se quejen que soy corto en tratar que demasiado: pues entonces pierden estimación” (176v). According to the biography of Father Salvatierra, also written by Venegas, this discipline was constant and implacable:

Después de muerte depusieron muchas personas, que lo trataron, familiarmente, que el P. Juan María jamás vio el rostro a mujer alguna, no sólo cuando se hallaba en el tráfico, y concurso de las Ciudades; pero aun cuando enseñaba, y catequizaba a las Indias en los Pueblos remotos de las Misiones, sino, que como hombre místicamente muerto, no veía a los vivos, aun cuando para su bien hablaba con ellos. Y que era tal su recato, que aun cuando por reverencia le pedían la mano para besársela, la recataba encubriéndola con el manteo, y eso les daba a besar en vez de mano. (266)

Juan José de Villavicencio likewise asserts that Ugarte persistently avoided eye contact with women lest even the suspicion of temptation stain his reputation. Villavicencio relates a particular episode described as one of the “lances bien peligrosos” that tested the heroic chastity of the father during his ministries in Mexico City, and in which the names of those involved are



omitted in order avoid scandal (175). The story begins in the manner of Cervantes' *Novela del curioso impertinente*, with a jealous husband wishing to test the faithfulness of his wife, yet it ends with a pious denouement:

Fue señalado de la Obediencia el Padre Ugarte para salir acompañando a un Padre, que visitó a una Señora, la qual se aficionó mucho del Padre Juan, y quedó grandemente prendada de su modestia, compostura, y discreción. Volvieron a sus Colegio los Padres, y volviendo a la noche a sus casa el Caballero Esposo de la Señora, dijo ésta muchas alabanzas del Padre, que aquella tarde había ido de Compañero, y manifestó los grandes deseos, que se le habían excitado de que aquel Padre frecuentara su casa. El Caballero, que lo era muy principal, y de mucha distinción, preciándose de honrado, al paso, que picaba en zeloso, sospechó (según declaró después) que allí había algo menos decente ofensivo a su persona, y pudonor, pero sin dar a entender sus sospechas; por sacar más bien en limpio la verdad, y salir de dudas, fingió tener altísima estimación del Padre, y estar asimismo pagado de sus prendas, y amable genio, por lo que también apetecí tenerlo en su casa con frecuencia. Fue luego al día siguiente al Colegio, con astuta política en busca del Padre, a quien con extrañas demostraciones de especial cariño, le suplicó encarecidamente que se dignara de frecuentar su casa. Escusóse cortesanamente el Padre, con el grave peso de sus muchas ocupaciones, que le dejaban poco tiempo para poderlo hacer. Repitió visitas el Caballero, y en una de estas le dijo, con discreción, o por mejor decir, con malicia, y artificio, que tales personas acostumbran. Mi Esposa está muy quejosa; porque después de suplicárselo tantas veces a V. Reverencia, no ha querido honrar, y favorecer con su presencia aquella casa tan suya. Entonces con más resolución el Padre, reprodujo la excusa de ocupaciones, y añadió: yo Señor mío, no gusto de visitas,

y mucho menos de Señoras mujeres. Aquí fue donde se quitó la máscara de su política simulación el Caballero, desengañado con pruebas tan repetidas, y mudando el semblante mentidamente risueño, y afable, en maduramente grave, y compuesto, dijo con grande ponderación de palabras, “Yo digo bien, que estos Padres son grandes hombres, que nos enseñan a nuestros hijos, y nos dejan nuestras mujeres. Con esto se despidió satisfecho de la inocencia, y pureza del Padre, quien supo, aun sin haber entendido los ardidés de aquel falaz político, defender su pundonor, y exaltar el buen nombre de nuestra Madre la Compañía. (176)

Ugarte, who is reported to have confronted other such “lances” in the urban center with the same aplomb, reasserts the ascetic ideal of the Society and its prestige as an institution fit to educate the colonial elite.

The Jesuit subjects of these works did not only face threats to their vow of celibacy in private meetings with women, for even on the street they were tested by chance encounters that could potentially ruin their reputation of saintliness as well as that of the Society of Jesus. Joseph María Genovese was said to wander the streets with the doors to his senses tightly sealed, “trayendo siempre los ojos casi cerrados, en las calles, y en las Casas, donde solo hablaba cosas de Dios, y su servicio, de donde nació que todos le venerasen como a Santo” (López 27). While these models of conduct were above all put on display to serve as examples to Jesuit subjects and secure the moral authority of the order, both religious and political, that they represented, they also doubtlessly responded to what colonial elites saw as a general decline in morals, particularly sexual mores, throughout New Spain during the eighteenth century. As Juan Pedro Viqueira Albán demonstrates in his work on the colonial government’s attempts to regulate conduct

throughout the eighteenth century, administrators considered the street of the Capital an unchecked space of licentiousness, especially for the lower classes:

La calle era además para las clases populares el lugar ideal par aque hombres y mujeres solteros pudieran encontrarse, intercambiar las primeras miradas, sonrisas y saludos. Los siguientes pasos del cortejo seguían efectuándose ahí mismo. La sexualidad hacía su aparición en las puertas o esquinas inmediatas a las vinaterías, bajo la forma de ‘mujersuelas de mal vida’ o de aquellas, ‘que no prostituyéndose enteramente buscaban la oportunidad de que o las convidaran o se incorporaran con ellas, los que pasaban o entraban a beber.’ De noche, las calles cuyas manzanas se hallaban ocupadas por conventos y en las cuales la soledad y la oscuridad reinaban, se volvían lugares propicios para realizar ‘torpezas,’ es decir, actos sexuales. (135)

There were, of course, more tangible signs of this licentiousness and the structure of power that it implied in Novohispanic society. In his *Instrucciones* to the incoming viceroy, José Sarmiento de Valladares, Conde de Moctezuma y Tula, the viceroy of New Spain from 1696 to 1701, warned his sucesor that the number of fatherless “mestizo” children born of relations between Spanish or Criollo men and Amerindian or mestizo women represented a growing demographic crisis for the Viceroyalty, as these children were often abandoned and left to fend for themselves on the street (De la Torre Villar 754-55). The viceroy describes his own efforts to fund schools and charitable organizations to educate and care for these abandoned mestizo children, who were portrayed as a moral threat to novohispanic society, as well as single mestiza and Amerindian woman, who were taught to care for their “honestidad” (755). The viceroy made no provisions for the inculcation of virtuous behavior in Spanish or Criollo men.<sup>72</sup>

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<sup>72</sup> According to Jorge Juan and Antonio Ulloa, the ecclesiastical establishment in Spanish America, both secular and regular, was also infested with this general licentiousness, although the authors of the *Noticias secretas* cite the

According to the *Vidas y virtudes*, Amerindian woman on the mission frontier presented a challenge to the Jesuit's vow of celibacy for three principal reasons. First of all, the missionary was often alone far from the scrutiny and controlling gaze of his correligionary; secondly, the Amerindian cultures of the mission frontier did not recognize Christian taboos regarding sexual conduct; and thirdly, the devil used Amerindian women as a tool to undermine the authority of the missionaries and the propagation of the faith.<sup>73</sup> Villavicencio's hagiography of Ugarte, who exercised his missionary vocation in Lower California, clearly frames his subject's struggle to remain chaste within a providential discourse of good versus evil:

[...] se vio en lances sumamente apretados, y peligrosos, en línea de honestidad: porque envidioso el Príncipe de las tinieblas, de que armado con la Cruz del Señor, con que su Magestad lo hechó fuera del mundo, que tenía tiranizado, venía también a arrojarlo de allí, donde estaba en pacífica posesión de tan dilatada gentilidad, procuró con todas sus diabólicas artes hacerle hechar alguna mancha en la pureza [...]. (177)

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Jesuits as an exception. This is no coincidence given that the work was compiled with help of the Society's information gathering network. Nevertheless, Juan and Ulloa's chapter on the "desordenes" of ecclesiastic officials in Spanish America contains dozens of titillating anecdotes on priests' misdeeds in the Viceroyalty of Perú. The authors write, "Entre los vicios que reynan en el Perú, el concubinage, como más escandaloso y más general, deberá tener la primacía. Todos están comprendidos en él, Europeos, Criollos, solteros, casados, eclesiásticos seculares y regulares" (490). The authors describe one blatant display of priests living in concubinage as a popular entertainment: "Durante nuestra residencia en Quito, llegó el tiempo de hacerse capítulo en la religión de San Francisco, y con el motivo de vivir en aquel barrio tuvimos la oportunidad de ver por menor todo lo que pasaba. Desde quince días antes que se celebrase el capítulo era una diversión el ver los religiosos que iban llegando a la ciudad con sus concubinas; y por más de un mes después que el capítulo se concluyó fue otra diversión el ver salir los que volvían a sus nuevos destinos" (493).

<sup>73</sup> Villavicencio recounts an episode from Ugarte's life that reveals the dangers that the solitude and lack of structure presented to the missionary as well as the institutional supports that regulated and disciplined the conduct of the Jesuits. Ugarte was called to intervene in the case of "una falta grave de un sugeto recién entrado en las misiones de Sinaloa" for whom the Jesuit advocates clemency: "Esforzó el Venerable Padre sus caritativa elocuencia a favor del delincuente, y peroró por el con grande energía. Mis Padres, dijo a los demás sujetos, este pobre hombre entró en la Religión por quitarse de los peligros, y riesgos del siglo, lo han enviado, con poco gusto suyo, a los mismos, y aún a mayores riesgos, entre innumerables ocasiones, que sin ir las a buscar, se entran por las puertas, no es mucho, ni debemos maravillarnos de que en tales circunstancias haya caído en algún defecto; pongan a este pobre sujeto el recogimiento, y regular distribución de algún Colegio, y se logrará con edificación" (159).

Failing to sow rebellion among the *californios* through their shamans, a frustrated Satan turns to the “la grandísima libertad de las Indias” in order to subvert the apostolic enterprise of the Jesuits (177-78). According to Villavicencio, Father Ugarte was ambushed on various occasions by Amerindian women who attempted to “desahogar su loca pasión” with the unwary missionary (178). Nevertheless, the Jesuit is said to have reproached these women and turned them away as if they were “venenosos áspides,” leaving no doubt as to his “varonil constancia” (180). While the actions of these women are sometimes attributed to demonic inspiration, they are also often portrayed as the result of erroneous customs, as in the case of a chief who attempts to give his daughter away to Ugarte as sign of respect (181). The Jesuit was forced take extreme measures on the mission frontier, for it was simply not enough to close the doors to one’s senses as in the urban center. According to Villavicencio, on hot summer nights Ugarte was forced to post young male guards outside of the improvised awning under which he slept so that he would not be provoked unwittingly by lustful Amerindian women (183).<sup>74</sup>

In his *Carta edificante* on the life and virtues of Francisco de Piccolo, Juan Antonio Balthassar presents his hero as facing similar challenges and devising the strategy of having “Indisuelos” sleep around his bed at night in order to repel the “assaltos, que le havían dado las mugeres” (64). According to Balthassar, Piccolo even went beyond these defensive measures and on occasion was forced to repel the assaults on his chastity with violence, as in one case in which he was importuned by two lustful young women:

[...] una tarde llevó consigo la disciplina el P. Francisco, y luego que se fueron llegando, como acostumbraban las dos mozuelas, descargó sobre ellas unos quantos golpes, que como no havia ropa en que quebrantaran su fuerza, se assentaron muy bien, y tuvieron

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<sup>74</sup> This same tactic is described in Ruiz de Montoya’s *Conquista espiritual* (49v).

muy buen efecto, retirándose ellas, y quedando libres los Padres de su importuna molestia. (64)

In this case, the Jesuit's instrument of self-mortification ("disciplina") becomes a tool for disciplining an Amerindian subject whose mores are seen as threatening to the order for which the missionary was an important symbol. Given that Amerindian women were frequently the target of colonizers' depredations and suffered inordinately in the colonial marchlands, these supposed defensive measures against their libidinous character convey a bitter historical irony. In focusing on the missionary's chastity, these works not only attempt to reproduce an ascetic ideal that justifies the colonial order and promotes an individual, internal self-discipline, but they also misdirect the gaze from the violent reality of the missionary frontier where even Jesuit writings disclose the prevailing violence against Amerindian women.

It is particularly revealing that during the first years of the Jesuit enterprise of *reducción* in Lower California, where both Ugarte and Piccolo worked as missionaries, a rebellion was sparked in the mission of San Francisco Javier due to what Miguel Venegas calls the "indiscreción" of one of the soldiers accompanying the missionaries. In his chronicle of the Jesuit missions of Lower California, Venegas recounts how José Pérez, a native of Puebla, had married "una india de la tierra" who later abandoned him in order to return to her family (*Empressas* 151). The jealous husband pursued the woman and when an elder Guaycura attempted to dissuade him from persisting the soldier "ciego de cólera [...] lo dejó allí muerto de un balazo"; upon seeing what the soldier had done, a group of Guaycuras killed him in retaliation, thus sparking a conflict between the colonizers and the *californios* (151). According to Venegas, "el demonio se valía de tales ocasiones, para hablar con los hechiceros, y por medio de estos inquietar al de más vulgo de la gente" (152). Notwithstanding the Jesuit's attribution of

the occurrence to diabolic intervention, this is a clear case of how the Amerindian women were caught in the middle of the process of economic exploitation and acculturation carried out on the mission frontier. For the male colonizer she was an object of his power, either through the misogyny of the missionary's ascetic discourse or through the assertion of masculine prerogatives over her sexuality by non-religious colonial agents; and for Amerindian men, the new taboos imposed by missionaries and the violence suffered by their mothers, sisters and daughters could have only signaled an apocalyptic end to their culture.<sup>75</sup>

While the Jesuit archive only provides a glimpse of this violence, one often finds footnotes to the missionaries' apostolic-ascetic heroism that speak tomes. In his *Historia de la Antigua o Baja California*, the exiled Jesuit historian Francisco Javier Clavijero explains that one of the primary causes of the the Pericu uprising in 1748 was the staggering demographic decline of women in their communities:

Otro origen de inquietudes y quejas entre los pericúes era la escasez de mujeres. Es cosa verdaderamente admirable que habiendo sido en el tiempo de su gentilismo comunísima la poligamia y el sexo femenino mucho más numeroso que el otro, hubiera aquél llegado a disminuirse después de algunos años tanto que apenas había una mujer por diez hombres. Tal vez serían la causa las enfermedades de los años anteriores, las cuales acaso harían mayor estrago en el sexo débil. (218)

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<sup>75</sup> Despite overwhelming evidence of this dynamic in the colonial archive, even in works that have gone through numerous modern editions and have been exhaustively studied, it has yet to receive the attention it deserves. Though a problematic work for its limited view of Amerindian symbolic production, Tvetzan Todorov's *La conquista de América. El problema del otro* deserves recognition for confronting the often scabrous details of this violence that were preserved in the colonial archive from the very beginning of Spanish conquest and colonization (56). Ramón Gutiérrez' *When Jesus Came the Corn Mothers Went Away* is exceptional for its thorough analysis of the role of sexuality in the colonization of Nuevo México, particularly in the relationship between the Pueblo Indians and Franciscan missionaries. James Sweet has likewise recognized the thoroughgoing misogyny of the Jesuit enterprise (26).

While Clavigero's explanation of this hecatombe may seem less than satisfactory, we can only conjecture about the real causes of this decline, as it was likely due to a combination of illness, unions with men outside the community and violent reprisals against Amerindian resistance. Nevertheless, these details clearly reveal that, despite the ascetic discourse of the *Vidas y virtudes*, Amerindian women suffered disproportionately on the mission frontier.

This erotic dimension of the *Vidas y virtudes* reveals the extent to which the Jesuit ascetic ideal sought out, and even attempted to reproduce, prohibited desire on the missionary frontier in order to reaffirm a form of colonial subjectivity. The discourse of Jesuit missionary hagiographies demonstrates the difficulty of speaking of subject-formation as a unilateral or mechanistic process wherein the colonial agent attempts to reproduce obedient colonial subjects from the Amerindians of the frontier. As Judith Butler explains, "subjectivation" is a more ambivalent process whereby the "subject emerges both as the *effect* of a prior power and as the *condition of possibility* for a radically conditioned form of agency" (15). In the case of the mission frontier, both the ideal subject of *reducción* and the ascetic ideal reflected in the *Vidas y virtudes* are effects of power, yet they also condition the performance of these identities, particularly that of the Jesuit missionary who needs a proscenium to reenact a tradition of ascetic self denial. This reproduction of a scene of self-denial paradoxically depends upon an object of desire that is sought out in order to perform an act of renunciation, or in Butler's formula, "Prohibition reproduces the prohibited desire and becomes intensified through the renunciations it effects" (81). The street as a space of licentious acts, the frontier as a test of virtue outside the gaze of one's peers, and the Amerindian woman as a libidinous foe of the missionary enterprise all suggest a foreclosed desire that prefigures the performance of the ascetic ideal, just as the Jesuit author asserts that the virtue of the man is superior to that of the angel because the former



must overcome temptation. This desire, however, is the function of a culture that projects previous models of ideal conduct onto a reality that is forced to fit within an exogenous tradition.

The model of conduct for the missionary became increasingly demanding in proportion to the imperative to bring order to the colonial frontier through *reducción* or as an exemplar of virtue directed to a decadent colonial society. The Jesuit missionary literally acted out this ascetic renunciation of prohibited desire (though perhaps not always successfully) through the performance of his vocation, while the production of missionary hagiographies conditioned subsequent such performances by reproducing the colonial frontier as “status-function” for the Novohispanic community. The iterability of prohibition is what linked the ascetic ideal to the expansion of the colonial frontier and what gave it power as a structuring force of novohispanic society. The ascetic ideal created parallel topographies through Jesuit writing: on the one hand it lent a social function to the geographical space of the frontier, which was represented as an ever present outside whose resistance to dominance reasserted the legitimacy of the colonial order; on the other hand, it sought to shape the “critical agency” of the colonial subject by likewise setting up the individual’s psychic life as a scene for the reproduction of prohibited desire. As Butler asserts, however, this iterability also leads to the instability of subjectivity, for the apparatus of cultural reproduction, even when dominated by a priestly class as in New Spain, cannot control all possible performances of the ascetic ideal, which in some cases may drift from the axis of the tradition (94).

## **2.5 Salvadora de los Santos: An Otomí Nun’s Life and Virtues**

The expulsion of the Society of Jesus from New Spain in 1768 brought an end to the production and distribution of the Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes*, with the curious exception of Antonio de Paredes’ hagiographic work on Salvadora de los Santos (1701-1762). Paredes’ work on the

Otomí Carmelite nun, originally published in 1763, was republished at least three times after the expulsion of his order with a slightly modified title, *Carta edificante, en que el P. Antonio de Paredes de la extinguida Compañía de Jesús refiere la vida exemplar de la Hermana Salvadora de los Santos, india otomí* (emphasis added). Paredes' work demonstrates the extent that Jesuit hagiographies, along with the ascetic ideal that they represented, had permeated Novohispanic society and continued to exercise influence despite efforts to diminish the Society's legacy in the Viceroyalty. Furthermore, the history of the publication and reception of the work after the expulsion of the order demonstrates how Amerindian subjects of the viceroyalty inhabited and adapted the Jesuit ascetic ideal in promoting models of conduct within their own educational apparatus.

The prologue to the 1784 edition of Paredes' work is addressed to the Viceroy of New Spain, Don Matías de Gálvez, and explains the pedagogical aims of republishing the work of a member of a religious order that had been recently banished:

La reimpresión de esta Carta edificante tiene el objeto recomendable de proveer las Escuelas y Migas donde nuestros hijos son educados de una especie de Cartilla, en que enseñándose a leer, aprendan al mismo tiempo a imitar las virtudes christianas con el dulce, poderoso, y natural atractivo de verlas practicadas por una Persona de su misma calidad. (A2)

The work was clearly a tool for teaching the Castilian language and ascetic Christian virtues to subjects outside of the classes from which religious orders usually drew their members. Rubial García places this *Carta edificante* within a general trend in eighteenth-century Novohispanic hagiography toward the representation of subjects of humble origins with the purpose of promoting popular models of conduct (90). This is connected to the trend that de Certeau traces

in the relationship between the Catholic Church and society from the seventeenth to eighteenth centuries, during which religion was increasingly subordinated to a logic of social utility, what the French Jesuit calls a “politization of conduct” (*Writing* 157). This subordination, according to de Certeau, redirected the Church’s teaching function to the extirpation of social evils (ignorance, delinquency, division) that threatened the incipient nation-state’s ideological cohesion (159). Through the example of Salvadora de los Santos, Paredes’ work portrays a model of conduct more identifiable (“de su misma calidad”) to those who would be the target of these campaigns in New Spain.

The dedication cited above also refers to “nuestros hijos” [“our children”] as the object of this educational mission, explicitly revealing the social position of the signatories as the indigenous *gobernadores* of the Amerindian communities, or *parcialidades*, of Santiago and San Juan in Mexico City.<sup>76</sup> The treasury of these communities financed the republication of Paredes’ work so it could be used in Amerindian schools to teach Castilian literacy and Christian virtues. This was an advantage over the schools in other Amerindian communities, or *pueblos de indios*, in which parents directly payed not only teachers’ salaries but also the texts used in the schools (Tanck de Estrada 406-17). Interestingly, the dedication to Gálvez insists on the *parcialidades*’ loyalty to the Spanish Monarch through the payment of tribute, and the text itself is presented as proof that “los Indios que habitan la Capital del nuevo Mundo, no piensan sino en dar pruebas al Rey nuestro amo de su fiel y reconocida dependencia” (A5-6). These Amerindian communities took up the work of their own temporal and spiritual *reducción*, and in doing so they

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<sup>76</sup> The dedication is signed by Cosme Miguel de la Mota, Governor of San Juan, and Juan Ignacio de S. Roque Martínez, Governor of Santiago. As chronicled in Joseph Antonio de Villaseñor y Sánchez’ *Teatro mexicano* (1746), these *parcialidades* corresponded to the pre-Conquest political and tribal divisions of Tenochitlan (“Tenucas”) and Tlatelolco (“Tlatelulcas”) and between them represented the Republic of Indians in the capital (58). For the early formation of these political divisions, the succession of *gobernadores* overseen by the Spanish, and the fate of these communities in the eighteenth century, see Charles Gibson’s *The Aztecs under Spanish Rule* (37; 166-193).

demonstrated the flexibility of the ascetic subject performed in the colonial context. Thus, the ascetic subjectivity promoted by the *vidas y virtudes* was not only destabilized by unorthodox religious expressions, popular satire and secular European writings, but it also was transformed as a tool for cohesion and a path to status for Amerindian communities promoting their own model of ascetic virtue through the life of an Otomí nun from humble origins.

These reflections on the reframing of the Jesuit text must be kept in mind when approaching the body of the work itself and the clear shift to the voice of the Jesuit author, who refers to those Amerindians who still live “as beasts” long after the Conquest and those that have been “reduced to political life”:

Los Indios de este Reyno despues de los muchos años de su conquista, todavía conservan mucho de su nativa rudeza: a excepción de algunos que avecindados en las Ciudades, comunican con los Españoles, aprenden la lengua castellana, y se reducen a vida política. Pero aquellos que viven en Rancherías distantes de poblado, atendiendo solamente a la labor de la tierra, cuyos groseros frutos son el sustento de sus vidas, perseveran agrestes, quasi bárbaros, y como brutos. Los de peor condición son los de la nación Otomí: cuya lengua difícilísima aun de pronunciar es causa de que vivan escaso de doctrina, y mantengan resabios de su gentilidad. De este pues horrible bosque sacó el Padre de las misericordias a *Salvadora de los Santos*, India Otomí, previniéndola desde su infancia con celestiales bendiciones, para que manteniendo la nativa inocencia hasta la muerte, saliese de esta vida con muchas virtudes meritorias de vida eterna [...] (2-3).

Salvadora is held forth as an example of the Amerindian “brought into” the temporal and spiritual flock of *reducidos*, and her condition as an Otomí (“los de peor condición”) living on

the edges of the city doubly marked her trajectory as exemplary.<sup>77</sup> Her condition as the daughter of shepherds is also doubly significant in that it emphasizes her humble origins at the margins of the city (“atendiendo solamente a la labor de la tierra”), and, as the anecdote of her willingness as a twelve-year-old child to fight off wolves to protect her parents’ flock suggests, as protector and patron of the humblest Amerindians, a symbol of faith and solidarity in the face of social stigmatization and economic depredation (9-10). The trajectory of Salvadora, who is described as an “anacoreta” living a rustic life outside the city before taking her vows as a Carmelite nun in Querétaro, is also indicative of the general trend away from an eremitic model of ascetic subjectivity associated with popular religiosity toward a model of conduct centered in the religious orders and convents (Paredes 12; Rubial García, *Profetisas* 84).

Apart from promoting the theological and cardinal virtues of hope, humility and obedience, which would have had a clear utility in reproducing the economic and social order of the Viceroyalty, Salvadora also demonstrates talents that would have been a cause of pride and a path to status for some of the Amerindian students learning to read with Paredes *Carta*. As told by the Jesuit, Salvadora taught herself to read so that she could increase her devotion in imitation of the saint’s lives, a story of reading which was already very familiar in the *Vidas y virtudes* and spiritual guides of the period (17). Paredes asserts “Aunque sencilla *Salvadora*, no era tonta,” and emphasizes her keen wit in reciting “dichos agudos” and popular verses (88). These virtues would have had special significance to an Amerindian public for whom the possibility of entering the religious and secular clergy in New Spain had been recently opened, a pursuit which literacy, a Catholic education and the example of Salvadora would have facilitated (Tanck de

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<sup>77</sup> It must be remembered that even before the Conquest the Mexicas stigmatized the Otomíes as living at the lowest stage of civilization by, and that they were the object of the Conde de Monterrey’s ill-fated campaign of *congregaciones* in 1601 (Gibson 21; Torquemada 687).

Estrada 412).<sup>78</sup> Beyond this path to social recognition through literacy and ecclesiastic authority, Salvadora also possessed knowledge of folkloric medicine, which combined with her popular reputation for thaumaturgic healing powers gained her esteem inside and outside her convent in Querétaro. Indeed, due to this reputation Salvadora had a faithful and numerous following among the Amerindian inhabitants of the city, who would throng to the convent at her beckoning (55). This following would have added urgency to her official recognition through Paredes' *Carta*, published just a year after her death. The humble Otomí nun's reputation as a healer and her popular following must have represented both a destabilizing threat to Catholic orthodoxy and the social hierarchy at the same time that it offered an opportunity to further solidify ideological domination through her recognition by ecclesiastic and secular authorities in a text destined to be used in Amerindian pedagogical institutions.

There is an aspect of Salvadora's life, however, that interrupts the text's function as ideological reproduction and that could not have escaped the attention of Amerindian students or catechumens. Despite (or because of) the Jesuit's insistence on the Otomí nun's theological virtues, especially her humility, it becomes clear throughout the narrative of her life that her Carmelite sisters depended on her much more than Salvadora on them. Paredes insists that Salvadora's most impressive virtues are resilience, patience, humility and resignation in the face of physical and psychological trials. According to the *Carta*, the Otomí nun was received in the Carmelite convent because of her physical robustness in addition to her virtuousness, "y la nueva fundación necesitaba de una Sirviente, que atendiese a los ministerios domésticos, saliese a la calle a las diligencias ocurrentes, y fuese el alivio todo de las nuevas Carmelitas, que se retiraban

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<sup>78</sup> Tanck de Estrada cites the testimony of an Amerindian priest in Durango, who followed just such a path and in 1799 declared himself a "child of this *reducción*": "Yo soy hijo de esta *reducción* y cuando niño, mis padres celaban el cumplimiento mío a la escuela donde me resultó el aprender a oficiar una misa y ayudar a los entierros de cantar" (412).

del mundo” (24). Salvadora was accepted in the convent as an “esclava” of the other nuns, yet due of this subaltern status she enjoyed a mobility that permitted her to prove her virtue in the street as well as the convent, coming and going as the other nuns could not (49). Salvadora’s sisters did not just depend on her as a servant and nurse, for the existence of the convent itself depended on the alms that the Otomí nun collected in her peregrinations in and around the city of Querétaro.<sup>79</sup> Despite her indispensability, Paredes claims that Salvadora was subject to the scorn and abuse of her sisters: “y teniéndose por criada de todas las Hermanas, a todas estaba sujeta: y todas la mandaban con imperio, sin que la buena de *Salvadora* se diera por sentida” (92-93). This abuse, however, only served as a trial to further prove the superior virtue of the least among the sisters, which Paredes, with characteristic misogyny, portrays as a continuous mortification:

Las Hermanas aunque gente virtuosa, mas como Mugerres tienen sus genios unas prolijos, otras violentas, otras ásperos, y si *Salvadora* alguna vez no acertaba a darles el gusto en lo que la mandaban, el desahogo eran regaños, apodos, y dichos picantes. De los que no haciendo la paciente India caso, proseguía obsequiándolas en quanto podía. Nada en mi juicio acreditó la virtud de *Salvadora* tanto como esta mortificación continuada por veinte y seis años. (62-63)

Paredes presents the Otomí nun’s Carmelite sisters as sickly, splenetic and torpid, while Salvadora enjoys spiritual and physical health tested through numerous ordeals in the seculum. These ordeals include two encounters with the devil outside the convent, who, in the guise of a vaquero and a hermit, attempts to undermine both the chastity and the humility of the nun. Salvadora passes these trials and wins the esteem of the Amerindian community, as well as

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<sup>79</sup> Rubial García asserts that this mobility was unique among the subjects of female hagiography in New Spain (*Profetisas* 33).

among Creoles and Spanish, due to her superior virtue and reputation for minor thaumaturgical feats.

While Paredes doubtlessly had in mind the social utility of inculcating the values of obedience, humility and devotion in those who another eighteenth-century Jesuit hagiographer classified as the “siervos del hombre” in New Spain, this moral is obscured by Salvadora’s literal and figurative mobility (Venegas 79r).<sup>80</sup> The *Carta* portrays Salvadora as a model of ascetic virtue and an ideal subject of *reducción*, yet she does not conform to the traditional narrative of the exemplary holy woman in New Spain, just as she is not contained by the walls of the convent. Her trajectory from female Otomí hermit to Carmelite nun in Querétaro, as well as popular following, seem to have represented a challenge to her Jesuit hagiographer who, in partially subjecting her life to a sub-genre of hagiography dedicated to male missionaries, could not totally avoid portraying the subversiveness of Salvadora’s example. Though she submits to a repressive colonial order, Salvadora’s life reveals the inherent weakness of the ascetic ideal promoted and exercised by colonial elites who depended on Amerindian labor to exercise their virtue. Salvadora is not quite reduced to obedience by the convent or the narrative structure of hagiography, her mobility and popular following exceed both.

Salvadora’s life and the use of her example in Amerindian schools represent a kind of “slave revolt in morality,” not as renunciation and self-discipline converted into a virtue superior

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<sup>80</sup> Miguel Venegas characterization of the Amerindian population of New Spain as the “servants of man” comes from his description of the Colegio de San Gregorio, where the subject of his work, Juan Baptista Zappa, was director: “Y con mucha razón podemos llamar el Colegio de San Gregorio casa de Obededom: porque si Obededom se interpreta lo mismo, que *siervo del hombre*, a quienes les conviene más propriamente en este Reino el título de siervos de los hombre, que a los Indios? Ellos son los siervos y criados de toda la Nueva España, donde antes eran Señores, y Dueños absolutos: ellos sirven como si fueran esclavos, según se van siguiendo por turno en todas las Parroquias, y Alcaldías mayores del Reino: ellos son los jornaleros universales, que anquilados por muy moderado salario, trabanan incansablemente en las haciendas de labor, en las minas, en los obrajes, y en todas las artes mecánicas y oficios más viles, y abatidos de la República: ellos finalmente sirven a todos, al secular, y al eclesiástico, al pobre, y al rico, al noble y al plebeyo, después que quiso Dios por medio de esta temporal servidumbre, sacarlos de la esclavitud del Demonio, y sujetarlos al feliz cautiverio de la fe, para traspasarlos a la libertad de hijos de Dios, siendo pues el Colegio de S. Gregorio, casa propria de los Indios, destinada para su educación y enseñanza, con razón merece el nombre de ser Casa de Obededom” (79r).



to the nobleman's lack of conscience, but rather as a more rigorous ascetic ideal performed against the tepid or hypocritical asceticism of the colonizer. The success of the Jesuit ascetic ideal as propagated through missionary hagiography (as well as the frontier *reducciones* and the colleges) exposed this ideal to resignification through its performance in all strata of colonial society. Of course, as a strategy for strengthening the colonial order and defending tradition, the ascetic subject represented in the *Vidas y virtudes* had to be reproducible, but this reproducibility could also come close to undermining that very order, as in the case of Salvadora de los Santos. The endorsement and promulgation of legitimate representations of the colonial ascetic ideal was the primary function of Jesuit narrative, for which the mission frontier represented both a destabilizing presence as well as a space for symbolic action.

### 3. “El rudo y penoso magisterio de un Indio”: Pedagogy, Mimesis and Writing on the Mission Frontier

According to the twentieth-century Jesuit scholar Charles Polzer, the missionary enterprise on the northwest frontier of New Spain was guided by the principle of “magisterium,” or the duty of the Christian to teach and spread the message of the Gospel as decreed in Matthew 28:19, “Euntes ergo docete omnes gentes, baptizantes eos in nomine Patris, et Filii, et Spiritus Sancti, docentes eos servare omnia quaecumque mandavi vobis” (230). Just what was meant by the command, “docete omnes gentes” [“teach all peoples”] was a matter of controversy from the early European debates on the nature of the Amerindian, most notably in the “Controversia de Valladolid” in which Bartolomé de las Casas argued for teaching by the example of Christian charity against Juan Ginés de Sepúlveda, who insisted on the necessity of coercion as a prelude to the project of acculturation. While Polzer is, as to be expected, an apologist for his eighteenth-century confrères, he makes an important distinction that is useful in examining *reducción* as a pedagogical practice. The Jesuit scholar argues that the concept of *metanoia*, or the Christian conversion experience, is bound up in the Judeo-Hellenic culture of Europe in ways not easily translatable to non-Western cultures, which of course resulted in countless challenges for missionaries who had to explain the concepts of a triune God and the resurrection to often bemused or skeptical Amerindian catechumens (232). This disjuncture between the goal of conversion and the culture of the catechumen led to the formulation of two goals of *reducción*: first to establish a political and cultural hegemony, and only then to undertake the process of inclusion in a universal church whose membership was paradoxically considered independent of cultural foundations. Due to the conflicts that arose from this paradox, the relationship between

the missionary as educator and the Amerindian as pupil was rethought and broken down into its essence on the Jesuit missionary frontier.

The Jesuit pedagogical apparatus that was central to the *Vidas y virtudes* and to the dissemination of the order's ascetic ideal in New Spain also extended to the missionary frontier. Jesuit writings, both hagiographies and natural histories, portray the process of *reducción* as a struggle between Jesuit schoolmasters and Amerindian pupils to establish a Castilian-Christian hegemony. In the ascetic discourse of *reducción*, the missionary prevailed as a model of self-mastery and the Amerindian acted as foil in the role of either an ideal or recalcitrant catechumen. Even Jesuit narratives, however, demonstrate how the encounter with non-European cultures on the mission frontier undermined this ideal of self-mastery, particularly the aspect of linguistic heroism that was celebrated in the *Vidas y virtudes*. The Jesuits' intellectual authority in the colonial center or metropole, established through the rigorous process outlined in the missionary hagiography, did not readily translate to the frontier, and though Jesuit narratives presented this obstacle as yet one more trial of the colonial subject's ascetic mastery they also serve as a testimony to the precariousness of the missionary's authority in the frontier contact zone.<sup>81</sup> Jesuit *Vidas y virtudes*, natural histories and official correspondence testify to the fact that the missionaries were often at a loss as to how to communicate with their catechumens or how to translate their authority into Amerindian languages. In fact, these texts frequently portray the Jesuit as reduced to a babbling pupil of his Amerindian tutors, and in extreme cases turning to

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<sup>81</sup> Mary Louise Pratt's definition of "contact zone" aptly describes the reality of the *reducción*: "'contact zone' is an attempt to invoke the spatial and temporal copresence of subjects previously separated by geographic and historical disjunctures, and whose trajectories now intersect. By using the term 'contact,' I aim to foreground the interactive, improvisational dimensions of colonial encounters so easily ignored or suppressed by diffusionist accounts of conquest and domination. A 'contact' perspective emphasizes how subjects are constituted in and by their relations to each other. It treats the relations among colonizers and colonized, or travelers and 'travelees,' not in terms of separateness or apartheid, but in terms of copresence, interaction, interlocking understandings and practices, often within radically asymmetrical relations of power" (7).

violent coercion in order to establish his authority. Ultimately, Jesuit discourse attempted to overturn this inversion of the pedagogical hierarchy by invoking a time-honored allegory of writing and orality that established an absolute distinction between the European and the Amerindian and legitimated the Jesuit performance of the ascetic ideal on the mission frontier.

The relation of *reducción* to the order's overall educational mission in New Spain has largely been neglected in previous studies. In her history of the Jesuits' campaigns of popular education in New Spain, Pilar Gonzalbo Aizpuru focuses on the order's urban ministries as vehicles for the diffusion of Ignatian piety and respect for the social order of the Viceroyalty. "Las misiones jesuíticas eran, en cierto modo," writes Gonzalbo Aizpuru, "una especie de divulgación de los ejercicios espirituales, con la que se aspiraba a lograr el arrepentimiento de los pecadores, el respeto de la autoridad, el fomento del amor al trabajo y la práctica de los actos de piedad" (48). This kind of social conditioning has been the objective of pedagogy in political theories since the *Republic*, and as Gonzalbo Aizpuru demonstrates, the Jesuits were the most active agents of this practice in New Spain. While recognizing that the frontier missions were essentially pedagogical enterprises, Gonzalbo Aizpuru nevertheless relegates them to a marginal application of the Jesuits' practices of popular education (37). Insofar as it aimed to prepare subjects for their roles in the state and the economy of the Viceroyalty, however, Jesuit *reducción* on the missionary frontier can be said to be a precursor to modern pedagogical institutions. The clash between European and Amerindian cultures on the colonial periphery, as documented in Jesuit writings, reveals the basic structure and strategies of national pedagogical institutions which aim to reproduce the means of state hegemony. This was an especially urgent task where there was no shared cultural foundation for establishing the values of the colonizer. Jesuit writing, indispensable in reproducing the ideal of *reducción*, was itself a pedagogical tool

in the sense that every historical text makes an authoritative claim on the representation of reality. Thus, through the writing of Jesuit writings, the education of Amerindians on the mission frontier became a lesson on the rationality of the colonial order itself.

*Reducción* on the colonial frontier paralleled the reforms in education that have been attributed to the Jesuits in early modern Europe, and in some aspects the order's experience in Spanish America anticipated the subsequent transformation of the educational apparatus under the modern nation-state. In his history of education in France, Emile Durkheim credits the Jesuits with applying educational reforms first proposed in theory by Erasmus, Vives and Montaigne. While Durkheim was disparaging of the content of Jesuit education in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries – he claimed that the decontextualization of Classical languages and literature led to the belief in human nature as immutable and transhistorical – he nevertheless maintained that the disciplinary structures of the Jesuit college were revolutionary in the history of pedagogical practice. According to the French sociologist the Jesuit college depended on two principles: continuous, personal contact between teachers and pupils, that is, a regime of constant surveillance focused on individual conduct; and a competitive system of evaluation and promotion, which created a self-regulating student body. This focus on the individual and dependence on self-regulation made the school a mirror for society. In Durkheim's words, "Never has the idea that the class is a small organized society been realized so systematically. It was a city state where every pupil was a functionary" (261). This description of the Jesuit college in early modern Europe could well apply to *reducción*, which similarly aimed to create a kind of microcosm of the state that reflected the ideal relationship sovereign and subject while creating a transitional space where the subject would learn to assume his or her role in society "on the outside." The religious order, the college and the *reducción* were all ruled by the same ascetic-

pastoral principle of intimate vigilance and direction accompanied by a reciprocal system of merit between educator and educated, which for Foucault is the essence of the practice of pastoral power in the West (*Omnes* 310-11).

Jesuit *reducción* also anticipated what Durkheim terms the “third revolution” in European pedagogy wherein the secular life of the students, that is the fulfillment of the functions eventually assigned to them by society, became the focus of education (288). Durkheim reveals a deep-seated bias when he attributes this revolution to Protestant Europe and in particular to the Czech reformer John Amos Comenius, who, according to the French sociologist, was the first to emphasize the role of educational institutions in preparing citizens for secular life before their spiritual education (286). The primary aim of Jesuit *reducción*, however, was to likewise create political subjects as means to the formation of Christian subjects. In the words of Acosta, in a work that appeared almost 50 years prior to Comenius’ work on pedagogy in Europe, “Atraer, pues, a estos hombres salvajes y enfierecidos a géneros de vida humana, y acomodarlos al trato civil y político, éste debe ser el primer cuidado del gobernante. Será en vano enseñar lo divino y celestial a quien se ve que ni siquiera cuida ni comprende lo humano” (1: 539). In their pragmatic approach to evangelization on the Spanish-American colonial frontier, the Jesuits placed the political formation of Amerindian subjects prior to their the religious indoctrination and, perhaps unwittingly, contributed to the process in which religious instruction was gradually subordinated to a pedagogical apparatus of the state which would increasingly focus on the secular education of its subjects during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Following late twentieth-century Marxist critique, we may broadly define pedagogy as the reproduction of dominant public and private institutions and the relations of power and production that exist within them. Louis Althusser, for example, described both pre-capitalist and

bourgeois states' pedagogical institutions as "educational ideological apparatuses" whose primary function is to form subjectivities within the dominant practices of a society. As Althusser states, repressive violence is never entirely absent from ideological state apparatuses, and in fact these institutions ultimately owe their effectiveness to the threat of violence, however abstract it may be (145). These institutions rely on the continuing affirmation of the authority of the schoolmaster as self-evident authority and the pupil as a developing or incomplete subject. In most cases (as in the University of the modern nation-state) there is a complicity between the schoolmaster and pupil (a shared ideology and a clear understanding of the costs and benefits of the tutelary relationship), but in situations where the reproduction of dominant institutions and ideologies is particularly onerous (as in the context of colonization), and implies the abandonment (under violence or coercion) of competing institutions and ideologies, a pedagogical discourse emerges. The primary objective of this discourse is to invent a pupil to be held in the inferior position of a tutelary hierarchy; in order to become a fully-realized subject, this other needs the lesson imparted by the schoolmaster. Especially in the colonial context, this lesson is often endless and full-subjectivity is held permanently out of reach in the reproduction of hegemonic practices.

*Reducción* clearly illustrates the use of coercion within an institution ostensibly founded on the principle of pacific acculturation. In fact, the Jesuit histories of *reducción* in Lower California often read as allegories for the violent and repressive origins of ideological state apparatuses that are portrayed as benignly reproducing the dominant practices of the modern nation-state. Practices that are transparently superior, or civilized, and without need of justification in the metropole or colonial satellite (monogamy, church attendance, the use of Spanish, etc.), are threatened in their encounter with a radical alterity on the colonial frontier,

whereby new pedagogical practices and a new pedagogical discourse are formed. Because the reality of the colonial frontier does not always yield to the self-evident superiority of the missionary-schoolmaster, a pedagogical discourse develops out of the necessity to legitimize *reducción* and situate the colonized Amerindian in the role of the (ideal or recalcitrant) pupil.

For the political theorist Jacques Rancière, pedagogical discourse relies on the logic of what he terms, after the nineteenth-century pedagogue Joseph Jacotot, *abrutissement*, or “stultification” (*Ignorant* 7). For Rancière and Jacotot, most pedagogies are founded on the (arbitrarily) assumed incapacity and ignorance of the other, and they must first represent this other as a brute. This critique of nineteenth-century bourgeois pedagogy and the representation of its underclasses can well be applied to Jesuit missionaries and their catechumens in the eighteenth-century *reducciones* of Lower California. In fact, both contexts are part of a tradition, outlined by Rancière in *The Philosopher and his Poor*, that goes back to Plato’s *Republic*. Rancière contends that Plato’s “noble lie” of three metals is a structuring, or foundational, fiction for all future pedagogies (*Philosopher* 18-19). According to Plato, it is up to the guardian to decide which natures possess enough of the noble metals and how much exposure to the light of truth they can take. For Rancière, this arbitrary division of intellectual labor is the founding gesture not only of politics but also of Western metaphysics (52-3). The Christian pastoral tradition encountered an open field of action in the New World in which to exercise this “noble lie.” It spread the pedagogical division of labor from the city onto the frontier and replaced the philosopher-king with the missionary. In their responses to the contingencies of the mission frontier, the Jesuits developed strategies that anticipated the development of the educational state apparatus of the modern nation state and its discourse of stultification.



Throughout the Jesuit *reducciones* on the northwest frontier of New Spain the education of Amerindian children was the first concern of the missionaries (Spicer 296; del R o 177). Children offered less resistance to the teachings of the newcomers, had a greater capacity for assimilating the colonizers' language and culture, and could spend more time with the missionaries as they were not entirely incorporated into the economy of their communities or that of the mission. Most importantly, the monopolization of childhood education was an effective means of undermining the autochthonous cultures of the peninsula. What is less evident about this strategy is that it was more the result of necessity than a deliberate plan. Just as with the early Franciscan missionaries in Tenochtitlan, children were considered more trustworthy informants than their elders and more likely to respect the authority of the missionaries, who seemed particularly sensitive to the slights received from Amerindian adults who they considered their inferiors. The case of Pedro Ugarte, a Jesuit missionary in Lower California who "hizo vivir en su casa [a dos ni os], para que le fuessen primero Maestros de la Lengua, y despues le sirviessen de Catequistas," is indicative of the practice of using children as both informants and as assistants (Burriel 1: 87-88). Andr s Marcos Burriel, the author of the *Noticia de la California* adds that Ugarte obliged these children to wear clothes that they would leave hanging on a tree when they returned to their village and "de noche se vest an, para venir a ver al Padre, y dentro de su casilla dorm an con el vestido puesto," thus demonstrating that these children were at least sometimes able to negotiate between the two cultures, adopting the mores of one or the other as the circumstances demanded (2: 88).

Nevertheless, these child neophytes eventually became a weapon themselves for disseminating the Catholic and Spanish hegemony among thier people. In the *Notitica*, Burriel writes that Salvatierra established a system in Lower California in which children were sent to

Loreto to be educated and then returned to their villages to serve as inspectors for the missionaries:

El primer cuidado es de los niños, porque de su educación pende todo. Algunos de todas las misiones se crían en Loreto, donde hay Escuela de leer, y escribir, y de canto Eclesiástico, con Maestros de uno, y otro pagados, y traídos de la otra vanda. Despejense con el trato: aprenden el Castellano, y después sirven de Fiscales de las Iglesias, y Maestros de la Doctrina en sus Rancherías, donde son insigneemente respetados. (2: 248)

In his supplement to Burriel's work, Francisco Javier Clavijero writes that formal schools, as the basis for a civil and Christian life, were subsequently established in the other principal missions of Lower California:

Como la educación es el fundamento de la base de la vida civil y cristiana, todos los niños y niñas de seis a doce años se educaban en la cabecera a vista y expensas del misionero, en cuyo tiempo se instruían en lo perteneciente a la religión y buenas costumbres, y aprendían aquellas artes de que era capaz su tierna edad. Unos y otros estaban en casas separadas; los niños al cuidado de un hombre de confianza, y las niñas al de una matrona honrada. (232-33)

As described in this passage, education was entrusted to non-clergy under the supervision of the Jesuits; furthermore, instruction included not only language and catechesis, but also manual arts that would be useful in the construction of the new colonial settlements. Also, within a larger plan of redefining gender roles in this society, boys and girls were separated with the latter instructed in "oficios femeniles" (127-28).

Of course, the Jesuits met resistance in their attempt to monopolize the instruction of the children of Lower California. The *Noticia de la California* portrays a kind of pedagogical war

between the Jesuit newcomers and the “guamas,” or shamans, of Loreto, who were said to run their own clandestine schools where they attempted to pass their culture on to the same children that were the target of the Jesuits’ campaigns. Whether characterized as satanic agents or cynical charlatans, the “guamas”, those responsible for the preservation and transmission of local knowledge in their communities, were seen as competitors for ideological supremacy within Lower California and thus were a principal target of *reducción* in both its spiritual and temporal aspects. Thus, as portrayed in Jesuit narrative, the Californio children were caught in the middle of a pitched struggle for ideological supremacy. The shamans’ teachings were branded “necedades inútiles,” which they were forced to teach out of view of the missionaries: “Retiraban para esto a los niños a algunas cuevas, o parajes apartados de los bosques, y allí les enseñaban a formar ciertas figuras en unas Tablas” (1: 111-112). Although Jesuit histories frequently characterize the Californios as lacking any technique resembling writing, here the shamans are described as passing on arcane symbols on “tablas” which their students were taught to reproduce. Furthermore, the pedagogical technique employed by the shamans is compared to that of the Jesuits: “aprendidas aquellas [figuras], les enseñaban otras al modo, que se hace en la Escuelas, para enseñar a escribir a los niños” (1: 112). In the representation of the rival pedagogical regime of the “guamas,” Jesuit narrative not only reveals the resistance met in practice by the Jesuits’ ideal of *reducción*, but also demonstrates how the discourse itself dissolves into incoherency and paradox when attempting to represent the fundamental differences between colonizers and colonized. The “guamas” are associated with classic spaces of barbarism in the West —the cave and the forest—yet in the same passage these spaces become the scene for the development of writing and the institution of schooling beyond the influence of Europeans. The Californios are first subject to an absolute dichotomy of nature and

culture (or barbarism and civilization) but as they resist the regime based on this dichotomy they are then portrayed as possessing the tools of civilization if only to misuse them in a perverse mimickry of the colonizers' culture

It is tempting to read this episode as a case of shamanic mimesis similar to those of the Cuna culture examined by Michael Taussig in *Mimesis and Alterity*. Burriel's description of the Californian *guamas* as imitating the institutions and gestures of the colonial agents of acculturation is uncannily similar to Taussig's descriptions of a Cuna healer donning Western garb in a process of imitating the other in order to become the other in a ceremony that releases the magical power from objects fashioned after Western models (188-192). As Taussig argues, the first contact of colonial exchanges becomes a "space permeated by the colonial tension of mimesis and alterity, in which it is far from easy to say who is the imitator and who is imitated, which is copy and which is original" (78). Just as in the Cuna healer's ceremony, the Western ethnographer likewise represents the colonial other through textual representation in order to steal away his magical powers. This representation (or imitation) of the Amerindian (imperfectly or perversely) imitating the colonizer's mastery is a frequently repeated trope of colonial discourse that neutralizes the threat of a rival pedagogical regime. Perhaps more than an empirical example of shamanic mimesis, this anecdote displays the centrality of the trope of mimicry, which, as Homi Bhabha suggests, reveals both the narcissism of the colonial agent (i.e. wishing to reproduce himself in the other) and his paranoia (i.e. fearing that the other may reproduce him too perfectly) (132). Thus, colonial discourse presents the colonized subject's efforts to imitate the colonizer's culture, which would paradoxically signal the success of *reducción*, as a parodic aping or uncanny hybrid, just as Burriel portrays the *guamas* as

attempting to reproduce the institutions of *reducción* in the barbaric setting par excellence for the West (the cave) and for the diabolic end of undermining the Jesuits' campaign.

Whether empirical fact or discursive strategy, rival pedagogues were not the only challenge faced in the establishment of the Jesuits' mastery on the mission frontier. In the beginning of *reducción* the missionaries were forced to renounce their authority and submit to the instruction of Amerindians in order to learn the languages of their would-be catechumens, a prerequisite to the establishment of Jesuits' project of colonization and acculturation. This inversion of roles threatened the hegemony of the colonizers' culture and was personally onerous to the missionaries. Burriel describes Father Helen's instruction in the Cochimí dialect of his mission as conducted under the "rudo, y penoso magisterio de un indio" (2: 327-38). As in the aforementioned case of Pedro Ugarte, this already humbling submission to Amerindian mastery was frequently intensified by further submitting to the instruction of children, who were considered the most reliable informants in their communities. The discourse of Jesuit historiography turns what was simply a response to the necessities of acculturation into an ascetic virtue: the subjection of the will in submitting to the instruction ("magisterio") of not only an Amerindian but an Amerindian child at that. Thus, the momentary subversion of the power structure in the contact zone paradoxically reaffirms the hierarchy of master and pupil, of conqueror and conquered. This aspect of apostolic merit becomes a key element of Jesuit missionology and hagiography as both a tactic in the acculturating process and a topos of missionary narrative that reaffirms the Jesuit mastery.

In the *Empressas apostólicas* Miguel de Venegas presents an already recognizable scene in which Father Salvatierra humbles himself to the linguistic instruction of his Californio catechumens:

[...] a tales niños escoge el Señor por instrumentos para obras tan grandes: porque se saben humillar como niños, y dar a Dios la gloria de todo. Humillaronse los Padres en esto con hazerse discipulos en la lengua de los que havian de ser Maestros en la fe: y hallandose niños con los niños, comunicaban continuamente con ellos, para aprender de su modo de hablar, no solo la substancia, y significacion de las voces, sino tambien el modo de pronunciarlas. (107)

Again, we see the missionary's worth measured by the depth to which he allows himself to sink in order to minister to his flock, even becoming a disciple of the children of those he has come to convert.<sup>82</sup> Thus, Jesuit discourse transformed the contentious and often violent dialectic that threatened to undermine *reducción* into a narrative of the missionary's ascetic triumph over the will and dedication to his providential mission.

The Jesuits were neither the first to employ this strategy of acculturation, nor were they the first to transform this strategic response to the contingency of the contact zone into an ascetic virtue. We see this particular form of apostolic merit arise from the conjuncture of the missionary enterprise in the recently conquered Tenochtitlan. Jerónimo de Mendieta, for example, describes the first Franciscan apostles' challenges in learning Nahuatl and the divinely inspired solution to their dilemma:

Hechas estas santas y humildes prevenciones, clamando a Dios continuamente, les acudió, como refugio que es de los atribulados y verdadero remedio en las tribulaciones, poniéndoles en su corazón, que con los niños que tenían por discípulos, se volviesen niños como ellos para participar de su lengua, y con ellos obrar la conversión de aquella gente pequeñuela, en sinceridad y simplicidad de niños. Y así fue que dejando a ratos la

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<sup>82</sup> Venegas paraphrases the well-known Biblical verse from Matthew 11:25: "thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes."

gravedad y austeridad de sus personas se ponían a jugar con ellos con pajuelas o pedrezuelas los raticillos que tenían de descanso, y esto hacían para quitarles el empacho de la comunicación y traían siempre papel y tinta en las manos y en oyendo el vocablo al indio lo escribían, y al propósito que lo dijo. A la tarde juntábanse los religiosos y comunicaban los unos a los otros sus escritos, y lo mejor que podían conformaban a aquellos vocablos el romance que les parecía más conveniente. Y acontecióles, que lo que hoy les parecía que habían entendido, mañana les parecía no así. (qtd. in Cuevas 1: 182)

The Franciscans' distress at the impossibility of communicating with their catechumens leads to desperate entreaties to God, who plants within them the idea of submitting to the instruction of children. This divine solution not only allows them to begin the arduous process of learning Nahuatl, which continues to vex them, but more importantly restores their spiritual authority by demonstrating their willingness to renounce the gravity and austerity of their office and submit to the most simple and humble of their flock. While not the first to employ this discursive strategy in response to the contingency of the contact zone, the Jesuits transformed this particular practice of self-abnegation into a cornerstone of the order's ascetic ideal and worldwide apostolic mission. In the Jesuit narrative tradition that was central to the corporate identity and cohesion of the order, the mastery of non-European languages was evidence of the Jesuits' particular efficacy as missionaries as well as serving as a trial of their ascetic will to self-mastery.

In Acosta's *De procuranda* this practical problem of the contact zone becomes the basis of a critique aimed at lax ministers as well as the foundation of the Jesuit missionary ideal on the Spanish-American colonial frontier. Referring to ministers who have not taken the trouble to learn Amerindian languages, Acosta asks "¿Pues qué hará el que no sabe lenguas ni tiene quien

le traduzca sus palabras, obligado él mismo a ser bárbaro entre los bárbaros, sin saber hablar, y, por otra parte, sin poder callar?” (95). Professing a kind of cultural relativism, Acosta claims that the missionary who cannot communicate with his catechumens, although he bears a truth that he dare not keep quiet, is just as barbarous as the Amerindian. Nevertheless, this momentary loss of prestige is fundamental to the institution of *reducción*: it becomes one more trial in which the missionary perfects his mastery and approaches the ascetic ideal. The Jesuit, who was the product of a rigorous and prolonged education in Classical languages and Christian theology, became a babbling pupil of a language spoken by people who were, in every way that was important to the Jesuit, his inferiors. Yet this was one more instance that the Jesuit could, according to Acosta, “sintonizarse con los humildes,” that is, follow the example of Christ through self-abnegation and prove his virtue by humbling himself before the most abased people he could find. This perceived lack of power and submission to his inferiors became a trial in which the true missionary, that is the the one who embodied the Jesuit ascetic ideal, proved his worth. By recourse to the ascetic ideal, the Jesuit thus avoided portraying himself as the mimetic parody of Amerindian culture.

In her work on the Jesuit natural histories of the northwest frontier of New Spain, Ivonne Del Valle has described the mission as a space of language exchange in which the Jesuits’ monological culture was threatened by the centrifugal forces of Amerindian resistance (77). Del Valle argues that the failure of the missionary led to a relegation of the traditional apostolic narrative (Edifying Letters, *Vidas y virtudes*, chronicles, etc.) with a consequent concentration in ethnography, botany and geography. According to Del Valle, this secular, scientific production is “la práctica occidental de autopreservación en condiciones de absoluta desventaja, un mecansimo aislado que permitía establecer con el medio ambiente una relación en la que el sujeto occidental



conservaba cierto control” (189). While it is true that this scientific discourse was a means of reestablishing the Jesuits’ contested authority on the mission frontier, this analysis does not take into account the fact that genres such as the *Vidas y virtudes* had a similar function of justifying the colonial order in the midst of this order’s decomposition on the frontier. Through the discourse of the Jesuits’ ascetic ideal, in fact, these narratives converted the failure of the missionary enterprise (the missionaries’ submission to Amerindian instruction, their inability to establish self-sustaining settlements, Amerindian rebellions, and ultimately martyrdom) into a triumph of the will that embodied the most hallowed virtues of the colonizers’ culture. Thus, it was not the failure of the missionary to adapt to the cultures of the frontier that led to the abandonment of a hagiographic discourse in favour of the secular, scientific discourse of natural history. In fact, the former was an effective response to this failure, and in many aspects, as I will argue in the next chapter, the latter was a further perfection of the Jesuits’ ascetic ideal.

While recognizing that the Jesuits’ claims of linguistic proficiency should not always be taken at face value, del Valle incorrectly states that there are “pocas referencias” to the Jesuits’ struggles with Amerindian languages on the mission frontier (78). In fact, the missionary’s struggle with Amerindian languages is a leitmotif of Jesuit narrative in both the hagiographic and scientific modes; while the Jesuits’ mastery of Amerindian languages was frequently celebrated, the cost of this mastery in self-abnegating and meticulous study is also well-documented. As revealed by Acosta’s *De procuranda*, mastery of Amerindian languages as a mastery of the self, a kind of linguistic heroism, was already an essential part of the Jesuits’ missionary ideal well before the eighteenth century. For every Francisco Hermano Glandorff, who was said to speak “el bárbaro idioma Tarahumar [...] como si le hubiera sido nativo” there was a Father Helen who was forced to submit to the “rudo y penoso magisterio de un Indio” (Braun 7). Even Juan

Eusebio Kino, who was a celebrated linguist and authored numerous grammars and vocabularies of the Amerindian languages of Sonora, was said to have learned these languages only after “venciendo el enojoso tedio” of apprenticeship (Burriel 2: 88).

The Jesuits’ struggles with the languages of the missionary frontier are perhaps best understood in comparison with their mastery of Amerindian languages with which Europeans had experienced a prolonged exposure by the eighteenth century. Juan Bautista Zappa and Juan de Ugarte, for example, were said to be accomplished Nahuatlitas before their missionary work on the mission frontier. In another case of the Jesuits either intentionally or inadvertently imitating Amerindian cultures, Miguel Venegas claims that Zappa was given the title “temachtiani,” or doctor, by his Nahuatl-speaking catechumens due to his mastery of their language in his sermons (115v). Juan de Ugarte, who would later exercise his missionary vocation in California, insisted that his confrères perfect their fluency in the “Idioma Mexicano,” or Nahuatl, and to such end organized study groups,

Provió en su colegio el Padre Juan con singular esmero el estudio del Idioma Mexicano, a el qual era el primero que se aplicaba, y para conseguir que sus súbditos lo aprendiesen y usasen con la mayor perfección, las tardes desocupadas de otros ministerios, juntaba a los Padres en su aposento, y juntos hacían ejercicio del Idioma, construyendo, preguntando, y respondiendo los puntos más difíciles del. Acabado este ejercicio, el Padre Rector (en todas sus acciones magnánimo, y caballero) daba a sus Súbditos un buen refresco, que tenía de antemano prevenido. (Villavicencio 42-43)

Ugarte’s diligence in the study of Nahuatl is presented here as an academic exercise undertaken among peers, that is, fellow Jesuits who share a similar cultural background; and though mastery of the language was useful to missionaries such as Zappa, the language also enjoyed certain

prestige in belle lettres, as evidenced in the work of contemporaries such as Sor Juana Inés de la Cruz and Carlos de Sigüenza y Góngora. Of course, native speakers are conspicuously absent from Ugarte's genteel study sessions, and they are only present as a captive audience to Zappa's supposed mastery of their language. Unlike the amicable dialectic in Father Juan's quarters in Mexico City, however, the experience of reproducing the Amerindian languages of the missionary frontier challenged the authority of the missionary and his culture.

The same text that celebrated Ugarte's application to the study of Nahuatl, Juan José de Villavicencio's *Vida y virtudes de el venerable, y apostólico padre Juan de Ugarte*, likewise employs the aforementioned leitmotif of self-abnegating submission to Amerindian instruction in its description of the Jesuit's first attempts at learning the languages of the Californios: "Así se ajustó al consejo de San Pablo, de hacerse ignorante para ser sabio verdaderamente, aprendiendo de los mismos a quienes iba a enseñar la sabiduría del cielo" (57). Ugarte, "educado con regalo en el siglo lograba en México dentro y fuera de la religión los mayores aplausos" (Burriel 2: 115), was forced to submit to the instruction of the ignorant, yet this act was prefigured in the proto-apostle's first epistle to Corinthians. Somewhat paradoxically, St. Paul's admonition against worldly wisdom, "Let no man deceive himself. If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise," authorized Jesuit mastery over their Amerindian catechumens, for in willingly renouncing recognition for their years of arduous study they would reaffirm their superiority over the ignorant (1 Corinth. 3:18). The fact that this mastery was not self-evident to the Californios is demonstrated by an anecdote involving the same Father Ugarte. In the *Noticia de la California*, Burriel recounts that Ugarte, who had assiduously studied the language of the Guaycuras, was vexed by the laughter that his first sermons produced among his catechumens and in the middle of a lesson stood up and began to

savagely strike the pupil who seemed to show the most blatant disrespect for his teachings (2: 116). Only later did Ugarte find out that the Guaycuras were laughing at his poor pronunciation of their language and his inappropriate use of certain words and phrases that his tutors had mischievously taught him in order to have a laugh at his expense. After this incident Ugarte was wary of his informants and “procuró poner más cuidado para instruirse en uno, y otro [vocabulario y pronunciación] tomando por maestros a los niños, habiendo averiguado, que los adultos, sobre resistirse, le engañaban, para burlarse después” (2: 117).

Though this episode is frequently cited in studies of the Jesuit missions of Lower California, the fact that the Guaycuras not only ridiculed the linguistic errors but also took an active role in subverting the tutelage of the missionary (“sobre resistirse, le engañaban, para burlarse después”) is overlooked; it would seem that the Californios were capable of inverting the trope of mimicry in order to parody their schoolmasters. Even armed with this newfound circumspection, Ugarte experienced a protracted and onerous apprenticeship due to the “rudeza brutal de aquellos infelices” (2: 117). Instead of demonstrating that the Californios were capable of subverting the process of *reducción*, or “reducing” the Jesuits, Burriel takes this anecdote as further evidence of their brutishness. Burriel’s text reasserts the violence that established the order and direction of *reducción*, a violence inherent in any encounter in which the subject takes the universal worth of his culture as an article of faith.

This linguistic heroism was not diminished in the Jesuit natural histories that, while based on the “Edifying Letters” and missionary hagiographies, were written in Europe and focused on those aspects of the missionary enterprise that would appeal to a secular reading public. In these works the Jesuits’ linguistic mastery increasingly grants authority to the missionary as a meticulous observer and ethnographer, but it is no less portrayed as a result of the missionary’s

self-mastery. The following passage from the *Noticia de la California*, which emphasized the ethnographic and scientific aspects of the Criollo Jesuit Miguel Venegas *Empresas apostólicas*, reiterates all of the details of this leitmotif:

El padre Salvatierra se dedicó desde luego a la enseñanza de los indios, y a aprender la Lengua, señalando para esto horas, en que los Indios concurrían a repetir las Oraciones, y Doctrina, que les leía por los Papeles de Copart: y el padre los oía hablar después, con la pluma en la mano, para notar sus voces, hablando el Padre, y enmendandole los Indios los yerros de los vocablos, o de la pronunciación. Enseñaba a los niños el Castellano, valiéndose de varias industrias: sufría las burlas, con que ellos, y los adultos mofaban de los yerros, que cometía, al pronunciar su lengua: burla, que saben hacer con donayre, y socarronada [...] Menudencias parecerán estas acaso, en que no debieramos detenernos. Mas yo ruego a quien leyere, que para darlas el valor que merecen, las pese en las balanzas del Santuario, reflexionando, qué espectáculo tan agradable sería a los ojos de Dios un hombre que pudiendo haver hecho gran fortuna, y aun vivido con estimación, y quietud dentro de la Religión, que había escogido, se desterró voluntariamente de su Patria, y Parientes, por passar a la América [...] por vivir sólo enter Bárbaros, con tantas incomodidades, y peligros de muerte. (2: 20)

Father Salvatierra is portrayed as patiently suffering not only the tutelage of his catechumens but also their ridicule (“que saben hacer con donayre”) in his protracted apprenticeship in their language. Furthermore, Salvatierra’s apostolic merit is magnified by his choice of voluntary exile among the “Bárbaros” of the mission frontier in place of the fame and luxury that he could have obtained in an urban college, a detail that, according to Burriel, must be measured against the lives of the saints.

In his *Historia de la Antigua o Baja California*, Novohispanic Jesuit Francisco Javier Clavijero, writing from exile in Bologna, emphasizes the task of learning the Californios' language as a means to establishing the Catholic and Spanish hegemony in the peninsula, which he claims was only possible thanks to the efforts of his brethren. With regard to Pedro de Ugarte, one of two Ugarte brothers who participated in the *reducción* of Lower California, Clavijero writes

Después que con semejante industria aprendió el dialecto de aquellos indios, se dedicó a catequizarlos, acariciándolos y regalándolos para obligarlos a asistir al catecismo, y valiéndose también de los niños para instruirlos; hasta que con un trabajo indecible y con una paciencia y una constancia heroicas, consiguió reducir a vida social y cristiana no sólo a los de Liguig, sino a todas las tribus vecinas y a muchos salvajes dispersos en los montes. (125-26)

While Clavijero emphasizes Ugarte's "industria" as a means to establishing a secular regime on the peninsula, he nevertheless mentions the fact that the missionary had turned his back on the nobility and fortune of his family, a key aspect of the Novohispanic ascetic ideal that was disseminated in the Jesuit *Vida y virtudes* (125). In one of the most noteworthy examples of this continuous and painstaking study of Amerindian languages, Clavijero writes that Clemente Guillén, who had arrived in the peninsula in 1714 and had remained in Loreto even after his retirement from missionary work thirty years later,

mas aún allí continuó trabajando cuanto le fue posible, y dio un raro ejemplo de celo, porque habiendo llegado a la misión, de tierra muy remota, una india anciana cuya lengua no entendían los misioneros, él a la edad de setenta años se puso a aprenderla con el solo

fin de doctrinar aquella mujer, y en este heroico ejercicio de caridad le sobrevino la muerte en 1748. (201)

These examples demonstrate that the linguistic heroism heralded as a foundation of the ascetic ideal in Jesuit narrative involved a humbling, painstaking and prolonged exercise of self-discipline and ascetic virtue.

The experience of Francisco María Piccolo, the missionary who accompanied Salvatierra on his first expedition to Lower California, reveals the personal challenges faced by missionaries in submitting to the instruction of Amerindians as well as the transformation of this experience through the discourse of Jesuit historiography. While there were Jesuits who doubtlessly possessed a gift for languages and achieved a high degree of fluency in Amerindian languages, Piccolo's history reveals the tension between the ascetic ideal of linguistic mastery and the reality of the missionary's experience on the frontier. Even in Juan Antonio Balthasar's idealized "carta edificante" on the life of Piccolo this tension is evident. Balthasar writes that Piccolo was beset by despair at his isolation on the frontier in his first mission among the Tarahumara, a solitude that was deepened by his inability to communicate with his would-be catechumens. In Balthasar's words,

Parece, que su grande, y especial devota la gloriosa Virgen, y prodigiosa Anachoreta Santa Rosalía, quiso asemejarlo á sí; pues sabemos, que la Santa á los principios de su varonil, y heroyca resolución de vivir sepultada en una cueva, padeció notable tedio, y horror à la soledad. No era el verse solo el principal motivo de la tristeza, que el P. padecía, lo que principalmente lo desconsolaba era, que ni entendía a los Indios, ni era entendido de ellos; y assí la mayor parte del dia la passaba llorando amargamente; probando Dios assi a su Siervo, con tenerlo en tan grande desolación. (31)

In another ironic reversal of roles in the mimetic “space between,” Piccolo’s biographer compares his inability to communicate with his catechumens to the twelfth-century anchorite Saint Rosalia’s solitary burial in a cave, for which Piccolo bitterly lamented his fate. In fact, Piccolo would later choose the name Santa Rosalía de Mulegé for one of the first mission settlements in Lower California. The advice supposedly given to the disparing Piccolo by a fellow missionary, “reze la doctrina por el papel, que de ella hay,” reveals just how improvised and precarious communication could be on the missionary frontier (31). Piccolo’s only means of communication was a rudimentary phonetic translation of the “doctrina” (Credo, Pater Noster, and Ave Maria), frequently used by missionaries on the frontier, from which he parroted the language of his catechumens.

Despite these revealing details from Piccolo’s biography, the missionary’s own *Informe del Estado de la nueva Cristiandad de la California* from 1703 presents a more idealized version of the linguistic exchange, although he stresses the Californios’ active participation in a dialectic with the Jesuits. Despite the Californios’ reasoned objections to the missionaries’ doctrine, Piccolo writes that they eventually ceded to the force of reason:

Su genio es muy vivo y despierto, y lo muestran, entre otras cosas, en mofar mucho cualquiera barbarismo en su lengua, como al principio lo hizieron con nosotros al predicarles. Despues de estar domesticados, se llegan a corregirnos, despues de predicar qualquier deslíz en su lengua. En predicandoles algunos mysterios contrarios à sus antiguos errores, acabado el Sermon, se llegan à el Padre, le reconviene de lo que dixo, y le arguyen y discurren en favor de su error con bastante aparencia; y à la fuerça de la razon, se sosiegan con toda docilidad. (65-6)



Notwithstanding the Californios' ridicule of the Jesuits' barbarisms, Piccolo notes the ease with which his confrères were learning the language (52). The fact that Piccolo's *Informe* was intended to solicit financial support for the Jesuit enterprise from the Viceroy of New Spain, the Count of Moctezuma, was likely the reason behind his optimistic portrayal of the order's first attempts at *reducción*. In more unguarded correspondence with his brethren, however, Piccolo revealed that communication was at best precarious in the first years of the Jesuit enterprise in Lower California.

In a letter written to Salvatierra from the mission at Santa Rosalía de Mulegé in 1709, Piccolo describes his efforts at making inroads among the Cochimíes, whose language was unfamiliar to the missionaries. Piccolo suggests that he was able to communicate his purpose to the Cochimíes, yet he affirms that the written speech he had prepared was of little use and he was forced to appeal to a higher power: "Les prediqué y les dije el fin de mi llegada a sus tierras. Tenía escrita la primera plática para esta entrada pues hablan muy diferentes de los Laimones y deseaba hablar al su modo de ellos. Finalmente dije lo que Dios me sugirió y quedaron muy gustosos [...]." It is impossible to know just how successful Piccolo's divinely suggested discourse was in convincing his new catechumens of their errors, but an overview of his documented experiences on the Jesuit missionary frontier casts doubt upon his assertions. On the mission frontier the Jesuits were placed in a situation in which their hard-won social prestige and authority was of little or no use in achieving their goals; not even the technology of writing, which the Jesuits had converted into a powerful tool for maintaining corporated discipline and promoting the order, could aid Piccolo in the unstable dialogic exchange with the Californios. Writing was, however, the means of establishing the Jesuits' authority *ex post facto* through

hagiography and natural history, whereby this loss of authority – a simple fact of the contact zone – was transfigured into an ascetic submission of the will.

Nevertheless, there was one fundamental form of universal communication that seemed to be successful in initiating the process of *reducción*: coercive violence. The Jesuit historiography of Lower California emphasizes that *reducción*, as practiced by the order's missionaries, was a form of "spiritual conquest" as opposed to the unsuccessful attempts, beginning with Hernán Cortés' aborted venture in 1534, at armed conquest of the peninsula and its inhabitants. Francisco Zevallos' "Carta edificante" on Fernando Consag, who served as a missionary in Lower California, expresses this ideal of *reducción*,

Ganar así los corazones de los hombres, es un género de Conquistas, que hace un misionero desarmado, y no puede hacer todo el estruendo, y terror de las armas. Tanto más poderosas son las armas del zelo, mansedumbre, y caridad cristiana, que son las con que se fundó, y se propaga el Imperio de Jesu-Cristo. (13)

This ideal of spiritual conquest is derived from the basic concept of Christian conversion, or *metanoia*, brought about through the example of charity and sacrifice, as practiced by Jesus Christ in the Gospels. In the ascetic ideal, these good works are transformed into a practice of self-denial that needs to create an other as witness, or even agent, of the subject's discipline. As this other of the missionary frontier is denied testimony, the network of textual production operated by the Jesuits and deeply connected to both colonial and metropolitan society assures that the significance of this sacrifice is reiterated.

Notwithstanding this oft-heralded concept of spiritual conquest, some Jesuit correspondence and narrative suggests that Jesuit *reducción* frequently made use of coercive

means.<sup>83</sup> In a letter to Juan de Ugarte sent from Lower California in 1697, Salvatierra describes the first tense days upon the arrival of the Jesuits and their entourage of soldiers and settlers.<sup>84</sup> Communication was hindered not only by a mutual lack of linguistic knowledge but also by the Californios' previous experiences of exploitation by rogue expeditions seeking pearls and mineral wealth in the peninsula. Salvatierra recounts the days leading up to a pitched battle with Californios,

Antes de que llegase el día de la pelea se hizo todo lo posible para que reconociesen la fuerza de nuestras armas, así en algunos buenos tiros tirando a los patos y animales: y la noche misma antecedente mató un soldado que estaba de guardia a un coyote muy gordo, que ellos pidieron para comerselo, y en nuestra presencia lo [comieron] como comida de grande sabor. También se puso un blanco de una tabla de grande distancia, y tirando todos por mostrar que yo también sabía tiré, y fue uno de los mejores tiros. Tiraron también ellos con sus flechas, y después del ejercicio al traerse la tabla vieron los agujeros de las balas, y se cotejó con el rasguño de las flechas y quedaron admirados de ver la diferencia de los tiros de unas y otras armas [...] (13v)

In this letter, one of the first missives sent from Lower California, Salvatierra reports that his first act of successful communication with his future catechumens was a demonstration of the Jesuits'

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<sup>83</sup> Del Río describes the Jesuit enterprise as a "conquista misionero-militar" in which "Aun en los casos en que, por razones tácticas, se prescindía del uso de las armas, la violencia permanecía latente puesto que en cualquier momento podía activarse el aparato militar para ofender, para repeler agresiones, para reprimir o simplemente para amedrentar a los nativos y prevenir de ese modo situaciones de conflicto" (94).

<sup>84</sup> Despite the fact that Jesuit historiography often foments the impression that the Jesuits were alone among the Californios, it is important to remember that they were accompanied by a significant entourage of soldiers and settlers from the countercoast. A "Memorial" written in 1700 by Salvatierra reveals that even in the early years of *reducción* the Jesuits were far from alone. The Jesuit's "censo de pobladores" includes "sesenta almas de cristianos de la Nueva España entre padres españoles y gente de familias, treinta hombres de armas españoles incluyendo capitán y alférez, dos españoles ventureros sin sueldo diez indios amigos de la Nueva España armados de arco y flechas, dos mulatos sirvientes, cinco filipinos pampangos y el resto mugeres y niños con caserías de adobes y otras estacadas y tierra todas en orden y bien techados y rodeado todo de un fuerte recinto de estacada y tierra para resistir a las armas de indios con una lancha varada en la playa a que pueden servir los filipinos en casa de grande urgencia [...]" (FAC 56).

ability and willingness to use lethal force. Contrary to Piccolo's assertion, this would seem to demonstrate that the Californios first ceded to the reason of force before the Jesuits had the chance to demonstrate the force of their reason.

The violence wrought by the process of *reducción* in Lower California assured the success of the acculturation of the inhabitants of the peninsula at the same time that it represented the failure of the Jesuits' ideal of "spiritual conquest." Furthermore, *reducción* failed insofar as it aimed to create political subjects and not exterminate them.<sup>85</sup> The process of acculturation combined with the devastation wrought by the diseases and violent reprisals of Europeans assured that Clavijero could confidently speak of many of the indigenous cultures of the peninsula in the imperfect:

La lengua pericú ya no existe, y los pocos individuos que han quedado de aquella desgraciada nación hablan hoy la española. La guaicura tenía tantos dialectos diversos cuantas eran las ramas de la nación que la hablaba, a saber: guaicuras propiamente dichos, aripas, uchitas, coras e indios de Conchó, llamados después lauretanos por el pueblo de Loreto que se fundó cerca de ellos. La rama de los uchitas y la de los coras se extinguieron; los lauretanos abandonaron su lengua por la española, y los otros restos de aquella nación conservan la que hablaban antiguamente. (50)

One is surprised to read of the widespread death and suffering of the Californios in a history that is ostensibly meant to portray the success of peaceful *reducción*, yet the hecatomb of the peninsular Amerindians was a fact that the historians of the enterprise could not easily gloss

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<sup>85</sup> Historians have estimated that the Peninsula was inhabited by between 40,000 and 50,000 Amerindians at the beginning of the eighteenth century. By the end of the Jesuit experiment in Lower California, the population is estimated to have dropped to around 7,000. According to Ignacio del Río, the principal causes of this steep demographic decline were disease, violent reprisals by viceroyal officials, the separation of women and children from their families, and the interruption of the hunter-gatherer subsistence of the Californios (Altable Fernández and del Río 66-67).

over. Venegas, Burriel and Clavijero seem to have tried to balance this fact by constantly emphasizing the physical suffering and privation experienced by the Jesuits, which culminates with the martyrdom of Fathers Carranco and Tamaral in the Pericú rebellion of 1734. Breaking with the overall somber tone of the *Noticia*, Burriel vividly recounts the torture and dismemberment of Carranco and Tamaral at the hands of their catechumens, attributing the uprising to an irrational rejection of the benign process of *reducción* instead of the Californios' reasonable association of their suffering with the presence of the outsiders (2: 469-70).

Jesuit historiography provides glimpses of the subversion of the order that the missionaries attempted to impose in the absence of institutional supports on the frontier. This subversion was not limited to the pedagogical regime, and in some cases it seems as if the Jesuits were in danger of being "reduced" by their catechumens. In one example, Juan de Ugarte, the same missionary who reacted violently to the ridicule of the Guaycuras, was forced to adopt to the hunter-gatherer subsistence of his catechumens after the Jesuits' failed attempts to establish a sustainable agricultural economy in the missions. And in a case of cross-dressing that must have bemused the Californios, Spanish soldiers used the headdresses of Californio women to tie up their hair. These examples demonstrate the inadequacy of the missionaries' culture for survival in the Peninsula as well as the ambivalence of mimesis in the contact zone. Indeed, one of the recurrent themes in the testimonies and histories of the *reducciones* is the hunger endured by the apostles and their catechumens due to the interruption of the Californios' forms of subsistence and the delay of food and supplies arriving from Sonora. Despite this occasional subversion, however, the asymmetrical relation of violent force ensured that the cultures of Lower California would ultimately face extinction. In approaching these paradoxes of the missionary frontier, Jesuit historiography invoked writing itself as a tool that would confirm the universal and

unidirectional extension of Western culture on the colonial periphery. To this end, Jesuit narrative evokes one of the most recognizable allegories of writing in Spanish American colonial discourse as a means to write non-European cultures (portrayed as not possessing the technology of alphabetic script) into its own universalizing and teleological history.

Writing, then, was doubly significant on the missionary frontier: on the one hand, its supposed absence among the Californios provided evidence of the nearly unbridgeable chasm between the missionary and catechumen, thereby increasing the apostolic merit of the Jesuit subject who was to draw them into the fold of Christianity and Western civilization; on the other hand, writing was the medium with which the Jesuits justified their enterprise and converted the *data* of the frontier into socially significant *facta* through the repetition of the order's ascetic ideal. It is important not to lose sight of the fact that this ascetic ideal, whether realized through the missionary's vocation or through the textual representation of his life, was in both cases a performance, even though it was legitimated and disseminated by powerful institutional supports. As I have shown in my reading of the Jesuit *Vida y virtudes* this performance depends upon a reciprocal, typological relationship between text and subject that legitimates the project of *reducción* and the social structure of the colonial center. Facing the centrifugal forces of the frontier contact zones, as witnessed in the Californios' laughter during the Jesuits' language lessons, the missionary repeats the predictable pattern of ascetic self-denial. This performance is consummated when the subject ultimately renounces his life and will to the text, becoming a model of conduct for readers both within and outside of the order.

In writing about writing, or about the lack of writing among the Californios, these narratives demonstrate the basic tautology underlying their authority: writing is superior because it is capable of writing itself into history. Of course, Jesuit authors repeat the well-known

arguments for the advantages of phonetic script over other modes of writing: it communicates in the absence of interlocutors, it preserves the memory of events and it permits the formation of abstract concepts.<sup>86</sup> These reasons are summarized in the *Noticia de la California*:

[...]el artificio maravilloso de las letras, con las cuales hablamos a los ausentes, y con que pueden conservarse las memorias de los siglos pasado. Esta prodigiosa invención, que pinta articulaciones de la voz, y da cuerpo a los conceptos del entendimiento, fue igualmente desconocida de todas las Naciones, que hasta ahora se han descubierto en la America. (1: 68-69)

Nevertheless, this argument for writing, which is an argument for the authority of the colonizer's culture to write the yet-to-be-colonized into history, depends upon a radical negativity imposed upon the Amerindian. Without writing, the Amerindian is deprived of significant communication, history or abstract thought, as if none of these could exist without the written script of the colonizer; but, as the Jesuit narratives begrudgingly concede, their catechumens possessed these faculties without the benefit of alphabetic writing. Furthermore, this writing the absence of writing denies its own performative basis as a strategy for imposing a hierarchy and arresting the unstable dialogic relationship of the frontier. In this sense, the Californios laughter at the missionaries' mispronunciation is countered by an immediately recognizable anecdote presented as a humorous and representative example of the simplicity of the Californios. In his supplement to the *Noticia de la California*, Miguel del Barco, a missionary in Lower California for three decades until the Jesuits' expulsion in 1767, adds the following story as an illustration

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<sup>86</sup> These arguments are summarized in José de Acosta *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* in which the Jesuit distinguishes between phonetic script and ideograms (284). According to Acosta the latter was an inferior form of writing found among the more advanced Amerindian cultures while the former was nowhere to be found in the New World.

of the lack of the “artificio maravilloso de las letras” among the Californios, which must be cited at length because of the relevance of each of its details:

Antes bien, les causó grande admiración que se pudiese hablar a los ausentes de otro modo que por la viva voz de un internuncio, como lo da bien a entender el caso siguiente. Sucedió hacia los primeros años de este siglo, y de la conquista, que un niño de la misión de San Javier, habiendo ido a Loreto, el padre que allí estaba envió con él dos panecillos al padre Juan de Ugarte, misionero de San Javier, y juntamente cartas, en que, demaás de lo que ocurría, le avisaba de los dos panecillos que le enviaba (lo cual en aquel tiempo era un especial regalo por no hacerse pan sino en Loreto, y esto no de continuo, sino cuando habían traído harina de la otra banda del mar). El indio en el camino probó el pan y, como le supo bien, fue comiendo hasta que acabó con todo, creyendo que, como iba solo nadie lo sabría. Llegó a San Javier, y entregó su carta al padre Ugarte quien, viendo lo que en ella le decían, dino al indio que el entregase lo que enn loreto le dieron que trajera al padre. Respondió, que nada le habían dado. Replicó el padre que le habían entreado dos panecillos. Volvía a decir el indio que nada había recibiso. Y, como el padre aún instase sobre lo mismo, preguntó el indio: ¿pues quién dice que me han entregado eso para ti? Este lo dice, respondió el padre, mostrándole el papel. Admiróse el pbre neófito de que un acosa tan pequeña, y tan delgada, supiese hablar. No obstante, dijo que, si el papel lo dice miente.

Dejóle con esto el padre, conociendo lo que había sucedido. Pasado algún tiempo, volvió a repetirse el caso, porque, habiendo ido a Loreto el mismo indio, y encargándole all´que llevase al padre Ugarte no sé qué comestible, con carta en que le avisaban lo que le remitían, el portador en el camino quería comerlo, pero tenía miedo a la carta, de quien



ya tenía experiencia le avisaba al padre lo que pasaba. Mas, apretándole la ansia de comerlo, se apartó un poco del camino, puso el papel detrás de un peñasco y, escondiéndose él en otra parte, comió todo lo que llevabay, acabado, fue a tomar su carta, y con ella prosiguió el camino. Llegado a San Javier, el padre Ugarte, leída su carta, le reconvinó para que entregara lo que en Loreto le habían dado. Respondió que a él no le habían dado nada. Replicó el padre que él sabía bien que le habían entregado tal cosa, para que la trajera al padre. ¿Quién lo dice?, preguntó el indio. Éste lo dice, respondió el padre Ugarte, mostrándole el papel. Pues éste miente, repuso el otro; la otra vez es verdad que yo comí el pan delante de él, mas ahora yo le escondí y me puse en donde él no me viera; pues si ahora dice que yo lo comí, miente; porque él no me ha visto comer ni sabe lo que yo hice. Por este caso se conoce bastantemente cuán lejos estaban los californios de tener noticia del artificio de las letras. (177-78)

In the same measure that the missionary struggles in establishing his authority in the language of his catechumens, the Californio is portrayed as awestruck by the Jesuits' technology of writing, which turns out to reveal both his simplicity and perfidy. Before delving into the structure and genealogy of this "caso," it is important to first note that Clavijero took this story from del Barco's notes for his own *Historia de la Antigua o Baja California*, omitting the name of the missionary involved as well as the toponyms while adducing the vague anecdote as evidence of the "sencillez pueril" of the Californios (52). Thus del Barco's story, though devoid of a reliable source, was widely disseminated as further empirical evidence of the breach separating Western written history from the speech of the Amerindian.

The Jesuits' own accounts of their catechumens' ability to rapidly assimilate the colonizers' culture, as well as examples such as the *hechiceros'* schools and writing already cast

sufficient doubt on the supposed innocence and awe experienced by the Californio in the anecdote. Furthermore, this supposedly empirical observation is remarkably, even suspiciously, similar to a trope frequently repeated throughout the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries among historians and early philosophers of language writing from Europe. Several recent studies have already examined the appearance of an early version of this anecdote in the Inca Garcilaso de la Vega's *Comentarios reales*, which, as Antonio Cornejo Polar asserts, became the source for the nineteenth-century Peruvian folklorist Ricardo Palma's version of the story published in his *Tradiciones peruanas* (97).<sup>87</sup> Cornejo Polar recognizes this story as essentially a "cuento" that expresses "la confrontación entre oralidad y escritura y su desigual inserción y uso en la dinámica del poder social" (96). While recognizing the significance of the allegory as portraying the complicity of the written word with power and within colonial discourse, these studies nevertheless underestimate just how pervasive this trope was in colonial historiography.<sup>88</sup> Though often presented as a humorous anecdote, this "cuento" was also, as in the case of del Barco's emendations to Burriel's *Historia de la California*, adduced as empirical fact gathered from direct experience. Indeed, the repetition, or performance, of the trope marks the limit between experience and mimesis in the crisis of Jesuit authority on the colonial frontier. The mirror game of mimickry in the colonial encounter again reflects back on the colonizer's discourse, which in this case represents the Amerindian as mimicking an anecdote that in fact the author himself is aping from a model handed down from the first colonial encounters.

Noting that similar anecdotes flourish in early-modern European travel writing, de Certeau examines a particular passage from the chronicle of Jean de Lèry that adduces the

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<sup>87</sup> Interestingly, Palma misattributes his source as José de Acosta (Cornejo Polar, 97).

<sup>88</sup> Just like Cornejo Polar, Juan José Arrom focuses his analysis of the allegory on the relation between the Inca's and Palma's versions (153-160).

Amerindian's wonderment at the technology of writing as further evidence of the special favor that God has visited upon Christianity (*Writing* 214-15). For de Certeau, these representations of speech and writing on Europe's colonial periphery demonstrate writing as an "expansionist labor of knowledge" which marks the difference between the Amerindian and European while justifying the West's universalizing discourse. Writing, which claims permanence and transparency across time and space, is also circular in that it articulates difference at the colonial periphery in order to be brought back to its origin and reaffirm authority over its negative, speech (215-16). We may add that this circularity is paralleled by the performance of the ascetic ideal, which is likewise realized at the colonial periphery only to reassert its authority over the life of the Criollo or European subject. While in the passage cited by de Certeau Lèry relates the measured surprise at writing that he witnessed while living among the Tupinambus, the sixteenth-century Calvinist also adds a reference to Francisco López de Gómara's *Historia General de las Indias* (1552), which exaggerates the elements of simplicity and duplicity of the Amerindian as revealed through the Spaniards' exchange of letters. All of the basic elements of the del Barco's anecdote are already present in Gómara's *Historia*:

Hicieron también mucho al caso las letras y cartas que unos españoles a otros escribían; ca pensaban los indios que tenían espíritu de profecía, pues sin verse ni hablarse se entendían, o que hablaba el papel, y estuvieron en esto abobados y corridos. Aconteció luego a los principios que un español envió a otro una docena de hutias fiambres porque no se corrompiesen con el calor. El indio que las llevaba durmióse y cansóse por el camino, y tardó mucho a llegar a donde iba; y así tuvo hambre o golosina de las hutias, y por no quedar con dentera ni deseo comióse tres. La carta que trajo en respuesta decía como le tenía en merced las nueve hutías, y la hora del día que llegaron; el amo riñió al

indio. El negaba, como dicen, a pie juntillas; mas como entendió que lo hablaba la carta, confesó la verdad. Quedó corrido y escarmentado, y publicó entre los suyos cómo las cartas hablaban, para que se guardasen de ellas. (54)

This story presents a fundamental structure that can interchange protagonists and settings (Brazil, Santo Domingo, California) while maintaining repeatable elements: a European master, an Amerindian servant, a package containing a specific number of edible goods, a missive stating the number, a solitary path, and a recipient of said package and missive. Furthermore, each of these elements is subject to a series of interrelated dichotomies: culture versus nature; the civility of the European (or self-denial of the missionary) versus the unrestrained appetite of the Amerindian; writing as the conservation of truth versus the Amerindian's perfidious speech. Upon close examination, each iteration of this anecdote also presents a very vague empirical origin; that is, we are told that a certain unnamed European (or in the case of del Barco's "caso" a specific missionary at an unspecified time with an unnamed interlocutor) was said to have experienced this phenomenon, yet just how it was transmitted and preserved, or transformed, remains a mystery.

As Gómara's version of the story is said to take place at the beginning of the Spanish colonization of Santo Domingo it is likely that he took license with a similar passage from Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo's earlier *Sumario de la natural historia de las Indias* (1526), which likewise portrays the wonderment that the Amerindians of Santo Domingo display upon witnessing the Spanish technology of writing:

Pero pues dije de suso que tenían letras, antes que se me olvide de decir lo que de ellas se espantan, digo que cuando algún cristiano escribe con algún indio alguna persona que esté en otra parte o lejos de donde se escribe la carta, ellos están admirados en mucha

manera de ver que la carta dice acullá, lo que el cristiano que la envía quiere, y llévanla con tanto respeto o guarda, que les parece que también sabrá decir la carta lo que por el camino le acaece al que la lleva; y algunas veces piensan algunos de los menos entendidos que tiene ánima. (131-32)

Oviedo's version lacks protagonists but maintains the message: the ignorant and perfidious Amerindian is wary of being exposed by the letter. It may be said that it is the moral without the parable.<sup>89</sup> In fact, del Barco's iteration of this story, lacking a plausible empirical basis, can be understood as parable or allegory, that is, as a trope that paradoxically enters into the discourse of history and ethnography in order to distinguish the truth of writing from the duplicitous language of the other.

While the genealogy of this parable can be plausibly traced back to Oviedo through Gómara,<sup>90</sup> if we examine other iterations its origins are revealed as more obscure, shifting in time and space and untraceable to any empirical determination. For example, the English Bishop and polymath John Wilkins' *Mercury, or the Secret and Swift Messenger* (1641) narrates nearly the same anecdote presented in del Barco's notes, with the two loaves of bread replaced by a

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<sup>89</sup> It is important to note that elsewhere Fernández de Oviedo is equivocal on the nature of writing, speech and history. In his description of the ceremonies of the Amerindians of Santo Domingo, Fernández de Oviedo describes their songs ("areytos") as a kind of writing serving the same purpose as Europeans' alphabetic script: "a lo que yo he podido entender, solo sus cantares, que ellos llaman areytos, es su libro o memorial que de gente en gente queda de los padres a los hijos, y de los presentes a los venideros" (*Historia* 229). The chronicler further compares these "areytos" to the Spanish and Italian romances that preserve the memory of their nations' heroes: "es una efigie de la historia o acuerdo de las cosas pasadas, así de guerras como de paces, porque con la continuación de tales cantos no se les olviden las hazañas y acaescimientos que han pasado. Y estos cantares les quedan en la memoria, en lugar de libros de su acuerdo; y por esta forma recitan las genealogías de sus caciques y reyes o señores que han tenido, y las obras que hicieron, y los malos o buenos temporales que han pasado o tienen; y otras cosas que ellos quieren que a chicos grandes se comuniquen y sean muy sabidas y fijamente esculpidas en la memoria" (233).

<sup>90</sup> Both Cornejo Polar and Arrom recognize this genealogy which they take from Raquel Chang-Rodríguez' "Elaboración de fuentes en 'Carta Canta' y 'Papelito jabla lengua'" (*Kentucky Romance Quarterly*, XXIV, num. 4, 1977: 433-39).

basket of figs.<sup>91</sup> Wilkins' parable even includes the second journey with the letter hidden by the Amerindian under a rock, a twist which is not included in Gómara's version. The author does not provide the names and nationalities of the protagonists except to mention that the messenger was an "Indian slave," but he does provide a source for the story (5-7). It should come as no surprise that Wilkins' source is the work of a Jesuit, Hugo Hernan's *De prima scribendi origine et universa rei literariae antiquate* (1617), which in turn takes the anecdote from the French Jesuit Louis Richeome's *L'Adieu de l'âme devote laissant le corps: avec les moyens de combatre le mort par la mort* (1597). The latter provides the most elaborate form of the story, which is now situated in Brazil:

In the year 1572 a missionary recently returned from Brazil told a funny story that is very pertinent to the present matter. He recounted that a European gentleman newly arrived to that country, one day sent to a neighbor of his, also a gentleman of the same nation, a basket of fresh figs accompanied by a letter entrusted to his Peruvian servant. Along the way, the servant was a little curious not only to peek at the fruits he was carrying, but also, not having seen anything like them before, to taste them: and having indulged his fantasy he picked up the basket and delivered it. When the gentleman read the letter and examined the present, he was soon on to the dimunition, and smiling to himself he said to the servant that he had taken on a great debt against his figs; upon the servant's steadfast denial of the charge, the gentleman adduced the testimony of the letter of his master who had specified a number of figs at more than a third greater than those in the basket. As the young man heard him say that the letter specified the number of figs, he was so stunned that he might as well have been told that stones spoke, and believing that the gentleman

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<sup>91</sup> Umberto Eco's *The Limits of Interpretation* begins with this anecdote taken from Wilkins' work. Eco contrasts Wilkin's naive faith in the written word with the post-structuralist critique of the writing-speech dichotomy (1-7).

had arrived at that figure by attempting a guess as opposed to anything factual communicated by the letter, he brazenly persisted in his defense with lively arguments, as if with a heavy conscience, saying that one could not make a peice of paper speak that did not have eyes, ears or sense. The gentleman was amused by this wonderment and brazeness, and he sent him back to his master with another letter of thanks, without forgetting to mention what had happened. The servent delivered this letter upon his return, and the master having learned of the story, without making any outward display laughed to himself in his heart with the intention of correcting his man once and for all; and thus eight days later he entrusted another basket of figs with a letter to be taken again to the aforementioned gentleman, carefully beseeching the servant to be faithful and not to touch any of them. This fine gourmand was quite full of himself, thinking that he had fooled everybody, and resolved to do even better the second time. When he was at the midpoint of his jouney, he visited the basket, and finding the letter on top of the figs, just to be safe in case that paper had any sense (which he could not believe) he hid it under a stone upon which he sat and shamelessly ate a few more of the figs than those he had not eaten before, after which he put the letter back and continued his journey. Upon arriving, the gentleman graciously received the second present, suspecting that it was meant to test the servant; after reading the letter he discovered an even greater substraction than before and he began to accuse the servant, specifically citing how many of the figs he had eaten and how he had done it against the express prevention of his master. That young man who believed he had been even more shrewd than the first time, was more dumbfounded than ever, in his soul trying to figure out how that letter had been able to reveal what it could not have seen, having been hidden as he ate the figs. Nevertheless he still held to

denial, thinking that it would be as before. The gentleman said no more and gave the servant his dispatch and instructions. Upon learning of his servant's relapse, the master condemned him to be well whipped and made him confess the feast, for which as a kind of justification he said that it was not possible that the paper had accused him, as he had kept it hidden under a stone while he ate the figs, and thus he remained astonished and incredulous almost making his master wary, that such astonishment at writing was reasonable was not thought possible. Yet anyone would experience the shock of that Peruvian at the amazing artifice of writing, not having the daily experience that we have, which has removed by custom the amazement at effects worthy of wonderment. (my translation, 58-59)

Richeome seemingly adduces this case in order to prove the opposite of what del Barco and Gómara claim, that is, that writing is truly a miracle that the Indian correctly perceives while the European is too conditioned by habit to marvel at the artifice. None the less, the Christian European receives the blessings of the written word despite his inability to properly perceive the "marvellous artifice of writing" (193r).

Richeome's anecdote seems to provide an alternate genealogy for del Barco's parable: originating in Brazil in the late sixteenth century instead of Santo Domingo at the beginning of the Spanish colonization of the Americas, and passed on to a Jesuit missionary who later related it as a "conte gracieux" upon his return to France. Again, this anecdote itself presents a dubious genealogy as an oral account, and a second-hand one at that, travelling back across the Atlantic to be preserved in a third-hand written account that additionally confuses Brazil and Peru. The details, however, are not important because the purpose of this anecdote as allegory is to tell us what must already be known about writing and speech (and the European and the Amerindian) in



order for the writing of ethnography to be truthful. This trope, so crucial to preserving the power of writing and the pedagogical hierarchy implicit in Jesuit narrative, paradoxically demonstrates the failure of writing to remember and the dependence of the written word on orality and performance. Colonial discourse must turn to trope or allegory, that is, despite its claims of faithfully preserving the memory of events it must also invent, or imitate, in order to tell its truth.

In addition to the structure of two missives and the underlying dichotomy of culture and nature, Richeome's parable contains some elements missing from del Barco's iteration which furthermore belie the concept of colonial writing as more truthful than speech. First of all, in the master's second missive writing itself becomes an instrument of duplicity in order to entrap the unsuspecting Amerindian servant who has supposedly proven that he cannot restrain his appetite or remain faithful to a contract undertaken with his master. Nor can the letter extract the truth on its own, as the "Peruvian's" confession is obtained by a "good whipping." Thus, the letter is foremost an instrument of power, keeping watch over the Amerindian and justifying retributive violence. This anecdote is similar to Nietzsche's genealogy of the guilty conscience arising through the debtor-creditor relationship (exemplified in the etymology of *Schuld* which means both "debt" and "guilt" in German) wherein the debtor internalizes the sadistic retribution of the creditor as a debt of guilt always already incurred (*Genealogy* 67). The recipient's quip about a debt taken against his figs and both "gentlemen's" glee (not to mention the author's) at the trap they have set for the unsuspecting servant indicate that the parable is itself a marvellous artifice representing the complexity of writing and mimesis on the colonial frontier.

The cases in which Jesuit narrative turns to writing and its absence are examples of what Jacques Derrida, in his study of Claude Levi-Strauss's *Triste Tropiques*, terms the "anthropological war" that inevitably breaks out between writing and speech even in the absence

of overt oppression (106). Levi-Strauss's "Writing Lesson" is strikingly similar to the Jesuit accounts of the Californios' unfamiliarity with writing: the French ethnographer uses child informants to discover the truth of the Nambikwara's language, vacillates on exactly what constitutes writing, and ultimately denies the Nambikwara a history due to their lack of writing. Unlike the Jesuits, however, the French anthropologist attempts an anti-ethnocentric critique of writing as an instrument of violence and colonial exploitation; yet, as Derrida shows, this critique depends upon the same ethnocentrism that "separates writing from speech with an ax" (121). Both forms of ethnocentrism depend on a strict dichotomy of culture and nature, as observed through writing and its negative, even when this dichotomy is represented alternately as one of Christian civilization versus heathen barbarism or capitalist exploitation versus primitive utopia (110). At the center of Levi-Strauss' "A Writing Lesson" is an anecdote, which like those examined above, carries a double moral by demonstrating the Amerindian's lack of comprehension of the function of written script while at the same time displaying the use of writing as a socially symbolic medium for exercising power. As Derrida suggests, in this anecdote "All the organic complexity of writing is here collected within the simple focus of a parable" (126). Derrida's suggestion that the "Writing Lesson" be read as parable is meant to blur the distinction between ethnography and literature, or between the historical and the aesthetic. Playing off Levi-Strauss' own assertion, after Rousseau, that figurative language is the most primitive form of human communication, Derrida quips that the structuralist anthropologist's "story is very beautiful" (126).<sup>92</sup>

Turning back to the *Noticia de la California*, we find an alternative story of writing that closely parallels Levi-Strauss' experience with the Nambikwara chief and undermines the trope

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<sup>92</sup> The French original ("L'histoire est très belle") plays off the ambiguity of *histoire* as both story and history, thus conflating figurative and historical discourses (187).

of the letter and basket of figs. Burriel relates a curious episode that involved the Jesuit missionary Juan Bautista Luyando, who lived among the Cochimíes of the northern part of the peninsula. Luyando, seeing the advantage of opening roads between his mission and the different *rancherías* that it served, had offered rewards to the group that was the first to clear a path from their village to the mission. What supposedly happened next reveals that the Cochimíes had quickly learned the Jesuits' writing lesson:

Vieron los de una ranchería, que los de otra cercana llevaban mucho más adelantado el camino, que ellos el suyo, y si habían de llevar la alabanza y premio. Para impedirlo, quitaron un papel de la casa del Padre; y habiendo observado, que las Cartas hablaban a los distantes, y servían de enviar recados, pintaron en el algunos borrones, remedando las letras, y enviaron el papel a los de la otra ranchería, con recado fingido del Padre, para que dejando el camino empezado, lo abriesen por otra parte. Suspendieronse los otros, y temiendo el engaño, les volvieron el papel, y mensajero, diciendo: Que el padre no les enviaría papel, pues no sabían leerlo. Replicaron estotros, que el papel era para seña de ser verdad: más recelosos ellos acudieron al Padre, y descubrieron el engaño. (2.405-06)

Just as in the trope of the duplicitous Amerindian messenger, this anecdote is structured upon the dichotomies of speech and writing, presence and absence, nature and culture, and falsehood and truth in order to distance the Amerindian and the European; yet, on closer analysis these distinctions are blurred. The context within which the story unfolds, the building of a road through a rocky unmarked landscape, even suggests a carefully wrought parable on the origin of writing in the first shaping of unformed nature, a path cut through a savage landscape towards civilization. Unlike the previous trope, however, in this case writing is associated with falsehood, that is, it becomes a tool for exercising the will to power over another. In replying that the paper

was a sign of the messenger's truth, the malefactors in this story have discovered what Lèvi-Strauss called the "sociological object" of writing, its use as means of exploitation, as opposed to the "intellectual object," that is the actual contents of its discourse (290).<sup>93</sup> Nevertheless, the targets of this scheme are immediately on to the fraud and point out the absurdity of Luyando sending them a missive they could not read, a situation uncannily similar to the reading of the *requerimientos* in the early years of the Spanish conquest. The Cochimíes had apparently already anticipated the "hypothesis" that Lèvi-Strauss' gleaned from his writing lesson with the Nambikwara: "the primary function of writing, as a means of communication, is to facilitate the enslavement of other human beings" (292).

In the end, the duplicity that the letter uncovers is revealed in writing itself, it is a game like the one played at the expense of the missionary attempting to learn the Guaycuras' language. The imperfect mimesis, the mimicry, of the other is subject to uneasy laughter that neutralizes a very serious threat to the primacy of writing over orality, or the Jesuit schoolmaster over the Amerindian catechumen. There is however, a duplicity that this writing perhaps does not anticipate. For the sake of argument, let us assume that del Barco's anecdote is based on fact, that it is linked to the other anecdotes either by chance or by a universally observable phenomenon. This would allow us to legitimately theorize the difference between cultures with writing and those without, yet this theory would still be open to divergent conclusions: the duplicity of Amerindian speech (the Jesuits) or the violence of European writing (Levi-Strauss). Furthermore, both of these discourses underestimate their own naiveté despite claiming to be wise to the perfidy or violence behind the phenomenon. What is to stop us from believing that the antagonist of these anecdotes plays off the missionary and ethnographer's overestimation of

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<sup>93</sup> In Lèvi-Strauss' "A Writing Lesson" the Nambikwara chief similarly uses the prestige of writing, without mastering the technique, to enhance his own authority and control the commerce with the white man for his benefit (290).

writing and underestimation of the Amerindian in a ruse that performs the simplicity and perfidy expected of him? This would be a truly masterful performance with the happy consequence of a belly, or two, full of bread (even if it were paid for with a beating). Even Levi-Strauss recognizes his anxiety before the spectacle of the Nambikwara chief, which causes him to flee “since there would obviously be a moment of real danger at which all the marvels I had brought would have to be handed over” (289). We might say that neither the missionary nor the ethnographer is nearly convinced enough of the mimetic prowess of the Amerindian, nor is he fully alert, despite his claims of sufficient experience, to the possibility of playing the dupe.

In the *Tropics of Discourse*, Hayden White describes how tropes such as those examined here insinuate themselves even into historiography that claims an unmediated empirical foundation. According to White, the absolute separation of ratiocinative and poetic discourse is a legacy of the Enlightenment classification of non-European and popular cultures as superstitious, ignorant and irrational, that is, everything that Enlightenment historians claimed to overcome through their own work (147). The use of tropes in historiography, however, occurs wherever the European historian meets resistance to fundamental notions of self, or “times of sociocultural stress” such as the Jesuits’ experiences on the northwest frontier of New Spain (151). In White’s words, “Metaphors are crucially necessary when a culture or social group encounters phenomena that either elude or run afoul of normal expectations or quotidian experiences” (184). Just like the metaphors of the “Wild Man” and “Noble Savage,” the tropes employed by Jesuit historiographers permitted them to positively distinguish themselves from the object of *reducción* and to further ground a scientific discourse upon this distinction. Writing, as both a medium and a metaphor, reasserted the legitimacy of the pedagogical regime that the

Jesuits sought to establish on the mission frontier, even in the face of irrefutable evidence of this project's failure.

#### **4. “Apóstoles y hombres doctos”: The Jesuit Ascetic Ideal and Enlightenment Natural History**

The experience of Jesuit missionaries on the eighteenth-century Novohispanic frontier, and in particular the Society’s undertaking in Lower California, provided material for both the mid-century boom in Jesuit-authored hagiographies on exemplary subjects as well as widely disseminated natural histories such as Andrés Marcos Burriel’s *Noticia de la California y su conquista temporal y espiritual hasta el tiempo presente*. As I have shown in the previous chapters, the Jesuit authors of eighteenth-century missionary narrative increasingly differentiated the discourses of hagiography and natural history into separate value spheres that served different purposes within the Society and were aimed at different audiences outside the order. This differentiation did not signal a simple rupture between a pre-modern providential worldview and a modern secular-scientific worldview, but was rather a parallel development of two forms of embodying and representing the ascetic ideal in the modern world. On the one hand, eighteenth-century Jesuit hagiographic works served the purpose of reproducing a reciprocal regime of self-control and control of the other in the context of colonialism, while on the other hand Jesuit natural histories emphasized the asceticism of intellectual activity and the reproduction of a scientific discourse that was likewise bound to the establishment of a colonial order on the Spanish-American frontier. The case of the Jesuit natural and civil histories of Lower California demonstrates to what degree the Society was able to adapt its ascetic ideal, and in some aspects even foreshadow, the modern scientific vocation of the naturalist and ethnographer.

Recent studies of eighteenth-century Spanish and Spanish-American historiography have focused on the *querelle de l'Amérique* that pitted European naturalists and historians who affirmed the degenerate nature of the Americas against Criollo authors who defended not only the variety and fertility of the New World but also the epistemological foundations of knowledge produced in the Americas. Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, for example, has argued that Criollo and Spanish historiography and natural history displays a “patriotic epistemology” that contested and critique the conjectural Enlightenment histories of Spain and Spanish America written from London, Paris and Berlin. While the Criollo Jesuit Francisco Javier Clavijero’s *Historia antigua de México* was one such salvo in the eighteenth-century debate on the nature of the Americas, the modernity of Jesuit-authored natural histories is more a function of the order’s ascetic ideal and the procedures and institutions employed by the order in Spanish-America and the metropole.<sup>94</sup> The Novohispanic Jesuit Miguel Venegas’ *Empresas apostólicas* (1739), a manuscript history of the order’s missions in Lower California, and his Spanish confrère’s *Noticia de la California* (1757), a revised version of Venegas’ original printed in Madrid and widely translated and disseminated throughout Europe, provide a case study in how the enactment of the Jesuit ascetic ideal on the Spanish-American mission frontier provided an epistemological foundation for the writing of Enlightenment natural history.

As Paula Findlen observes, the development of natural history in early modern Europe up to the eighteenth century is lacking in the type of “Copernican revolution” that marked other natural sciences in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, but rather developed slowly through information sharing media and networks in early-modern Europe (436). A discipline that developed among a disparate group of practitioners, natural history involved the observation,

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<sup>94</sup> The most thorough account of the *querelle de l'Amérique* during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, including Clavijero’s participation, is Antonello Gerbi’s *The Dispute of the New World* (195).



description, collection, and classification of flora, fauna and minerals as well as ethnographic accounts of the cultures encountered in the expansion of European empires in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. What came to fruition in the eighteenth century was the accumulated experience of early modern naturalists and scientific travellers, among whom the Jesuits played a prominent role due to their world-wide missionary network and corporate discipline (Harris, “Confession Building” 311). The epistemological limits of the genre of “Natural and Civil History” had already been outlined by Thomas Hobbes in the mid seventeenth century:

The Register of *Knowledge of Fact* is called *History*. Whereof there be two sorts: one called *Natural History*; which is the History of such Facts, or Effects of Nature, as have no Dependance on Mans *Will*; Such as are the Histories of *Metalls, Plants, Animals, Regions*, and the like. The other, is *Civill History*; which is the History of the Voluntary Actions of men in Common-wealths. (60)

Reflecting the eighteenth-century public’s expectations of the genre, the author of one of the “Aprobaciones” to Burriel’s *Noticia* praises the work for covering all areas of the natural and civil history of California “dando noticia de sus moradores, su religión, costumbres, y trajes: de sus aves, animales, peces: y de sus plantas, frutos y minerales, con lo demás, que corresponde a su Historia Natural, y Civil, sin olvidar los ramos del comercio, como punto que pide una atención reflexa” (1: xiii).

Burriel’s reformulation of the *Empressas*, and even more so his letters describing the motives behind the undertaking, provides evidence for the place of the Jesuit ascetic ideal in the epistemological foundations of Enlightenment natural history and ethnography. In his essay comparing ancient and modern historiography, the eighteenth-century Spanish polymath Benito Jerónimo Feijóo y Montenegro praised the empirical authority of modern naturalists claiming

that “no es tan libre el mentir que antes” given that “No hay Región tan remota, que por razón del comercio, u de las Misiones, no sea frecuentada de muchos Europeos” (“Historia Natural” 62). By the eighteenth century the mission frontier of Spanish colonies was appraised as much, if not more, for its contributions to the progress of knowledge of the natural world than for the progress of evangelization. Until their expulsion from Spain and its dominions in 1767, the Society was at the center of the reforms of Spanish natural history, and even after the expulsion Jesuits such as Miguel del Barco and Francisco Javier Clavijero continued to contribute from their exile in the Papal States. The exchanges between eighteenth-century Spanish and Spanish-American Jesuits and the works on natural history that they produced prove that the foundations for a modern scientific world picture were already in place and active. Thus, the contribution of the Jesuits to modernity was less a reactive “patriotic epistemology” and much more an ascetic approach to their scientific enterprise and to the nature and peoples they encountered on the colonial frontier.

In his analysis of the works of de Pauw and Raynal, Cañizares-Esguerra recognizes the “ascetic behavior and forms of self-restraint” implicit in eighteenth and nineteenth-century historians’ and naturalists’ search for objective truth in the Americas (52). Just as with the Jesuit ascetic ideal, the enlightened researcher opposed his masculine, celibate discipline to effeminate, subjective distortions of truth. Mary Louise Pratt has likewise observed this masculine ascetic ideal in Linneaus’ eighteenth-century revolution of natural history, which was based on a worldwide network of fieldworkers that was in many ways similar to the Jesuit missionary network (56-57). According to Pratt, the “innocent” gaze of eighteenth-century secular travel writing obscured the history and consequences of European imperialism by focusing on natural and ethnographic description. What Pratt defines as the discourse of “anti-conquest” was already

employed in narratives of Jesuit *reducción* in which the diachronic narrative of “peaceful” or “spiritual conquest,” with all its inherent contradictions, was gradually detached from a synchronic, synoptic description of the geography, flora, fauna and peoples encountered in the missionary enterprise. In the words of Pratt:

In the literature of the imperial frontier, the conspicuous innocence of the naturalist, I would suggest, acquires meaning in relation to an assumed guilt of conquest, a guilt the naturalist figure eternally tries to escape, and eternally invokes, if only to distance himself from it once again. [...] the *discourse* of travel that natural history produces, and is produced by, turns on a great longing: for a way of taking possession without subjugation and violence. (57)

Eighteenth-century natural history and travel narrative elided the violent and coercive aspects of colonial encounters through an emphasis on the visual and synchronic, which creates a discourse of the colonized other as a static museum piece presented to the contemplation of the European observer. The disciplined, celibate gaze of the missionary, transposed to the narrative of Jesuit natural history, similarly attempted to obfuscate the violence inherent in the project of *reducción*. As the Jesuits were often the first Europeans to register the nature and cultures of the Spanish-American colonial frontier, it can be said that the ascetic gaze of the eighteenth-century naturalist originated in the gaze of the Jesuit ascetic.

In his additions and corrections to Burriel’s *Noticia*, Miguel del Barco, a former Jesuit missionary in Lower California living in exile in Bologna, provides an anecdote about the activities of a fellow missionary that serves as an allegory for the transfer of the ascetic gaze of the Jesuit missionary to the asceticism of eighteenth-century travel literature and natural

history.<sup>95</sup> Del Barco, who had lived among the *californios* for three decades, took issue with Burriel's claim that the Amerindian women of the north of the peninsula did not cover their bodies before the arrival Christianity. The exiled missionary attributes this error to the fact that Burriel's source, the missionary Fernando Consag, was so chaste that he never dared to look below the neck of his female catechumens and assumed that they must have been naked. Del Barco explains:

Cualquiera misionero, y cualquiera otro sujeto amante de la honestidad, cuando llegaban a saludarle los californios gentiles, procuraba por una parte recibirlos con buena gracia para aficionarlos y atraerlos a nuestra santa fe y, por otra, estar muy sobre sí, para mirarlos hacia el rostro solamente y no bajar por descuido la vista por no ver su desnudez. (199)

The missionary's chaste gaze excludes the object of desire, particularly the bodies of the principal victims of colonial violence, in much the same way that the history of colonization was increasingly excluded from ethnographic and travel writing in the eighteenth century.

Interestingly, according to del Barco's account, Consag's ascetic discipline resulted in a distortion of the ethnographic "facts" whereby the missionary imposed an assumption about the culture of the people he encountered, that is, that their lack of civilized mores was manifest in their nudity. In a sense, Consag produced the nudity Cochimíes in order to exercise his ascetic self-control.

Though del Barco's anecdote can be read as allegory, it perhaps more importantly reveals the function of the ascetic's gaze in the discourse of natural history, both religious and secular.

According to del Barco, Consag, "de natural vergonzoso y en estas materias por extremo

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<sup>95</sup> Del Barco's emendations to the work of Burriel remained in manuscript until Miguel León Portilla's edition published in 1973 with the title *Historia natural y crónica de la Antigua California*.

recatado,” is beyond reproach in his interactions with his catechumens and objects of ethnographic inquiry, so much so that he fails to see what is in front him (200). Nevertheless, this (presumed) innocence is exactly what permits the ethnographic gaze to expand, accumulate, dissect and archive information about the *californios* and their territory. Writing on the Calvinist Jean de Lery’s sixteenth-century history of Brazil, Michel de Certeau describes the function of the Amerindian woman’s nudity in European historiographical discourse:

As in the painting of the Renaissance, the unclothed Venus replaces the Mother of men, the mystery of Mary or Eve, and as in Venus the naked truth is what the *eye is allowed to see*, in the same way the Indian women indicate the secret that a knowledge transgresses and disenchant. Like the Indian woman’s naked body, the body of the world becomes a surface offered to the inquisitions of curiosity. [...] Of the transgression that accompanies the birth of a science, Léry provides a summary with two elements: “a good foot, and a good eye.” On another occasion he writes, “See and visit.” From this labor, the women naked, seen, and known designate the finished product metonymically. They indicate a new, scriptural relationship with the world; they are the effect of a knowledge which tramples and travels over the earth visually in order to fabricate its representation. (146)

Somewhat ironically, de Certeau, a twentieth-century Jesuit writing about a sixteenth-century Calvinist, perfectly describes the contribution of the Society’s ascetic ideal to the modern world picture. The Jesuit missionaries’ trajectory and tribulations as apostles, prolifically chronicled in the *Vidas y virtudes*, “purified” their perspective as naturalists and ethnographers: just as they submitted their will to the apostolic mission of the order they likewise exercise an ascetic will to power through the dispassionate, detached and disenchanting exercise of the naturalist. The desire

and will of the observer are neutralized until he becomes a simple register filling in the lacunae of a synoptic “picture.”

Through the categories and procedures of natural history, the missionary-fieldworker turned archivist-compiler assumes a safe distance from the object of inquiry, such that his gaze can safely take in the totality with no danger of transgressing the role of religious and researcher. This “denial of coevalness” is the structuring myth of early anthropology. Only the ascetic, detached and synoptic gaze can tell the whole truth about the other; it tells all there is to see even though it has carefully sought out and framed its object to exclude the context of colonialism.<sup>96</sup> Indeed, del Barco, who possessed vast first-hand experience in Lower California, is only able to correct and add information to the previous histories of California, including details on the “bragueras” [“loincloths”] of the *californias*, from Europe using Burriel’s *Noticia* as a structuring guide. In this sense, in the Jesuit histories of California demonstrate the development of what Heidegger referred to as the “world picture” which is conditioned by the vocation of the researcher and the institutions supporting his or her work. Heidegger describes modern scientific research as “constant activity” and the researcher as a rootless subject nevertheless bound to procedures and institutions and ultimately beholden to social utility (64). In the Jesuit histories of California this rootless and disciplined “constant activity” of the researcher emerges from the Society’s ascetic ideal. Furthermore, in the transition from a typological-providential history of the Jesuit enterprise in California to a natural and ethnographic history produced by an archivist and researcher we can observe what Heidegger calls the “liberation” of the modern subject wherein the certainty of salvation is replaced by the certainty of knowledge:

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<sup>96</sup> Johannes Fabian defines the “denial of coevalness” as “*a persistent and systematic tendency to place the referent(s) of anthropology in a Time other than the present of the producer of anthropological discourse*” (31). According to Fabian, this denial of a shared temporality between the ethnographer and the ethnographic subject results in a synoptic, atemporal representation of the culture under examination.

The demand springs from the liberation of humanity from the bonds of the truth of Christian revelation and the doctrines of the Church, a liberation which frees itself for a self-legislation that is grounded in itself. Through this liberation the essence of freedom – being bound to something that binds – is posited anew. Because, however, in accordance with this freedom, self-liberating man himself posits what is obligatory, this can henceforth be defined in different ways. The obligatory may be human reason and its law; it may be beings, set up and ordered by objects by such reason; or it may be that of chaos – not yet ordered and only to be mastered through objectification – which, in a certain age, comes to demand mastery. (81)

Along similar lines, Max Weber described the modern scientific vocation as an “inner devotion to the task” through which technical progress and the improvement of secular knowledge replace the certainties of faith (“Science” 137). This “intellectualist rationalization,” or “disenchantment” of the world, unfolds through the different Jesuit histories of Lower California as the hagiographic material is subordinated to the synoptic gaze of the natural historian. While this process was in part due to the external influence of secular Enlightenment historiography and natural history it is also the result of the natural development of the Jesuit ascetic ideal exercised on the missionary frontier and in the formation of a colonial archive. Burriel’s transformation of Venegas’ manuscript reflects this move from the theological to the scientific, or from the Amerindian as catechumen to object of the ethnographic gaze.

#### 4.1 Miguel Venegas' *Empresas apostólicas*: Providential History and "Mappas Historiales"

Given that he dedicated a great deal of his life's work to the documentation of the lives of his co-religious in the Province of New Spain, there is some irony in the fact that so little information on the life of Miguel Venegas has survived. In his early nineteenth-century bibliography of New Spain, José Mariano Beristaín y Souza writes that the Jesuit chronicler was born in 1680 in Puebla de Los Angeles, and that after entering the order in 1700 he worked as a professor in the Colegio Máximo de San Pedro y San Pablo in México City, occupying the chair in moral theology of the same institution in 1714. Ten years later Venegas retired from his post due to ill health resulting from a pair of incorrectly prescribed bleedings and, according to Beristaín y Souza, "retirado del bullicio de las ciudades vivió 40 años en el campo, dedicado todo a escribir" (3: 261). Although the Mexican bibliographer notes that he took his information from a *Vida* written by Salvador Gandara, the last Provincial of the order in New Spain before its expulsion, Gandara's work has yet to turn up in the libraries and archives of Latin America or Europe.

While the the loss of the *Vida* of Venegas has deprived us of another example of the genre of Jesuit hagiography as well as the details concerning one of the most active Jesuit historians of eighteenth-century New Spain , the prolific bibliography provided by Beristaín y Souza provides important insight into Venegas' literary production.<sup>97</sup> A perusal of the titles

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<sup>97</sup> Beristaín y Souza's bibliographic note on Venegas is worth citing in its entirety: "Nació en la Puebla de Los Angeles a 4 de Octubre de 1680, y habiendo renunciado una beca, que le ofreció en el colegio eximio de S. Pablo su fundador el Exmo. Sr. Obispo Santa Cruz, se pasó a México y tomó en Tepozotlan la ropa de la compañía de Jesús en 30 de Agosto de 1700. Fue maestro de latinidad, retórica y filosofía en el colegio máximo de S. Pedro y S. Pablo de México. En 1714, fue nombrado catedrático de teología moral; pero a los diez años se inhabilitó para seguir la carrera de cátedras y prelacías, de resultas de dos sangrias que recibió mal recetadas. Retirado del bullicio de las ciudades vivió 40 años en el campo, dedicado todo a escribir; y a los once meses de insultado falleció de 84 años de edad y 64 de religiosos en la hacienda de labor, llamada Chicomocelo el año 1764. Ni fue sólo estudio de las ciencias eclesiásticas el que le ocupó. Por ser útil a la humanidad se dedicó a la botánica, química y medicina; y por



attributed to Venegas, though many have been lost, tells us a great deal about the Jesuit historian and the literary milieu of New Spain during the first half of the eighteenth century. Upon

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sus sales y quintas esencias, que apreciaban con preferencia los boticarios de México, recibía de ellos otras medicinas con que curaba a los pobres enfermos del campo. Su *Vida* la escribió el P. Salvador Granada [sic], y se imprimió en México en 1765. Por ella y por lo que yo he visto, tanto impreso como MS. de nuestro Venegas, consta que escribió:

“ ‘Relación de los milagros de la Virgen María en su Imágen de la Concepción, trasladada de la Capilla de Jalmolonga a la Iglesia de S. Pedro y S. Pablo de México.’ S. en la biblioteca de la universidad de México. – ‘Templo místico de la gracia, delineado en la admirable Vida y virtudes heroicas del V. P. Juan Bautista Zappa, de la Compañía de Jesús, Misionero de la N.E.’ dos tom. en 4, MS. originales en la biblioteca del colegio de S. Gregorio de México. – Esta obra compendiada se imprimió en Barcelona en 1754, a solicitud del P. Fluvía, jesuita catalán – ‘El Apóstol Mariano, representado en la Vida admirable del Ven. P. Juan María Salvatierra, Provincial de la Compañía de Jesús de México, Conquistador de Californias.’ MS. original en dicha biblioteca, del cual publicó un extracto el P. Oviedo, jesuita mexicano, en 1755. – ‘Empresas Apostólicas de los Misioneros de la Compañía de Jesús de la N.E. en la Conquista de las Californias.’ MS. en fol. original en la misma biblioteca, dedicado por el autor al marqués de Villapiente en carta escrita en la hacienda de Chicomocelo a 5 de Agosto de 1739. – Se imprimió extractada por el P. Andrés Burriel en Madrid por la viuda de Manuel Fernández, año 1757. 4. y se tradujo y publicó en francés y en inglés con el título de *Historia de Californias*. – ‘Vida del P. Angulo, Religioso Franciscano de Zacatecas.’ MS. – ‘El perfecto Eclesiástico representado en la Vida Apostólica del Siervo de Dios – Dr. D. Juan González, Canónigo de México, Rector de su Universidad, y Misionero de Indios de la N.E.’ MS. en 4, en la biblioteca de la universidad de México – ‘Hymnodia sacra Jesuitica.’ o himnos en elogio de S. Ignacio de Loyola y de otros santos jesuitas. MS. – ‘Hymnodia Mariana.’ MS. – Se comprenden especialmente los del oficio de la Virgen, glosados en latín y castellano y aumentado. Por ejemplo:

‘Ave Maris stella,  
Favens in procella:  
Ave virens Palma,  
Dei Mater Alma.  
Ave Jesse Virga,  
Atque semper Virgo;  
Ave terris orta  
Felix Coelo Porta.’

Existe original en la librería del citado colegio de S. Gregorio de México. – ‘Hymnus in laudem B. Mariae Virginis de Guadalupe.’ Con su traducción castellana, imp. en México, 1765. 8. – Comienzo:

‘Audi Patrona Mexici,  
Imago picta floribus...’

‘Manual de Párrocos para administrar los Sacramentos a Indios y Españoles.’ Imp. en México, 17...4. – ‘Orationes latinae in laudem S. Elisabeth Tres: altera in laudem S. Ignatii Loyolensis.’ MS. en la biblioteca de la universidad de México – Están escritas de mala, pero perceptible letra: muy buenas y dignas de la estampa: También escribió: - ‘Medulla Libri aurei de imitatione Christi, et Aphorismi spirituales ex eodem desumpti – Florilegium morale. – Instructio Sacerdotis in Ritibus et Ceremoniis Missae – Florilegium Marianum ex SS. Patrum Sententiis contextum et in faciculos redactum pro Marianus Festivitibus’ MS. – ‘Catecismo judicial y político para Alcaldes Mayores de Indios. – Magisterio espiritual – Silva de varia lección de materias espirituales. – Idea práctica del buen gobierno Religioso. – Instrucciones de S. Francisco Javier para Operarios evangélicos.’ MS. – ‘Selecta ex Plutarco. – Selectae Sententiae ex Curtio. – De Arte Pictoria et ejus Professoribus. – Selecta ex jure Canonico. – Regulae juris civilis ordine alphabetico.’ MS. – ‘Reflexiones importantes. – De la paz interior. – De la limosna. – De la contrición. – De las indulgencias.’ MS. – ‘De Conceptione Virginis.’ MS. – ‘Vita B Virginis Mariae 540, Rhythmis exposita.’ MS. – ‘Officium Eucharisticum.’ MS. – ‘Trece Tablas Chronológicas, Hitronomilagocas.’ MS. – ‘El Cántico Magnificat’ glosado todo así: - ‘Magnificat anima mea Dominam meam, et exultavit Spiritus meus in Maria, in Matre Jesu, Salvatoris mei. Quam elegit Jesus et praelegit ante saecula in Matrem; quia respexit humilitatem Ancillae suae...’ – ‘Certamen poético para la Noche de Navidad de 1707, con la Metáfora de Libro.’ MS. Tiene este título ‘Fecundo parto del Entendimiento Divino, dado a luz al estamparse el Verbo en la Humanidad de Jesús con lo caracteres de Libro.’ – La mayor parte de estos MS. existen en las bibliotecas de la universidad de México, y del colegio de S. Gregorio.” (Beristáin y Souza 3.260-263)

examining Venegas' bibliography it becomes evident that his forty-year sojourn in Chicomocelo (in the modern state of Chiapas), far from the bustle of Mexico City, was not spent idly. Venegas not only wrote missionary hagiographies and chronicles of his order's apostolic mission, but also penned hierophantic works dedicated to the Virgin Mary, several Latin hymnodies, guides for missionaries and parish priests, selections from Classical authors and devotional poetry. Apart from the *Noticia*, which bore Venegas' name despite being almost unrecognizably reformulated by Burriel, his most well-known work was his *Manual de Párrocos para administrar los Sacramentos a Indios y Españoles* (1731), which was edited by Francisco López and went through numerous editions in Mexico well into the nineteenth century. During Venegas' lifetime, three of his historical-hagiographic works were published after undergoing thorough revisions at the hands of fellow Jesuits: *Vida y virtudes del V.P. Juan Baptista Zappa*, reworked by the Catalan Francisco Javier Fluviá and published in Barcelona in 1754, *El Apóstol mariano representado en la vida del V.P. Juan María Salvatierra*, revised by Juan Antonio de Oviedo and published in México in 1754, and Burriel's *Noticia*, published in Madrid in 1757. In *El Apóstol mariano*, Oviedo tactfully explains why Venegas' works underwent such extensive revisions,

comenzó, y concluyó hermosa, y eruditamente la vida; pero le salió tan defusa, que atendiendo el P. Juan Antonio Balthazar actual Provincial de esta Provincia, que por lo mucho, que en estas partes cuestan las imprentas de los libros, no podía darse a la luz pública, sin excesivos gastos, me ordenó, que sin faltar a lo substancial de la historia, la reduxesse a compendio más breve. (vi)

Though Oviedo praised Venegas' erudition and style, he claimed that the work was too "defusa" to print without incurring an unreasonable expenditure, or at least this was the reason that Venegas' co-religious, who were inclined to show deference to the elder Jesuit, gave publicly for

their interventions. Nevertheless, the praise that Juan Antonio Balthasar heaped on Burriel and his *Noticia* in his letters to the younger Spanish Jesuit suggest that many of his contemporary co-religious found Venegas' work fundamentally flawed because it could not appeal to a secular eighteenth-century readership avid for natural histories.

From the scant biographical sketch surviving from Gandara's *Vida* and the prodigious corpus of manuscripts that Beristaín y Souza perused in the archives of early nineteenth-century Mexico, a profile of Venegas nevertheless emerges as the scholarly ascetic whose prototype is found in Eusebius' portrayal of Origen and which formed, along with the missionary enterprise, a fundamental part of Jesuit subjectivity. The patristic tradition added the intellectual asceticism of "constant activity" and "an inner devotion to the task" to the sanctified dominion of the will exercised by the early Desert Christians. In his sermon "De fuga saeculi," a foundational text of Christian asceticism, Ambrose of Milan portrayed the life of the exegete and Christian intellectual as a method for "fleeing the world" and perfecting one's virtue through the disciplining of one's natural understanding, a departure from the ascetic practice of the Egyptian anchorites such as Saint Antony and Saint Paul the Eremita (317-19). As demonstrated in Juan Eusebio Nieremberg's description of the ideal religious order, the Jesuits aspired to adopt both forms of asceticism to a world marked by the expansion of European empires and scientific discovery (138-139). The intellectual pursuits of the Jesuits were undertaken in view of their practical consequences for the order's worldwide apostolic mission, and in some cases writing even became a proxy for the ascetic practice of the missionary frontier.

Venegas' withdrawal to the "hacienda de labor" in Chicomocelo, where he wrote his prolific works and tended to the spiritual and physical health of the locals, combines both aspects of the Jesuits' ascetic ideal. It is no wonder that many of the authors of sacred biographies and

devotional works such as Venegas themselves became the subjects of works eulogizing their ascetic virtues. Venegas' prolific production, his exhaustive pursuit of minute details included in his works, and his focus on the hardships endured by his brethren in Lower California suggest a life dedicated to the exercise and contemplation of ascetic virtue. While the *Empressas* doubtlessly reflect the real obstacles faced by missionaries and the precariousness of their settlements on the peninsula, Venegas nevertheless indulges his natural prolixity in descriptions of the penury and hunger suffered by the likes of Juan María Salvatierra and Juan de Ugarte. In an episode particularly filled with pathos, the Jesuit historian describes Salvatierra and Ugarte as two ragged and emaciated anchorites who dare not countenance the spectacle of their mutual mortification:

[...] porque no faltasse ración para el Presidio, se contentaban [Salvatierra y Ugarte] con un tan escaso alimento, que mas servia para dilatar la muerte, que para conservar la vida. Confirmación es de esto lo que sucedio por entonces con los dos Padres, como effecto de la mucha hambre que padescian. Havian passado algunos dias, sin veerse, quando el P. Juan de Ugarte baxó a Loreto, a visitar al P. Juan Maria, y consolarse con el en sus trabajos. Pero apenas lo vio el P. Juan Maria, quando despues de haverlo saludado le dixo, que se quedasse alli, porque le era precisso ir luego a S. Juan Luondo a visitar sus hijos. Apenas se fue quando el P. Ugarte deio la vuelta para su mission de S. Xavier: y la causa de esto fue, que al P. Juan Maria le causó tanat compassion, y lastima, veer al P. ugarte tan exhausto, y consumido, quele quebraba el corazon, y por no veer aquella lastima, se salio huyendo de su pressencia. Lo mismo le sucedio al P. Juan de Ugarte: el qual se enternescio tanto de veer al P. Juan Maria tan flaco, y macilento, que no veerlo

segunda vez, nolo quiso esperar, y se retiró a su mission. Assi lo confessaron uno al otro, quando pudieron veerse despues. (2: 150-51)

Beyond this emphasis on the minutiae of his confrères ascetic trials on the mission frontier, an examination of the *Empressas*' 700 pages of miniscule and painstaking script divided into 2047 numbered paragraphs with copious glosses from the Bible and the patristic tradition, reveals to what degree the authorship of the work was itself a sustained exercise of self-discipline.

Attributing the failed attempts at colonizing the peninsula, from Hernán Cortés' ill-fated expeditions to Isidro de Atondo y Antillón's aborted *entrada* of 1683, to God's desire that the evangelization of the Californios be undertaken by worthy apostles, Venegas' *Empressas* portrays the history of California within an eschatological framework that presupposes the supernatural intervention of God and the devil in the development of human history. This remote corner of the earth, according to Venegas, had remained hidden (from Europeans) along with the rest of the New World so that God could show the extent of his mercy towards the most sinful of nations:

La verdadera causa pertenece à los altos Juicios de Dios: cuya inefable providencia quiso, que se ignorasse este secreto, hasta que llegase la plenitud de los tiempos, en que havia determinado, embiaar el remedio à tantas naciones bárbaras, que tyranizado el demonio en estas regiones de la America. Porque assi como, para embiar a Mundo la redempción del linaje humano, aguardo que llegasse la plenitud de los tiempos, como dixo San Pablo: para que, estando ya el mundo en la plenitud de sus miserias campeasse mas la plenitud de sus misericordias: assi parece que aguardò su divina clemencia, à que llegasse este Mundo Americano, como havia llegado, a lo summo de los vicios, para usar con el la

summa de sus misericordias: ilustrando con la luz Evangelica à los que habitaban en las tinieblas, y sombras de la muerte. (2:1)

Venegas draws a parallel between God sending Christ unto a people wallowing in moral corruption and the state of barbarism into which the Almighty had allowed the *Californios* to sink before sending forth his new apostles. Furthermore, Venegas likens the establishment of the first missions in California with the discovery of America, both of which, according to the Jesuit, were examples of God biding his time with gentile lands until the proper vehicle for spreading his word was ready (2: 1-3).

Venegas' manuscript is cluttered with citations of Scripture, which, more than simple rhetorical flourishes represent a typological understanding of history in which the deeds of the Jesuit apostles are paralleled in both the Old and New Testaments. Father Salvatierra, for example, bore the "señal de divina misión" that is announced in the Book of Isaiah: just as the first apostles were announced in the Old Testament, so too were the apostles of Lower California (2: 54). When the missionaries are forced to humble themselves and accept the linguistic instruction of their catechumens they repeat the scene from the Book of Jeremiah in which the Lord put the words in the prophet's mouth so that he could speak to all nations:

Esto requeria en los Ministros evangelicos el uso de la lengua: pero en esto se parecian tambien a la Yglesia niña, que iban formando: porque eran niños balbucientes en el hablar aquella lengua. Por esso pudieran dezir lo mismo, que Jeremias dixo al Señor, quando lo embiaba por Predicador de las gentes: *A, a, a, Domine Deus ecce nescio loqui, quia puer ego sum.* (2:107).

Even the missionaries' inability to communicate with their catechumens is reflected in a biblical precedent, which acts as a prefiguration that infuses *reducción* with an aura that sanctifies all the Jesuits activities.

In addition to its providential-typological view of history, the *Empressas* often reflects a credulity towards the supernatural that was already abating by the end of the seventeenth century. Like its nearest precedent, the seventeenth-century Jesuit Provincial Andrés Perez de Ribas' *Triunfos*, the *Empressas* tells the story of an epic battle for the souls of the *Californios* who have been led to lives of sin and darkness by a devil who mimics aspects of Christianity in order to confuse his victims. The clearest example of Venegas' view of the history of California as a providential struggle between the forces of God and Satan is found in his description of the "hechiceros," or shamans, against whom the missionaries fought for ideological supremacy over their catechumens. While admitting that some of the "hechiceros" were indeed merely charlatans, Venegas, in stark contrast to Burriel's later skepticism on this topic, suggests that some "hechiceros" dealt directly with Satan and acted as his agents in the perdition of the Californios:

Los sacerdotes que tenían los Californios para los ejercicios de su falsa religión, eran los Hechizeros: y con esto se dize, que ellos eran la gente más perversa, que havía en la tierra, como ministros, que eran del diablo, escogidos por el para medianeros suyos, que le aydassen à la perdición, y ruina de aquellas infelices almas. Su destino ordinario para este diabólico exercicio era por via de instrucción, conque enseñaban los padres a sus hijos, y los hechizeros de profession à los que se les llegaban por discipulos y aprendizes de su arte. Es verdad, que tal vez no faltaban algunos, que no haviendo aprendido por instrucción humana esta arte diabólica, la sabían por enseñanza del mismo demonio, que

se les aparescía, y los combidaba con su amistad, escogiendoles por sus ministros, y enseñándoles el modo de invocarlo. Pero tales era sus perversas, y depravadas costumbres, que les hazían dignos, de tener por maestro al mismo demnio. (2: 543-44)

While Venegas' text displays a belief in the direct intervention of God and demons in the natural world, his work likewise reflects a transition from the belief in explicit pacts with tangible demons to the interiorization of demonic influence through psychological suggestion that was typical of eighteenth-century historiography in New Spain (Cervantes 97). Citing the Old Testament book of Ezechiel as precedent, Venegas' maintained that even when the *Californios'* shamans did not have direct dealings with demons, the devil perverted them through more subtle means: "[...] mas el demonio de todos se valía: de los hechizeros verdaderos con pacto expreso: y de los falsos con internas suggestiones, para engañar, y pervertir por su medio à los pueblos trayendolos sugetos à su obediencia" (2: 544). In both Burriel's revisions to the *Empresas* and in Francisco Javier Clavijero's *Historia de la Antigua o Baja California*, the direct influence of the devil in the peninsula is altogether disregarded "porque en virtud de los informes dados por los misioneros más hábiles, se sabe que no tenían comercio alguno con el demonio" (Clavijero, *Historia* 66-67).

Despite the providential narrative of Venegas' work, his rigorous search for source material was exhaustive, even though Burriel and others would later complain that it lacked a corresponding process of appraisal. Most of the original sources of Venegas' work are the letters and reports sent by the Jesuit missionaries to their superiors within the order and to viceregal authorities. These letters generally served two purposes, namely to report on the progress of the conversion of the *Californios* and to communicate the need for more resources in order to sustain the precarious missions. Despite the pragmatic nature of these letters, they are full of important



information about the inhabitants of the peninsula and the process of transculturation in the recently established missions. These *cartas* and *informes*, along with their permutations into chronicles and natural histories, form part of the complex network of textual production that linked the outmost reaches of the Spanish colony with the centers of the Atlantic empires of the eighteenth century through the performance of the ascetic ideal in both missionary work and intellectual labor. Venegas' manic obsession with detail, as evidenced by the questionnaires he sent out to missionaries, created problems for the Society's system of publication and distribution, which could not summon the resources or guarantee a readership within or outside the order for Venegas' extensive works. A questionnaire sent to California in 1737, for example, insists on seemingly irrelevant specifics about a church built by his fellow Jesuit: "Si se hizo de adobes con techos pajizos y cuántas piezas" (qtd. in Rodríguez Tomp 292). But the insistence on obtaining and including details such as the linguistic characteristics and customs of the inhabitants of Isla de la Santísima Trinidad, who were decimated by an outbreak of smallpox in 1728, is what makes Venegas' text such a valuable source for the history of the Jesuit missions and the inhabitants of Baja California (2: 407-09).

The *Empressas* possess one surprisingly modern aspect that would come to dominate the discourse of Burriel's work. In his dedication to the Marqués de Villapiente, Venegas refers to his work as a "mappa historial," or "historical map," using the well-known trope of spatializing time that was also used by Jacques Bénigne Bossuet in the prologue to the *Discours sur l'histoire universelle* (40). Spatializing time in order to view "d'un coup d'oeil" the customs of various stages of the history of Christendom in relation to one another not only portrayed the rise and fall of civilization as part of a providential plan but also provided a model for framing the Amerindian present as an earlier stage of historical development with respect to Europe (Fabian,

25).<sup>98</sup> But Venegas' contribution surpasses the mere repetition of a trope already widely known through the French Bishop's defense of absolutism. Venegas further develops the concept of the "mappa historial" to include not only the diachronic series of events in the spiritual conquest of California, but also a synchronic description of the nature and inhabitants of the peninsula. The following passage demonstrates how Venegas envisaged these two types of "mappas":

Hemos corrido ya por toda la tierra de Californias siguiendo con las [sic] narracion los passos, que han dado en su conquista los Padres Missioneros, como Conquistadores Apostolicos de aquellas incultas, y barbaras naciones: para sugetarlas felizmente al imperio de Jesu-Christo, e introducir las al gremio dela Santa Iglesia. Tiempo es ya, de que recogiendo las velas al discurso histórico, hagamos pausa, y nos detengamos a contemplar abreviado como en un mappa historial todo quanto observó dividido, y separado en diversos tiempos, y lugares la attenta especulación de aquellos Conquistadores Evangélicos acerca delas tierras de Californias, y de sus moradores: imitando en esto a los Conquistadores terrenos, que primero se ocupan, en avasallar a los habitantes de nuevos reynos; y después en observar la tierra, para poblarla. Esto conseguiremos, con proponer aqui un mappa historial delas Californias: el qual para mayor claridad ira dividido en tres partes. La primera contendrá la descripción dela tierra en lo natural con todo lo tocante a sus plantas, aves, pezes, y animales. La segunda representará la tierra en lo moral de sus habitantes, según vivían en el tiempo de su

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<sup>98</sup> According to Anthony Pagden, Venegas and Burriel's contemporary and fellow Jesuit, Joseph François Lafitau, likewise spatialized time by comparing the Iriquois and Huron of North America to the ancient Spartans (and ultimately arguing that the former were descendants of the latter). Although his contemporaries discredit his conclusions with regard to the genealogy of Amerindian cultures, the kind of comparative anthropology practiced by Lafitau, which depended more on discription of culture and language as a system that could be classified according to a stadial theory of development, was influential in the development of modern ethnography (198-209).

gentilidad. La tercera darà à veer las Californias, segun el gobierno christiano, que ahora tienen, despues de su reducción â la fê. (2: 458)

With a rhetorical flourish, Venegas explicitly marks the shift from the diachronic discourse of the apostolic campaign to a synchronic description of the peninsula, even noting the temporal interruption (“pausa”) of the discourse for a panoptic display of the natural history of the peninsula. Furthermore, Venegas compares this strategy of surveying a territory and its inhabitants to a military strategy, albeit employed by “Conquistadores Evangélicos,” thus emphasizing the practices of submission and control with which the text is complicit. Despite the affinity of these “mappas historiales” with modern anthropology Venegas’ work was principally concerned with justifying the endeavors of his fellow Jesuits as part of a providential plan to bring the Californios into the fold of Christianity; in other words, he focuses on the discursive and diachronic aspect of his historical map. While Venegas reserved this shift from the discursive and historic to the visual and synchronic for the concluding chapters of his work and subordinated the discourse of natural history to the providential discourse of the Jesuit campaign of *reducción*, Burriel would reverse this emphasis in his *Noticia*. Although this shift in emphasis reflects a general trend in early anthropology to elide colonial relations by presenting an ahistoric account of non-Western cultures through maps, diagrams and tables, it is also indicative of the influence of the Jesuit ascetic ideal on the discourse of natural history.<sup>99</sup> Just as with the Jesuit missionary, the authority of the scrutinizing and all-encompassing gaze of the eighteenth-century

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<sup>99</sup> Venegas’ “mappa historiales” are in accord with Fabian’s description of eighteenth-century anthropology: “Visualization and spatialization have not only been points of departure for a theory of knowledge, they become a program for the new discipline of anthropology. There was a time when this meant, above all, the exhibition of the exotic in illustrated travelogues, museums, fairs, and expositions. These early ethnological practices established seldom articulated but firm convictions that presentations of knowledge through visual and spatial images, maps, diagrams, trees, and tables are particularly well suited to the description of primitive cultures which, as everyone knows, are supremely ‘synchronic’ objects for visual-esthetic perception” (Fabian 121).

naturalist was premised on a chaste and self-possessed subject who painstakingly devoted himself to his vocation.

#### 4.2 Andrés Marcos Burriel and the Jesuit Vocation for Natural History

As Cañizares-Esguerra has demonstrated, Andrés Marcos Burriel was at the center of the most important debates on the upheaval eighteenth-century natural history and historiography in Spain (*How to Write* 144-45). Burriel was an active participant in the camp of Spanish intellectuals led by Gregorio Mayans y Siscar who were concerned about the image of Spain as a cultural and scientific backwater and sought to open the country to the latest developments in science and political-economy circulating in other European countries. For Burriel, this concern with reforming Spanish education and science was connected to reforming the government of Spanish America, to which end he supported Jorge Juan y Santacilia and Juan de Ulloa's reports on the corruption of the colonial government and economy as a means to improve Spain's geopolitical standing.<sup>100</sup> The image of the polymath and cosmopolitan Spanish Jesuit who was familiar with contemporary advances in natural history such as Linneaus' system of classification is a stark contrast to the figure of Venegas. Benefitting from the mid-century reforms under way in the imperial court, Burriel was recognized as a prodigy and provoked the

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<sup>100</sup> Cañizares-Esguerra highlights Burriel's protagonism in these debates as well as his support of Ulloa and Juan y Santacilia (145). Burriel's role, however, was recognized even during the eighteenth century, as Ibañez de Echeverri demonstrates in his anti-Jesuit history of the order's conflict with Bernardino de Cardenas in Paraguay from 1644 to 1660. Ibañez de Echeverri praises Ulloa and Juan y Santacilia's *Noticia de la América* but complains that their partiality towards the Jesuits was due to the intervention of Burriel, who likewise is accused of embellishing his history of California: "¿Pero qué hombre instruído ignora, que apoyado del P. *Francisco Rabago* se entrometió el P. *Burriel* a intercalar este y otros capítulos? [sobre los Jesuitas] ¿Quién ignora tampoco las intercalaciones, y supresiones del mismo Padre *Andrés Marcos Burriel* en la historia de *Californias*, escrita por el P. *Venegas*, y retocada a su modo por dicho *Burriel*, hombre por otro lado amante de las letras, de gran ingenio; pero que unido por profesión a los intereses de la *Compañía*, no era dueño de resistirse al despótico imperio del General? ¿Quién ignora tampoco las intercalaciones, y supresiones del mismo Padre *Andrés Marcos Burriel* en la historia de *Californias*, escrita por el P. *Venegas*, y retocada a su modo por dicho *Burriel*, hombre por otro lado amante de las letras, de gran ingenio; pero que unido por profesión a los intereses de la *Compañía*, no era dueño de resistirse al despótico imperio del General?" (*Colección de documentos*, xlix-l).

interest of eminent figures of the Spanish Enlightenment outside the Society such as Gregorio Mayáns y Siscar (Díaz 8). Due to his manifest talent and capacity for tireless archival work, Burriel even won the patronage of King Fernando VI's confessor, the Jesuit Francisco de Rábago y Noriega, a connection to the royal court that would prove advantageous at least until the Society fell out of favor under Carlos III. The defining moment of Burriel's career came in 1749 as he was about to embark on a voyage to New Spain where he intended to work as a missionary in California, the fulfillment of a vow he had made to Saint Francis Xavier during a grave illness 5 years earlier. Perhaps aware of the talent he was about to lose, Father Rábago intervened to retain Burriel in Spain with a special commission to revise the Church archives of Toledo. In his letters to fellow Jesuits, Burriel repeatedly referred to the disappointment of being held back from his vow to work as a missionary in the Californias, for which his prodigious archival work was to serve as a supplement in service of the temporal and spiritual well-being of the Indies. In a letter to the Jesuit provincial of New Spain, Juan Francisco Tompes, Burriel explains,

Estoy casi de todo persuadido, que la estraña reprasalía, que se ha hecho de mi, quando ya caminaba despedido al Puerto, destinado a essa Provincia de México, y deseosísimo de sepultarme entre los Californios, o entre los Pimas, ha sido ordenado por Dios, para que el publico de las Indias tenga en mi un Agente de pocas fuerzas si; pero de vehementissimos deseos del bien universal de las Indias. No en vano me ha dado S. Mag. esta ardiente propensión a la América, y no en vano me puso en el estrecho de consagrar a S. Xavier, estando a la muerte, mi persona, y pluma para las Indias, acá o allá, según se me permitiera. No en vano ha hecho S. Mag. que me informe muy particularmente de las cosas de América, que desee mayores luces, y noticias para darlas a España, donde se cometen por falta de ellas yerros. (3 June 1750, 2)

Burriel's "ardent propensity" for the well-being of the Indies and his vow to the Jesuit proto-apostle to do missionary work on the Spanish-American frontier was redirected to the compiling of information on the affairs of America in order to improve the government of the colonies from the metropole. The *Noticia* was in fact the first stage of a Burriel's more ambitious plan to put the Jesuit's ascetic ideal and world-wide missionary network at the service of eighteenth-century natural history.

Burriel's ambitions for modernizing Spanish institutions and improving the government of Spanish America through empirical research place him within the early Bourbon reforms and Spain's moderate Catholic Enlightenment. Jonathan Israel has placed the culmination of the Catholic Enlightenment, with its delicate balance of providentialism and empiricism, around 1750, precisely the time when Burriel was editing, reorganizing, correcting and rewriting Venegas' daunting manuscript (540). As Richard Herr has noted, the Bourbon monarchs generously supported observatories, botanical gardens and medical schools; furthermore, the most important venues for the transmission of scientific and technological advances, the periodical press and the *sociedades económicas*, flourished, despite the opposition more recalcitrant sectors of the clergy (44). Burriel's *Noticia* and his plans for reform of Spanish science and education suggest that some clergy and religious were not only open to ideas from outside Spain but were also active promoters of these ideas within key institutions. With respect to Jesuit scientific contributions during the eighteenth century, Jonathan Wright fittingly comments that it was possible to believe in both creation ex nihilo and Linneaus' system of botanical classification (198-200). Burriel is representative of the intellectual climate of Spain in the eighteenth century: while rejecting the metaphysical grounds of the New Philosophy, he was a receptive and prolific reader of contemporary works and he wished to contribute to the flow of

new ideas throughout Europe. Remaining faithful to his vocation, Burriel used the *Empressas* as raw material for a work that was contemporary with the work of naturalists, ethnographers and historians of the eighteenth century.

While recognizing the important changes to the original manuscript, contemporary scholars have opted to grant dual authorship for the *Noticia* to both Venegas and Burriel (Mathes, *Supplement* 15; León Portilla “Prólogo” xiii). Indeed, granting Burriel primary authorship of the *Noticias* might seem a difficult position to assume as Venegas’ name remains on the frontispiece of the work while Spanish Jesuit’s name appears nowhere in the text. The paradox is further exaggerated by the fact that the various translators and disseminators of the *Noticia*, with the exception of Clavijero, seemed oblivious to the existence of the Spanish historian, who, according to Mathes, requested anonymity in deference to Venegas (*Supplement* 13). In the same line, Ivonne del Valle cogently demonstrates that the *Noticia* was a “producto institucional” pieced together from the Jesuits’ missionary network whose authorship was of little import (204). In a confidential letter, however, Burriel confessed that the primary motive behind the use of Venegas’ name in the *Noticias* was more prudence than deference to an elder confrère or to his vow of submission to the larger aims of the Society. Burriel acknowledged that given his detailed account of the Spanish Empire’s periphal outposts and recommendations for reforming the colonial government and economy it would be wise not to use his own name because “se tocan cosas bastante delicadas, y es bien que yo empleado del Rey no suene, especialmente mientras no sabemos cómo serán recibidas” (qtd. in Díaz 25). Nevertheless, in his letters, and even in his anonymous prologue to the *Noticias*, Burriel made an unabashed effort to distance himself from his source material and emphasize his own effort to reorganize Venegas’ work. In both the *Noticia* and Burriel’s letters we witness a struggle to define the Jesuit ascetic

ideal in light of the eighteenth-century revolution in European historiography and ethnography, a revolution that the Society had a significant role in initiating through the performance of the order's ascetic ideal throughout the world.

In his prologue to the *Noticia*, Burriel declares that one of the major deficiencies of the *Empressas* was an excess of information on the apostolic work of the Jesuits, which needed to be reduced and updated: “[...] de ser la obra [de Venegas] muy dilatada, y que apenas se trata de otra cosa, que de las Empressas de los Jesuitas faltaban sobre esto mismo muchas noticias en ella, fuera de otras, que justamente pudieran echarse de menos por los lectores curiosos” (1: xix-xx). The Spanish Jesuit goes on to declare that his work was more on the order of a reconstruction rather than a simple updating, “Húbose de emprender de nuevo todo el trabajo [...]” (1: xx). Burriel not only reduced the extension of Venegas’ manuscript, but also reorganized the work and amplified its descriptive-synoptic aspect using primary and secondary sources not available to Venegas. Burriel acknowledges that he is working in a discipline that has undergone a paradigm shift within his century and modestly puts forth his own work as an incomplete yet necessary contribution to the field:

No esperen los Lectores, baxo el titulo de que he puesto, una Historia natural cumplida de la California, dividida en sus tres Reynos, Animal, Vegetal, y Mineral. Sè bien que la Historia natural ha sido siempre el embeleso de los Sabios de todas las Naciones cultivadas. Sè tambien el cuidado, que merece oy à los eruditos, y aun à los Principes en toda la Europa el conocimiento experimental de la naturaleza, como lo manifiestan las Galerías de curiosidades, los Museos, los Jardines, los Laboratorios, las Salas de Demonstraciones, las Academias, y los Libros innumerables de esta materia. (36)



The Jesuit refers to the contributions of museums, botanical gardens and laboratories to the empirical knowledge of the eighteenth century, to which his work was to be a modest contribution until more thorough research could be done to satisfy the demands of a sophisticated reading public. Burriel cites a considerable bibliography of natural histories from the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries including Linneaus and Mark Catesby, an Englishman who employed the Linnean system in his book on the flora of Virginia. And of course, Joseph François Lafiteau and Pierre François Xavier de Charlevoix, the immensely influential Jesuit naturalists and ethnographers, are also cited. In addition to his familiarity with Linneaus' system, Burriel was also familiar with the Swede's complaint about the lack of reliable information on the flora of the New World, to which the Spanish Jesuit responds by calling on his colleagues in Spain and America to heed the challenge (42-43). Notwithstanding his tacit confirmation of Linneaus' criticism, Burriel defends the legacy of important works that Spaniards had contributed to Europe's knowledge of the New World, from Oviedo, Acosta and Francisco Hernández to the *Relaciones* of Jorge Juan and Antonio Ulloa, thus securing his place among the long line of historians who have vindicated Spain's scientific heritage against the traditional view of the Iberian Peninsula as a backwater of Counter-Reformation Catholicism.

In his reordering and condensation of Venegas' text, Burriel basically turned the *Empressas* on its head. Venegas' "mappas historiales" describing the nature and inhabitants of California, relegated to the last part of the *Empressas*, are transferred to the first book of *Noticia* and considerably modified to conform with the criteria of the contemporary naturalists, such as Linneaus, that Burriel cites at the beginning of the segment. The first book of the *Noticia* describes in order the location, climate, landscape, flora, fauna and human inhabitants, a strategy that dehistoricizes the colonized peoples by presenting a geographic, zoobotanical and

ethnographic account of the region independent of the diachronic process of colonization. The second segment describes the several failed attempts to colonize the Peninsula, beginning with Hernán Cortés' ill-fated plans to conquer California and ending with Isidro de Atondo y Antillón's 1683 expedition accompanied by the Jesuit missionaries Eusebio Kino, Matías Goñi and Juan Bautista Copart. The third segment begins with the establishment of permanent reductions by Juan María Salvatierra and Francisco de Píccolo and ends with the reconquest of the peninsula after the 1734 rebellion that claimed the lives of Fathers Carranco and Tamaral. The providentialism of Venegas' *Empresas* is only implicitly present in Burriel's work. In a letter to another Jesuit Provincial of New Spain, Juan de Armesto, Burriel emphasizes synchronic and synoptic focus of the *Noticia* as he explains his plans for future natural histories and exhorts his fellow Jesuits to be the "eyes of the world": "Seamos los ojos del mundo, no solo para el bien espiritual, sino para el temporal en quanto no desdiga" (4). Burriel subtly transforms the apostolic calling of the Jesuit to the mission frontier into a vocation for natural history and the creation of a synoptic picture of colonized nature and subjects for European eyes.

Burriel was aware that his text was part of a booming genre of travel literature in Europe enjoyed by scholars and laymen alike. This potential lay reader is alluded to several times in the "Aprobaciones" and "Prólogos" of the *Noticia*. In his "Parecer" preceding the *Noticia* the Jesuit Bernardo Lozano Velez writes that the work the reader is about to undertake is "provechosa, util, y agradable su leyenda" with "tantos casos de edificación" and "muchos gustosas noticias, que hasta ahora no sabía el público," and concludes that the style is especially apt for a broad audience (1: vii). In his "Aprobación," Jacobo Samaniego, an advisor to the king of Spain, emphasizes the edifying as well as the entertainment value of the work, "Ninguno hasta ahora había tratado de exprofesso de aquellas Naciones, cuyas noticias, divirtiendo no menos por lo

extraño, que por lo remoto, interesarán a la Religión, y à el Estado” (1: xii). Although the evangelical mission of the Jesuits remains prominent, these prologues emphasize the temporal importance, specifically to the Spanish empire, of the Jesuit reductions in California. The lessons that Burriel hoped to impart with his work had more to do with sound economic policies and the formation of civil society on the colonial frontier than with the conversion of infidels to Christianity. As the almost immediate translation of Burriel’s history into English attests, this genre had a broad appeal to the reading publics of Europe’s eighteenth-century natural histories and travel literature, and if we are to believe the English translator of the *Noticia*, this appeal had everything to do with these secular, scientific and political aspects of the text. Despite the English translator’s reservations about the author’s habit and nationality, he concludes that the Jesuit, “[...] shews himself equally sensible and cautious, and alike free from prejudice and credulity,” and asserts that, though not intended to amuse, the *Noticia* “is full of instruction and information, and in that light, no doubt, will be a most acceptable present to the publick” (A4v).

One of the most striking of Burriel’s additions to Venegas’ *Empressas* is a disquisition on the economic policies of the Crown on the frontiers of Spanish America.<sup>101</sup> Although Burriel argues for reduced tariffs on mercury in order to promote the extraction of silver, he declares that the “verdadera riqueza de un país” resides in its labor force and manufacturing capacity, which he believes the metropole should take steps to develop in New Spain (2: 84). Burriel cites Sonora as a specific case of a region that remains underdeveloped because of the continued emphasis on the extraction of precious metals, “una de las provincias mas ricas y mas pobres a

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<sup>101</sup> According to Richard Herr, political economy was the field most open to Enlightenment ideas in Spain: “Sobre un punto al menos, muchos de los pensadores nacionales de la época habían llegado a ponerse de acuerdo, y en esto no iban a la zaga del pensamiento europeo: la economía política era la tan buscada ciencia natural de la sociedad, cuyas leyes mostraban el camino que debía seguir el hombre para vivir y prosperar, de acuerdo con los dictados de la razón” (48).

un mismo tiempo de la América y del mundo” (2: 79). Advocating patently physiocratic ideas with regard to the political economy of New Spain:

[...] no el oro, no la plata, no la pedrería, y los metales preciosos hacen ricos, y poderosos los Estados; sino la muchedumbre de habitantes laboriosos, y industriosos en la labranza de la tierra, crianza de ganados, y labor de toda suerte de manufacturas precisas para su consumo, surtimiento, gobernados con Justicia, y equidad, para que no se destruyan los unos a los otros. (80)

Apart from the affinity of Burriel’s economic ideas with contemporary economic theories from England and France, these proposals are also remarkable because José de Gálvez, the Visitor to New Spain who oversaw the expulsion of the Jesuits and the implementation of Charles III’s reforms to the Viceroyalty, returned to an emphasis on mining as the center of the frontier economy (Gálvez, “Noticia de la Nueva España”).

Burriel likewise links the Jesuit missions to the project of establishing a port of call in California for trade from the East Indies, which, as Burriel himself points out, was part of a plan to improve the colonial economy promoted by Julio Alberoni, one of the early Bourbon reformers (2: 288).<sup>102</sup> The Spanish co-author of the *Noticia* describes this as part of the nationalist project of improving the Spanish empire’s fortunes, for which Jesuit *reducción* was to serve as a first stage,

para que la España antigua, despertando de su letargo, entablase Comercio activo, y no sufriese el puro pasivo en Europa: para que unida en caudales con ellas, fuese la mayor, y más principal interessada en el Comercio mismo de Oriente, y en la navegación de todo

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<sup>102</sup> According to Lynch, “The Alberoni quinquennium (1715-19) was not exactly a stage in Bourbon reform, yet he could claim some successes,” among which Lynch includes the improvement of the Spanish navy and the reform of commerce in the Indies (78).

del Mar del Sur; y finalmente, para dar nuevo semblante, y aun nuevo ser a toda la Nación. (292-93)

Burriel's additions and enmendations to the *Empressas* reveal how the Jesuits' activities on the mission frontier anticipated the Bourbon reforms through a dual emphasis on the establish of a civil order and the compiling of natural histories and ethnographies to aid in the political and economic subjection of new territories. Furthermore, Burriel was directly involved in the mid-century "reformismo de fronteras" through his own historiographic efforts as well as through his support of Ulloa and Juan y Santacilia's work. Manuel Lucena Giraldo explains that from 1750 the Bourbon state increasingly took control of overseeing the new impetus of territorial exploration and expansion with an emphasis on social and political control (268). Far from the antagonistic relationship between the Crown and the Society of Jesus that later developed under Carlos III, Burriel saw the Jesuits' efforts on the Spanish American frontier as perfectly reconcilable with the Bourbon reformers' rationalization of social control and application of Enlightenment political economy and natural history.

In addition to an emphasis on the secular consequences of the Society's mission in California, Burriel also displays a marked skepticism towards Venegas' claims of demonic intervention against the Jesuit enterprise in Lower California. By the late seventeenth century, belief in demons and the supernatural became a principal target of both the radical and moderate Enlightenment, and by the mid-eighteenth century excessive adherence to superstition had even become a focus of Spain's moderate Enlightenment.<sup>103</sup> Burriel's account of the "hechiceros" reflects this skepticism:

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<sup>103</sup> According to Jonathan Israel, the "death of the devil," or the widespread skepticism towards witchcraft and demons, is one of the cornerstones of the early Enlightenment that spread through all languages and confessions during the early eighteenth century. Though many Catholic intellectuals were resistant to the Radical Enlightenment's outright rejection of the devil and magic, they nevertheless admitted that popular superstitions

En las Relaciones frecuentemente son llamados *Hechiceros*, y assi los nombraremos tambien nosotros, por conformarnos con ellas. Mas no por esto debe pensarse, que estos pobres hombres tenian comercio alguno, o pacto con el Demonio, ni que este les hablasse, como ellos decian, y publicaban, creyendolo facilmente, no solo los Indios, sino tambien muchos de los Europeos. (1: 109-10)

Burriel's dismissive attitude not only toward the traditional attribution of Amerindian idolatry to diabolic intervention, but also toward the widely held view, sustained by no less an authority than Acosta, that pagan practices of the Ancient Mediterranean world were instigated by the devil, demonstrates a profound rupture between the *Empressas* and the *Noticia* (*Historia* 217). Burriel's narrative abandons the hagiographic narrative of a struggle between the missionaries and demonic agents over the soul of the Amerindian and reframes the Jesuit mission as a battle between enlightenment and ignorance, or reason and superstition. In this new narrative, however, the missionary continues to perform the ascetic ideal on the colonial frontier, only his ascetic will and self-sacrifice now justify a new faith in reason.

While the *Noticias* itself clearly demonstrates the transition underway in Jesuit hagiographic literature, Burriel's correspondence with his Novohispanic confrères before and after the publication of his work provides an intimate perspective on how the organizational structure and ascetic ideal of the Jesuits lent itself to the production of geographic and ethnographic knowledge during Europe's Enlightenment. It is telling that the Spanish savant's correspondence requesting information, suggesting reforms and inquiring into the reception of

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exaggerated the frequency and potency of demonic interventions (Israel, 402-03). Feijoo expressed this measured skepticism in his essay "El uso de la mágica": "De qualquiera modo que sea, toca a la Providencia impedir que totalmente se baraje la economía del Orbe, como sin duda sucedería, si a aquella criatura [el Demonio], igualmente valiente que infeliz, se le dexase suelta la rienda para exercer en daño nuestro su actividad. Confundiría los Elementos, jugaría como con una pelota con todo el globo de la tierra, y aun no sé si estarían libres de ss violentos soplos las luces del Cielo. Esto podría hacer un Demonio solo. ¿Qué harían tantos millares?" (119).

his work does not include any letters to Venegas, who had long before retired to Chicomocelo by the time Burriel undertook his project. In his letter to Tompes, the Jesuit procurator of California, Burriel adds in passing as he closes a lengthy explanation on his project for a history of California that he had not written to Venegas because he did not know if he was alive (16). Though he was in the process of thoroughly revising the Novohispanic Jesuit's work, Burriel seems to have never inquired further into Venegas' whereabouts. As he was almost disdainfully critical of the author of the *Empressas* in his letters and repeatedly affirmed that the type of histories written by Venegas were a detriment to the order, it would have been convenient for Burriel to believe Venegas had passed. Nevertheless, the Novohispanic Jesuit's "mappas historiales" were not entirely antithetical to his Spanish counterpart's ambitious project for reforming natural history in New Spain and the rest of Spanish America.

Burriel sought to thoroughly reorient the apostolic asceticism of the Jesuits to the writing of natural history and ethnography from Europe's colonial possessions. Burriel's letter to Tompes is in effect a prospectus in which he explains his plans for the revision of Venegas' work and presents his views on the role of the Society in the production of knowledge in Europe's Enlightenment. The Spaniard affirms that his project was motivated by his desire to "servir al bien común espiritual y temporal de la América con la pluma" given that he was kept from fulfilling his vow to Saint Francis Xavier to work as a missionary in California (1). As in the Jesuits' hagiographic works, Burriel represents writing as a supplement to the apostolate, or as a form of *reducción*, in which the author contributes to the pastoral administration of colonized subjects while fulfilling his vow to adhere to an ascetic ideal. Burriel's concern for the spiritual and temporal welfare of Spain's colonial subjects is also motivated by the conviction that the improvement of knowledge would lead to more efficient government. Burriel's letter to Tompes

is imbued with the Enlightenment spirit of correcting the errors of inherited knowledge, ignorance and superstition in order to, as he planned with his *Noticia*, “ilustrar el estado moderno de las Indias” (2). In addition to his proposed work on California, Burriel also confessed his ambition to write a natural history of all of New Spain in which he would put to use the Jesuit missionary network and educational apparatus to map the colonial frontier, catalogue flora and fauna and provide ethnographic data on the Amerindians of the Viceroyalty. Burriel mentions the difficulties of governing the Viceroyalties in a vacuum of reliable information and asks his interlocutor: “¿No es esta una obra necesaria para el gobierno espiritual y temporal de la América?” (10).

In his correspondence, as with his work on California, Burriel subordinates the Jesuits’ apostolic mission to the end of efficient government through the orders’ role as collector and producer of knowledge. Whereas in the late 16th century Acosta, following the Aristotelean-Thomist paradigm of government as a means to creating good Christians, had distinguished between the task of first “making men” out of colonial subjects in order to then make them Christians, in Burriel we can see the function of creating Christians through the Jesuits’ apostolic network and intellectual production increasingly transformed into the means of creating political subjects through knowledge production. In hagiographic writing, such as Venegas’ *Empresas*, *reducción* was portrayed as the fulfillment of the ideal Jesuit missionary’s apostolic-ascetic vocation and as the providential justification of the colonial order. In Burriel’s letters as well as the *Noticia*, however, *reducción* becomes the means, or the peripheral tentacles, of a global knowledge producing network at the service of government. Burriel’s enthusiastic offer to assist his Novohispanic brethren betrays this shift in emphasis: “Y aunque en todas materias los serviré



con gusto en ninguna con tanto, como la que mire al adelantamiento de las ciencias, y libros” (13).

In his letter to Tompes, Burriel expresses his consternation at the “inverosimilitudes” in Venegas’ manuscript and laments the lack of methodical astronomic observations and descriptions of flora and fauna (5). Burriel outlined his plan to restructure and modernize the work: the first section would include a complete geographic, natural and ethnographic description of Baja California, the second section would thoroughly recount the pre-Jesuit attempts at colonizing the peninsula, the third section would narrate the Jesuit “spiritual conquest,” and an appendix would include detailed maps and essays on the geopolitical importance of the peninsula (3). Despite the inconsistencies of Venegas’ text, it did include some of these elements in one form or another. Burriel, however, was concerned with the work’s appeal to a reading public outside of his order’s members and devotees, that is, a secular European reading public that demanded a “Historia cumplida y exacta con todos aquellos primores y delicadezas que hoy desea la gente de buen gusto” (3). The Spaniard, rather audaciously, confessed that he found “muchas cosas repugnantes” in the *Empresas*, referring to the aforementioned inverosimilitudes and the many contradictory assessments of the peninsula included in the work. On this last point, Burriel complains, “según unos la California es tierra hermosa, pingüe, y fértil, y según otros la más infeliz del mundo. Los primeros, que entran a la Conquista, para aficionar Bienhechores, dicen maravillas del país, y del número de Indios: los que se siguen dicen mil miserias para que los socorran” (5). Venegas, according to Burriel, had not sufficiently scrutinized the verosimilitude of his sources in order to shape a coherent picture of the peninsula.

In his criticism of Venegas' text and his plans for a revised work, Burriel adhered to the Enlightenment "art of reading" that judged natural histories by their internal consistency (Cañizares-Esguerra 24-26). In his criticism of the contradictory accounts of the peninsula, the Spanish Jesuit indirectly targeted Francisco María Piccolo's *Informe del estado de la nueva cristiandad de California* (1702), which was a principal source for Venegas' manuscript, and which exemplifies how the Jesuit network of correspondence and publication, while providing the structure for modern natural history and ethnography, also fueled the anti-Jesuit backlash. Piccolo's work, an attempt to tout his order and secure patronage from then Viceroy of New Spain, the Duke of Albuquerque, by exaggerating the fecundity of the peninsula and the submissiveness of its inhabitants was later included in the *Letras Edifiantes* (1713) and circulated throughout Europe. Those who were later disabused of Piccolo's hyperbolic descriptions, such as the Jesuit missionary Sigismundo Taraval, lamented his co-religious' well-intentioned but ill-advised rhetoric, which would later fuel the wide-spread belief that the Jesuits reigned over wealthy lands in detriment to the states they ostensibly represented.

In an unguarded letter to Pedro Ignacio Altamirano, the Provincial of the Society in New Spain, Taraval updated his superior on his exploration of the peninsula and explained how Piccolo's embellished and erroneous account slipped through the Jesuit hierarchy:

Piccolo fue de aquellos hombres sinceros de quienes ni la sabiduría ni la virtud pueden conseguir que entiendan en más que[en]sus objetos. Con que V.R. verá lo que es digno de crédito, y lo que no es aún según los mismos que lo niegan. Harto se sintió en Californias ese memorial, y se procuró recoger, pero ya fue tarde, por que ya el P. Piccolo lo había remitido al P. Quino, este al P. Bartólome Alcazar nuestro Cronohistórico, y este a los PP. del Gran País. (1)

In Taraval's criticism of his predecessor in the missions of California we see the inherent contradiction between the Jesuit rhetoric of letter writing (Piccolo's *Informe* was an open letter addressed to the Viceroy) and the order's information gathering network. From the Society's inception, letter writing was a key tool for not only maintaining cohesion within the order but also for soliciting financial and political support from powerful patrons. For this reason, Jesuit novitiates were trained in the art of crafting epistles for different situations and aims (Boswell 248-49). Taraval suggested that Piccolo, concerned with the short term goal of securing much needed financial support for the California missions, was incapable of understanding the consequences of his inflated rhetoric, being one of those men who "ni sabiduría ni la virtud pueden conseguir que entiendan en más que[en]sus objetos" (1). In Taraval's criticism of Piccolo and in Burriel's comments on his *Noticia* the attitude towards the Jesuit network of information gathering and circulation shifts: while the order originally used these letters as an effective means to achieve the reciprocal goals of reforming morals and glorifying the Society (by extolling the virtues of illustrious members, sharing information from the field for future missionaries, or soliciting support from powerful allies), the reliability of the information relayed by this network increasingly came to be seen as an end in itself to be served by missionaries in the field.

Burriel's reformulation of the *Empressas* was in fact only one facet of the Jesuit's ambitious plans for reforming education and science in Spain and Spanish America, a reform that the Society would be uniquely equipped to undertake and from which the order would ultimately reap benefits. The Spaniard revealed to Tompes that the *Noticias* would serve as an example to instruct all Jesuit missionaries in what information to gather and remit to their superiors for the benefit of knowledge and efficient administration of the colonies (4). Burriel

was aware, however, that this example would have to accompany reforms to Spain's educational institutions in general and to the formation of Jesuit novitiates in particular. Displaying the nationalist spirit of these proposed reforms, Burriel laments that the lack of interest in the type of natural history he wished to write "ha bastado a acreditar a los Españoles de bárbaros y brutales entre las naciones de Europa" (8). The Spanish Jesuit argued that this lack of interest was due to educational institutions that permitted students to graduate in "edad de aprehender" without the fundamentals for understanding and appreciating "ciencias curiosas," "physica experimental," "historia natural," and "geografía" (8). Furthermore, few students were capable of competently reading maps or performing basic mathematical calculations (9). This, according to Burriel, had lead to an adult reading public of religious and laymen alike "sin gustillo de crítica, y discernimiento para juzgar de lo que leen, o de lo que ven, sin amor a los libros antiguos, con desprecio de los modernos sobre las citadas materias, o sin curiosidad" (9).

While Jesuit missionaries stationed around the globe were uniquely positioned to add to the Enlightenment archive of natural histories, in a partial indictment of the order's own educational apparatus, Burriel asserted that these missionaries were not entirely to blame for not fulfilling their potential: "De educación semejante no deben pedirse grandes adelantamientos ni acá ni allá y por tanto muchos no son culpables en no ser, como debieran porque no está en sus manos ser mejores" (9). Burriel insisted that there were "muchos españoles y extranjeros hábiles" in New Spain but that they lacked proper books and instruments, and even when capable minds set out to scientifically observe and record the nature and inhabitants of the colonial frontiers they lacked opportunities to publish their work and win the recognition they deserved:

Pero aun cuando falten estas cosas contemplo tambien que muchos se detendrán en escribir lo que han observado ya, y aun también en observar, por que las experiencias

pasadas les harán ver sus trabajos no han tenido la estimación que debieran, por que sus mapas, sus dibujos, sus curiosidades, o sus relaciones o se han despreciado, o cuando más honra les haya hecho, han parado en [un] rincón oscuro del archivo. (9)

In this passage, Burriel implies that the most important function of the missionary was to observe nature, recording and collecting anything of scientific interest on the colonial periphery. By not fulfilling this function, argued Burriel, his Jesuit confrères were doing a disservice to the progress of knowledge, the Spanish nation and the Society itself.

Although in his letter to Tompes Burriel mentions the addition of “cartas edificantes” on the California missionaries whose lives were not included in the *Empressas*, his comments seem disingenuous in light of his ambitions to reach a wider reading public in Europe. As he stated in his letter, Burriel hoped to write a “historia cumplida y exacta con todos aquellos primores y delicadezas que hoy desea la gente de buen gusto” throughout Europe (1). The Spanish Jesuit specifies what kind of exact and complete natural history the people of “good taste” expect, only briefly mentioning missionary biographies. Indeed, in proposing a multivolume series of *Cartas edificantes* from New Spain after the popular French model, Burriel remarks that these must include subjects to stoke the curiosity of readers who would otherwise shun a purely hagiographic work:

Es cierto que por gracia de Dios hay materiales para que juntas las relaciones de todas las provincias se haga una cosa buena, y se de a conocer bien lo que trabaja la Compañía.

Solo falta que no haya omisión en adelante, y que a las cosas de edificación se añadan las de curiosidad de modo que aficionen a toda suerte de lectores, lo que no se logrará sino con este cebo, de otro modo sólo leerán las relaciones nuestras beatas. (11)

Burriel disdainfully refers to the readership of Jesuit *Edifying letters* as “nuestras beatas,” that is pious women devotees or nuns, outside of the Society but under the spiritual guidance of Ignatians. His feminization of this reading public is telling not only as a reminder of the misogyny inherent in the hyper-masculine ascetic culture of the Jesuits but also as a representative of the Enlightenment association of scientific objectivity and rigor with the masculine, ascetic subject (Pratt 55-56).

While Burriel’s ambitions may be attributed to the individual enthusiasm of one youthful, talented and well-connected member of the Society without resonance among his brethren, the reception of his work demonstrates that he had many like-minded colleagues. After the completion of the *Noticia*, the first step in his project for reform, Burriel even more emphatically pushed his proposals in letters to his Novohispanic counterparts. In this correspondence we can more clearly see how in the eyes of the Jesuits the order’s ascetic ideal and organizational structure lent itself to the work of natural history in the age of Enlightenment, in which the pursuit of knowledge of the natural world becomes an end in itself. Juan Antonio Balthasar, the Provincial of the Society in New Spain from 1750 to 1753, praised the “tersa elocuencia” of Burriel’s *Noticia* and confessed to the Spaniard that if the *Empressas* “hubieran salido al público en estilo natural del padre Venegas sin [la adición] de las noticias selectas y apreciables con que Vuestra reverencia entretejió la relación hubieran logrado corta accepción” (1).<sup>104</sup> Referring to

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<sup>104</sup> The following is from the entry on Balthasar in Beristain de Souza’s *Biblioteca hispano-americana septentrional*: “Baltasar (P. Juan) nació en Lucerna de los Suizos a 10 de abril de 1697, y vistió la sotana de la compañía de Jesús en 26 de octubre de 1712. Ya profeso pasó a la América, y en las misiones del obispado de Durango en la Nueva Viscaya permaneció algunos años entregado todo a la salud espiritual de los indios. De allí fue traído a rectorado del colegio máximo, y finalmente al provincialato de su religión en la Nueva España por el año 1750. Escribió: *Vida el esclarecido P. Juan Gumersvac, de la compañía de Jesús*. Imp. en México 1737. 4o – *Vida del Ven. P. Francisco María Picolo, jesuita misionero de Californias*. Imp. en México 1730. 4o – *Relación de la vida y gloriosa muerte del P. Lorenzo Carranco jesuita misionero de Californias*. Imp. en México 1751. 4o – *Sermones en lengua mexicana*. MS. en la biblioteca del colegio de S. Gregorio de Méxio. – *Noticia de la vida y preciosa muerte del P. Nicolás de Tamaral, jesuita misionero de Californias*. Imp. en México 1752. 4o – Memorias sobre la conquista de la

Venegas' rhetoric, the elder Novohispanic Jesuit lamented with frankness, "esto es el estilo que por lo común se usa por acá donde se carece de muchas noticias que pudieran ennoblecer los escritos" (2).

In praising the *Noticias*, Balthasar repeated an important keyword, "crítica," that Burriel himself had used to describe his own work: "está bien escrita la historia, con gran crítica omitiendo algunas cosas, abreviando otras, y deteniéndose con prudencia en las más importantes" (3). In the context of the Spanish and Spanish-American Enlightenment use of "crítica" is not casual or coincidental; one only need consider the title of Feijóo's collection of essays largely credited with disseminating the critical spirit of the Enlightenment throughout Spain and the Americas: *Teatro Crítico Universal*. In fact, the appearance of this key word in Burriel's prized letters on Spanish history published by the journal *Seminario erudito* in 1780 (*Cartas eruditas y críticas de Andrés Marcos Burriel de la extinguida Compañía de Jesús*) also echoes the title of Feijóo's influential collection letters.<sup>105</sup> As Balthasar declares in his praise of the *Noticia*, the application of "crítica" to Venegas' work meant the discernment of which elements were of historical or scientific value. Burriel revised extravagant or contradictory facts, toned down Venegas' providential rhetoric, rewrote the work with a clear and direct style, began with a methodical catalogue of the flora, fauna and inhabitants, and included a detailed map of the peninsula. Overall, Burriel's modifications privileged the synchronic and scientific exposition (Venegas' "mapas historiales") over the diachronic, hagiographic and providential narrative. Despite his praise, Balthasar noted this bias and encouraged Burriel to include

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Pimería y sus misiones y comunicación de las del Río Colorado con las del Norte de Californias. MS> de que se aprovechó el autor de la *Historia de Californias*."

<sup>105</sup> The first letter of the collection is a 200 page disquisition addressed to Juan de Amaya on the Catholic Monarch's reform of the Spanish Church in the fifteenth century. The editor of the letter was none other than Gaspar Melchor de Jovellanos, who possessed his own manuscript copy of Burriel's missive.

biographies of Salvatierra, Piccolo and Ugarte in the second edition of his work, which he admitted would never be read if they were published as independent *Vidas y virtudes* (5). In the minds of these Jesuits, the life of the ideal apostol had become a supplement to the principal object of the *Noticia*, which was to provide an accurated geographic, natural, ethnographic and historic account of Lower California. This is not to say, however, that the ascetic-apostolic ideal was renounced; on the contrary, the disciplined gaze of the missionary becomes that of the critical researcher gathering and scrutinizing data in the field or the archive.

The academic formation of these missionary-researchers was likewise a concern for Balthasar, who understood along with Burriel the consequences for the future of the Society if the order did not keep up with the epistemic shift it had helped to bring about. Balthasar expresses his disappointment with a novitiate whom he had charged with the composition of a history of California and who, according to the former Provincial, could not accomplish in seven years what Burriel could write in 15 days (3). Just as his Spanish counterpart, Balthasar attributed this inadequacy to a slackening in Jesuit education and a lack of interest in tapping the potential of the order's missionary outposts and communication network (6). Offering his own ambitious reform, Balthasar proposed that the order properly school missionaries in navigation and mapmaking, and furthermore suggested that each province should have two "padres descubridores" solely dedicated to the activity of collecting, surveying and mapping the colonial frontiers, without any evangelical responsibilities (7). In the relegation of evangelical labor this scheme did not abandon the order's ascetic-apostolic ideal, but rather the scientific and ethnographic mission itself became an apostolic-ascetic exercise, exposing the missionary-fieldworker, or "padre descubridor," to the same discipline, risks and privations as well as serving the greater glory of the Church and the Society.



There is a great deal of historic irony in these discussions of ambitious projects and reforms, for at the moment of these personal exchanges the secular-scientific world picture that the Jesuits had helped to establish and continued to transform was turning against the order in what would be its most embattled moment. In his letter to Burriel Balthasar alludes to the order's situation when he mentions the obstacles to funding his proposals: "bien sé que pedir dependencia del barco, soldados y marineros, y gasto es pedir una herejía política en este tiempo cuando están tan calientes los cuentos de Paraguay" (9). Balthasar, of course, was referring to the loss of the prized Jesuit *reducciones* in Paraguay after the 1750 Tratado de Límites between Spain and Portugal, an event directly linked to the expulsion of the order from Portugal in 1758.<sup>106</sup>

Burriel's response to Balthasar, dated July 20, 1760, is perhaps the most extraordinary document in the Spanish polymath's correspondence with his Jesuit brethren in New Spain, as it not only refers to his work on California and plans for future natural histories but also gives a detailed account of the current events in Europe that were about to overwhelm the Society. The exchange of letters between the Spanish Jesuit and the elder Provincial of New Spain, who anxiously awaited news from Europe on the tribulations of the Society, amounts to an intimate and unique snapshot from the trenches on the theological, philosophical and political battles raging across the continent. Burriel was keenly aware of the need to adapt Jesuit writing to an evolving European public sphere, assuring Balthasar of the need to produce work that "pueda halagar el gusto de Europa," for only in this way would it "tiene asegurada su lectura" (1).

Aware of the Society's precarious reputation in Enlightened Europe, Burriel viewed the

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<sup>106</sup> In order to control contraband trade in Colônia do Sacramento, the Spain negotiated to take over the enclave from Portugal in exchange for lands that included 7 of the Jesuit's Guaraní *reducciones*. The Jesuits' impassioned and polemic efforts to stop the treaty were later used against them as evidence of their hostility to the interests of the Spanish crown. When the Guaraníes rebelled against Spanish and Portuguese attempts to resettle them, the Jesuits were blamed for instigating the uprising (Lynch 179-82).

production of natural histories as a means of defending the order against its detractors. Nevertheless, for Burriel this implied a return to the origins of the Jesuits more than an adaptation to the emerging public sphere. Perhaps reflecting on the work of Acosta, Burriel remarks that the early Jesuits never lost an opportunity to chronicle their missionary enterprise and that their example should serve as an admonition to the contemporary Jesuits of Meridional America whose lack of interest in producing “relaciones metódicas, curiosas, y ordenadas en un cuerpo con mapas, dibujos, y discursos políticos” had occasioned grave errors in the administration of the Americas (2).

According to the Spaniard, the most serious consequence of this diminished initiative to produce reliable information from the Jesuit missions was the expulsion of the order from all Portuguese territories in 1758, which according to Burriel was the result of misinformation about the order’s activities in the Americas. Though Burriel also criticizes the “genio” of his compatriots who show little interest for matters far from the metropole, he asserts that the Society would continue to bear the brunt of the consequences if they failed to publish works aiding the political and economic administration of the colonies: “pero si los Jesuitas no lo hacen, nadie lo ha de hacer, y ellos pagan la pena que no se haga” (2). Burriel’s response to Balthasar goes on to describe the embattled position of the Society in both the European Republic of Letters as well as in the political sphere. According to the Spanish Jesuit, the declining fortunes of his order had affected him personally as they had led to his removal from the position as director of the ecclesiastic archives in Toledo. In his letter, Burriel outlines four interrelated fronts in which the Jesuits faced fierce opposition: Paraguay, Portugal, French Jansenism and the theological dispute with Daniello Concina, a Dominican friar who had published a theological treatise in 1749 that condemned Jesuit Molinism and probabilism and

which, according to Burriel, was simply an anthology of anti-Jesuit calumnies “esparcidas por más de un siglo en mil libros y libelos” (4). Burriel asserted that the most efficacious response to these attacks was the conscientious exercise of the Jesuits’ dual vocation as apostles and producers of historic and scientific knowledge: “¿Nuestra vida, a qué llama?” asks the Spaniard, “Nuestra profesión qual es, sino de Apóstoles y hombres doctos?” (15).

As he demonstrated in his *Noticia* and his correspondence with his fellow Jesuits, Burriel believed that these two “professions” were one and the same. Although he diminished the apostolic-ascetic vocation that was extolled in the *Vidas y virtudes*, Burriel nevertheless understood that it was the basis for the epistemological shift in eighteenth-century natural history and hoped that the Jesuits could use this institutional identity to reform the Spanish-American colonial government as well as improve the standing of the Society throughout Europe. While the discourse of Jesuit natural history and ethnography was in the last instance framed by the Company’s need to justify the order it imposed on Amerindian peoples of the colonial frontier, as Kristin Huffine has demonstrated in her analysis of eighteenth-century accounts of the Guaraní *reducciones*, Burriel’s *Noticia* demonstrates that they increasingly became an end in themselves whose value was judged by their usefulness for governing Spain’s colonial possessions and their contributions to the fields of natural history and ethnography in Europe (294). Though Burriel participated in the debates that generated what Cañizares-Esguerra has termed a “patriotic epistemology,” his work was more importantly influenced by the Society’s ascetic ideal and organizational structure. Just as Burriel’s work was translated and widely disseminated throughout Europe, so too were the Jesuits’ methods of framing the colonial frontier in the discourse of natural history. Venegas’ and Burriel’s works require us to view the Jesuits as both precursors and contemporaries to Enlightenment natural history and ethnography,

a perspective that has been skewed by the order's fate in the second half of the eighteenth century.



## Conclusion

The elaborate map (figure 1) that Burriel included in the *Noticia* vividly illustrates the development of the Jesuit ascetic ideal on the Spanish-American mission frontier. The map itself presents, *d'un coup d'oeil*, the foundation of permanent settlements on the northern frontier of New Spain, where the fluid political boundaries of the viceroyalty (Provincia de Sonora) share a space with the names of Amerindian nations that crisscross the landscape (Yumas, Papagos, Cocomarcopas, Cochimies, etc.). In a sense, the map is a snapshot of the process of *reducción* whereby these nations were incorporated into the political institutions of New Spain. In his introduction to the ethnographic description of the Californios, Burriel explains that the territorial limits and political sovereignty of the European nation have yet to be established on the northern frontier of New Spain. Rather, the concept of “nación” is used to denominate linguistic groups with no fixed boundaries:

Este nombre *Nación* en América, generalmente hablando, tiene distinta significación, que en Europa; aunque en Europa suele tambien tomarse de diferentes maneras. En Europa se da nombre de una Nación a los que viven en cierta extensión de terreno, o baxo de cierto Dominio, sean, o no de un Language. En la América, por lo regular, no habiendo entre los Indios, que ahora se conquistan, ni distinción, o límites de Provincias, ni separación de Dominios, quales se hallaron en los dos Imperios de Mexico, y del Peru, se reputan por una Nación todos los Indios, que usan un mismo language, sean pocos, o muchos; bien vivan cerca unos de otros; bien derramados en distantes rancherías, o que si se diferencian en el Idioma es poco, por ser unas Lenguas dialectos de las otras, de modo que puedan entenderse entre sí mismos. Quando el language es entre sí tan diferente, que

no pueden entenderse unos con otros, entonces se llaman diversas las Naciones; sin que esto impida, que algunas veces tomen el nombre las Naciones, no tanto de la Lengua, como del parage en que viven, o de algunas otras circunstancias tales. (1: 61-62)

As in his map, in this passage Burriel paints the cultural boundaries of the mission frontier as a confusing mosaic that is in the process of being “reduced” to the political order of the viceroyalty. While presenting a synoptic, bird’s-eye view of the Amerindian peoples of the north-west frontier of New Spain, this map likewise reflects the Jesuits’ emphasis on identifying and mastering the languages of their catechumens. If the experience of the missionary “in the field” often contradicted the linguistic heroism that was essential to the Jesuits’ ascetic ideal, Burriel’s ethnographic map nevertheless restores mastery by cataloguing and distributing these language groups upon a landscape that can be dominated by a globalizing perspective and traversed with the tools of modern cartography and navigation.

In the upper left hand corner of the map a sun bearing the symbol of the Society of Jesus shines down upon the unexplored regions of the frontier as if progressively revealing the landscape and its inhabitants to the viewer. Reinforcing this impression, a legend inscribed at the edge of the map in the upper part of the California peninsula reads “Naciones Gentiles no Conocidas” as a stand-in for the toponyms and ethnic groups to be filled in on future maps. Burriel’s map is bounded on the left and right by a series of drawings meant to represent the principal fauna of the peninsula as well as the physiognomy, dress and customs of the Californios. The inhabitants of the peninsula are frozen in idyllic scenes that represent an eternalized pre-Hispanic past free from the darker side of *reducción*. Although a group of women, one of whom suckles an infant, is more chastly garbed, the mostly naked and languid bodies of the Californios suggest an existence barely above the state of nature portrayed in the

drawings of the fauna. In one frame, Burriel has depicted the Californio practice of curing illnesses by sucking through a pipe filled with wild tobacco and placed on the head of the sufferer, while in another frame he depicts the ritual dress of the Californio shamans as they assume an unthreatening pose.

The two scenes that frame the bottom of Burriel's map remind us that this synoptic "mapa historial" is the product of the Jesuit ascetic ideal performed on the mission frontier. Both drawings depict the "martyrdom" of Fathers Nicolás Tamaral and Lorenzo Carranco at the hands of the Pericues in 1734. Carranco is portrayed with an angelic smile while clutching a cross as his body is pierced with arrows and dragged by two figures whose headdresses suggest they are shamans. In the background, Burriel portrays the Pericues thrusting the Jesuit's decapitated corpse into a bonfire. The images complement Burriel's description of Carranco's torment, which according to the Jesuit defy words: "No son para escritas aquí las profanaciones, que influidos del espíritu de inmundicia executaron contra el sagrado cadaver, y las burlas, y mofas abominables, que de él hicieron antes de darle al fuego" (2: 470-71). In the frame to the right, the same fate awaits Tamaral as one of the instigators of the rebellion stands over him with a dagger aimed at his throat. The placement of these the ascetic narrative of the mission frontier at the bottom of the map is doubly significant: on the one hand, this narrative has been separated out from and subordinated to the composition of the ethnographic map; on the other hand, the narrative, which in some cases culminated in martyrdom, is represented as the foundation upon which the knowledge contained in the map is produced. At a glance, Burriel's map tells the story of the development of the *Vidas y virtudes* and Jesuit natural history in relation to the performance of the Jesuit ascetic ideal on the eighteenth-century Novohispanic frontier.



The Jesuit ascetic ideal was a product of the dialectic between a millenary tradition of Christian asceticism and the experience of the Society's missionaries on the Spanish-American colonial frontier. As embodied in the *Ejercicios espirituales*, this ascetic ideal focused on the inner-worldly conduct of a subject, both religious and layman alike, who is trained to submit his or her own actions to rigorous scrutiny and to continue in the saeculum with the certainty of a God-willed vocation. On the mission frontier, the Jesuits found a field of action which put this ideal to the test, and through the Society's prolific cultural production reproduced this model of conduct not just for the order's own members but also among all strata of colonial society. This ascetic ideal was reciprocal in three principal aspects: firstly, as it was directly linked to the colonial project of *reducción*, the Jesuit ascetic ideal was based on an economy of merits in which the missionary subject's virtue was tested and proven in the process of forming obedient Amerindian subjects; secondly, as a model of exemplary conduct tested in the extreme conditions of the colonial frontier, the subject of Jesuit missionary hagiography became an object of contemplation and imitation for the subject of the colonial center. As means of reproducing the moral order of the viceroyalty, this ideal justified the excesses and injustices of the colonial system by upholding the values of obedience, humility and self-sacrifice in the face of both Amerindian resistance and pervasive colonial corruption. Lastly, the performance of the Jesuit ascetic ideal on the Spanish-American frontier made its way back to the metropole and reached an audience beyond the borders of Spain through the production of natural histories and theories of government.

As a process that subjected inner-worldly conduct to new techniques of rationalized self-control and increasingly approached nature through an instrumental-scientific discourse, the Jesuit enterprise on the Spanish-American colonial frontier was an important development in the

disenchantment of the world within Western societies. For Max Weber the disenchantment of the world implied an intellectualization and rationalization of social relations and culture wherein “there are no mysterious incalculable forces that come into play, but rather that one can, in principle, master all things by calculation” (“Science” 139). This process of disenchantment is directly linked to the ascetic ideal, which increasingly subjects individual conduct and the organization of society to rational calculation and discipline as end to be pursued for its own sake. Burriel’s map, with the sun throwing light upon a territory whose landscape and inhabitants emerge into the purview of the Western subject, suggests just such a view of the world as a space devoid of mystery that can be observed, studied and understood by a dispassionate and disciplined gaze. Contrary to Weber’s emphasis on the Puritan ascetic ideal, however, this disenchantment of the world was an ecumenical process that was carried out even on the remote frontiers of early-modern Spanish America. This is not to say that *reducción* and the Jesuit ascetic ideal were necessary or sufficient conditions of a disenchanted world or a modern subject of control. The Jesuit missionary frontier in Spanish America was intertwined with the myriad practices and discourses that together, by linking local contingencies (such as the missionary contact zone) to global designs (such as the providentialist discourse of empire), shaped modernity. The Jesuits contributed to this global modernity in attempting to forge an ascetic planet through the performance of an ideal of self-mastery on the Spanish-American colonial frontier, in undertaking the project of forming Amerindian communities based an urban-monastic model, and in producing and disseminating knowledge about the nature and inhabitants of the colonial hinterlands for world-wide consumption.

In her account of the formation of a “planetary consciousness” in eighteenth-century European travel narratives, Mary Louise Pratt largely separates the missionary undertaking from the enterprise of natural history on the frontiers of European empires:

As Christianity had set in motion a global labor of religious conversion that asserted itself at every point of contact with other societies, so natural history set in motion a global labor that, among other things, made contact zones a site of intellectual as well as manual labor, and installed there the distinction between the two. (27)

Jesuit narrative, however, belies a clear division between the missionary’s labor and the that of the natural historian: the latter built upon the intellectual labor of the former and reinhabited the ascetic ideal in an inner-worldly sphere that the Jesuits had helped bring into being. The intellectual labor of the Jesuits’ missionary enterprise was a focus of the order’s narrative production from the very beginning of their presence in Spanish America, both through the study of Amerindian languages as well as the study of nature for the practical ends of *reducción*. As revealed in Burriel’s *Noticia* and his letters to fellow Jesuits, the task of collecting and publishing knowledge about the remote frontiers of Spanish America increasingly became an end pursued for its own sake, albeit with the ascetic self-control and the certainty of a God-willed vocation that was inculcated in the Jesuit missionary. Thus, through the performance of the ascetic ideal on the Spanish-American frontier, the Jesuits contributed to the secularization of reason in the West. Though Burriel’s catalogue of the flora and fauna of California did not reach the level of abstraction in Linneaus’ system, he nevertheless shows that the Jesuits had already anticipated the narrative of eighteenth-century secular natural history, with its synoptic and chaste gaze, through the reproduction of the order’s ascetic ideal on the mission frontier.

Of course, the differentiation of the discourses of missionary hagiography and natural history was never complete in eighteenth-century Jesuit narrative, as the images of the martyrdom of Fathers Tamaral and Carranco at the bottom of Burriel's map demonstrate. Even the *Vidas y virtudes* sometimes blur the boundaries between the performance of the ascetic ideal and the disenchantment of the colonial frontier, as in the case of Juan de Ugarte, who together with Juan Eusebio Kino explored the northern reaches of New Spain and established the peninsularity of Lower California. In his work on the life of Ugarte, Juan de Villavicencio cites a letter from Ugarte which begins by narrating the perils faced by the missionary in sailing northward in the Gulf of Cortés towards the Colorado River and ends by dispelling the many myths that had been disseminated in chronicles and maps of the region:

[...] y que cada día que nos librábamos de un riesgo era un nuevo milagro. A esto se llegó el que enfermó la gente, yo me llené de llagas, y pensé morirme. El que prometió los bastimentos faltó también. Mas en esto se vió que la obra era de Dios; pues destituidos de todo socorro humano, entre tantas enfermedades, necesidades y peligros, llegamos a pasar el Río Colorado y a descubrir cuantas mentiras se han dicho hasta ahora de estas tierras. En donde hay Islas, ninguna ponen, y en donde no las hay las ponen. Ponen la Isla de oro, y en tierra firme, casi en el mismo paralelo la laguna del oro sin coger, siquiera por cosa esquisita para una sortija, para las manos de su Magestad. Ponen en tierra firme el Reino del Rey Coromedo, el gran Tepuayo, la gran Quivira, las siete cuevas de donde salieron los mexicanos, la sierra de los minerales, y para que no faltase para su beneficio, ponen inmediatamente el cavo de los azogues. Nada de esto vimos, ni señal de que hubiera Reinos; pues antes bien lo que reparamos, fue un desierto, y despoblado inmenso. Por el contrario en las costas de Californias vimos muchísima gente, llegamos

a treinta y seis grados de altura. No proseguimos adelante; porque tenía el mar ya poco fondo; con que yo creo que la California es Península, y que en la creciente del mar se aísla toda; bien, que esto es conjeturar; mas según lo que vimos, bien fundada. (106-07)

According to Ugarte, the prize for passing such demanding trials of his ascetic virtues was certain knowledge about the natural features and inhabitants of the lands he was sent to explore, and though his letter ends with a hypothesis that the peninsula becomes an island with the rising tide, he is nevertheless guarded about further conjecture. The desert landscape described in Ugarte's letter is both a space for the practice of the ascetic ideal as well as a disenchanted space progressively freed from the "mentiras" of the past.

As narratives that exalted the virtues of perseverance, obedience and humility, the *Vidas y virtudes* likewise reaffirmed a colonial order built on a rigid social hierarchy and exploitative economic relations. The lives of exemplary Jesuit subjects, made objects of contemplation for all strata of Novohispanic society through hagiographies, sermons and spiritual exercises, emphasized the sense of Christian duty inculcated among members of a Criollo elite, such as Juan de Ugarte, who renounced fortune and fame in order to pursue an ideal of self sacrifice through the process *reducción* on the missionary frontier. Where Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra and Antony Higgins have linked Criollo subjectivity and the production of knowledge in late eighteenth-century New Spain through the concepts "patriotic epistemology" and "Criollo archive," I have attempted to show the Novohispanic subject of control and the writing of natural history were rooted in the ascetic ideal promoted by the Society of Jesus before they were expressions of cultural autonomy in response to Enlightenment discourse or the Bourbon reforms. As an expression of colonial theodicy, the narrative of ascetic models of conduct bestowed a moral order upon a society whose violent origins were exposed in the expansion of

the colonial frontier. By reenacting the Christian ascetic ideal the Jesuit missionary turned the brutality and chaos of the frontier into a familiar narrative in which the most hallowed virtues of Novohispanic society were put on trial and passed the test. Thus, the frontier was linked to both the colonial center and metropole through the practice and discourse of pastoral power in which ideal models of conduct were forged reciprocally in the process of forming ideal colonial subjects.

As evidenced by the publication of several editions of Antonio Paredes' work on Salvadora de los Santos after the expulsion of the Society, the Jesuit ascetic ideal continued to exercise influence over Novohispanic society even in the order's absence. While Paredes' work reveals the importance of the Jesuit ascetic ideal in restricting popular religious practices or charismatic authorities that threatened hegemony, the text likewise demonstrates how the virtues extolled in Jesuit hagiography provided a path to social prestige for even the most marginalized Amerindian subjects. As acts of colonial mimesis directly linked to institutions of social control on both the frontier and colonial center, Jesuit narratives produced a recognizable colonial other while at the same time demonstrating how this other could imitate, albeit imperfectly, a hegemonic model of conduct. It is an historiographic commonplace that the expulsion of the Jesuits from New Spain, along with other Bourbon reforms, galvanized members of the Criollo elite who would later lead the movement for independence, but the order's legacy in both the institutions of cultural reproduction and in the occupation of the ecumene of the future Mexican republic has largely been left unexplored. Any future research into this legacy will have to begin with the Jesuits' performance of the ascetic ideal on the colonial frontier.

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