

# *Transplanted Spanish Catholicism*

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- fynd at gopi a'i lwytho i lawr;
- argraffu copi;

**Sylwch bod y deunydd hwn yn UNIG at ddefnydd myfyrwyr sydd wedi cofrestru ar y cwrs astudio fel y nodir yn yr adran isod. Caniateir i holl staff a myfyrwyr eraill ddarllen y deunydd yn unig ac ni ddylent ei lwytho i lawr ac/neu argraffu copi**

Mae'r Copi Digidol hwn ac unrhyw gopi digidol neu brintiedig a ddarparwyd i chi, neu a wnaed gennych, o dan delerau'r Drwydded hon, i'w ddefnyddio gyda'r Cwrs Astudio hwn. Gellwch gadw copïau o'r fath ar ôl i'r cwrs ddod i ben, ond at eich defnydd personol eich hun yn unig. Bydd pob copi (yn cynnwys copïau electronig) yn cynnwys y Rhybudd Hawlfraint hwn a bydd yn rhaid eu dinistrio ac/neu eu dileu pan fydd Prifysgol Cymru Y Drindod Dewi Sant yn galw am hynny.

Ac eithrio'r hyn a ganiateir gan gyfraith hawlfraint, ni chaniateir copïo, cadw neu ddosbarthu pellach (yn cynnwys drwy e-bost) heb ganiatâd deiliad yr hawlfraint.

Mae gan yr awdur (ac mae'r term hwnnw'n cynnwys arlunwyr a chrewyr gweledol eraill) hawliau moesol dros y gwaith ac ni all staff na myfyrwyr achosi, na chaniatáu, i'r gwaith gael ei aflunio, ei lurgunio neu ei addasu mewn unrhyw ffordd arall, neu ei drin yn ddiraddiol mewn unrhyw ffordd, a fyddai'n niweidiol i anrhydedd neu enw da'r awdur.

Mae hon yn fersiwn ddigidol o ddeunydd hawlfraint a wnaed dan drwydded gan ddeiliad yr hawl, ac ni ellir sicrhau ei chywirdeb. Cyfeiriwch at yr argraffiad cyhoeddedig gwreiddiol os gwelwch yn dda.

Trwyddedwyd i'w ddefnyddio ar gyfer y cwrs HPRS5007 - Exploring Religions in Latin America

Teitl: South and Meso-American native spirituality : from the cult of the feathered serpent to the theology of liberation

Enw'r Awdur: Gossen, Gary H., Leon Portilla, Miguel.

Enw'r Cyhoeddwr: Crossroad

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# Transplanted Spanish Catholicism

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**T**O GREATER AND LESSER DEGREES, transplanted Spanish Catholicism has been a major, formative influence in the development of postcontact religious beliefs and practices of the Indian communities of Mesoamerica and South America. It was of course by colonial design that this should be so. The Spaniards organized their American colonies as kingdoms, each with two republics in it: a "republic of Spaniards" in the cities and a "republic of Indians" in the countryside, where every effort was made to resettle them in townlike population units called *reducciones*. The native peoples in these "new" towns and villages enjoyed a certain cultural and political autonomy, although they were subject to tribute, *mita*, and other forms of obligatory work. Nevertheless, intermarriage quickly appeared as a bridge between the two republics, creating a third sociocultural reality (the process of cultural encounter and crossing known as *mestizaje*) that completed the shaping of Hispanoamerica.

From the point of view of religion, one can say, in the well-known cultural typology of Darcy Ribeiro (1972), that Spanish Catholicism was the religion "transplanted" from Spanish cities. It would also become the fundamental component of the "new" religion of the mestizos, and even of the "persistent" religions of those Amerindian societies that most tenaciously resisted conversion — for example, the Quechuas and Aymarás of the Andean region and the Nahuatl and Maya peoples of Mesoamerica.

I should like to emphasize that the present study seeks primarily to portray the historical roots and ethnographic context of sixteenth-century Spanish Catholicism. This focus necessarily precludes full discussion of doctrinal, spiritual, and liturgical aspects of medieval Christianity and of the post-Reformation period. These more general considerations of Western Christianity are covered in volumes 17 (*Christian Spirituality: High Middle Ages and Reformation*) and 18 (*Christian Spirituality: Post-Reformation and Modern*) in this series.

Of concern to me in this study are both the subjective and objective issues

pertaining to Spanish Catholicism of the period in question. By "subjective," I refer to Clifford Geertz's well-known definition of religion as a particular way of looking at life and interpreting the world by means of a symbolic system that produces in human beings profound and lasting attitudes and motivations concerning the meaning of life (Geertz 1965). By "objective," I refer to Emil Durkheim's consideration of religion as the entirety of beliefs and customs, ethical and ritual, related to the divine as these are articulated by a particular religious group or church (Durkheim 1968). Thus, both subjective and objective perspectives are pertinent to this study. The Catholic religion that the Spaniards brought to the New World was of course that particular phase of its historical development that was peculiar to Spain in the sixteenth century. It was not completely homogeneous, and thus one can speak of an "official" version, which was brought by the ecclesiastical hierarchy and the clergy, and a "popular" version, which was brought by the conquistadors and the colonists (Velasco 1964, 1965, 1967, and 1971). It seems certain that at that time there was not as great a difference between the two versions as there is today, because the rupture between the clergy and the people that characterized the Enlightenment had still not begun, at least in Spain. The Spanish church carried out the conversion of America through the successful preaching of its missionaries; indeed, many of them viewed America as a providential compensation from God for the losses to the church caused by the Protestant Reformation. In the hands of the grass-roots laborers in the conversion process, it was undoubtedly Spanish popular religion, not the "official" version, that reached Indian communities. Nevertheless, the official economic and political support of the state was crucial to this evangelization. In fact, it should be recalled that the early sixteenth-century Spanish state enjoyed a privileged relationship to the Vatican. Through a policy known as *Patronato Regio*, proclaimed by the papal bulls of Alexander V (1493) and Julius II (1507), the Vatican conceded to the king of Spain complete control over the church with regard to its evangelization mission in America. Thus, in effect, the Spanish state, as represented in America, became a "missionary state" with full authority to proceed with administration of church affairs and missionization policies in the New World, free from papal intervention. The unified church and political authority undoubtedly made the conversion efforts of the Spanish missionaries seem like one more instrument of oppression, thus reducing its credibility to Indian subjects. Although this was, sometimes tragically, so, it was the church, acting with full political backing of the Spanish Crown, that enabled the Crown to play such a crucial role in the cultural transformation of Indian society.

This is not the place to provide a full study of the historical formation of Hispanoamerican Catholicism. Nor can I pretend, in this context, to provide a detailed consideration of the long process of indigenous acculturation and resistance. I shall consider here only one component — the particular variety

of Catholicism that was transplanted — that figured in these larger, complex processes. To this end, this study is organized according to the following scheme. The section that follows describes the historical forces that shaped Spanish Catholicism in the sixteenth century. The second section considers its principal beliefs; the third section addresses its rituals; and, finally, the fourth section discusses its organization and ethical norms.

### **The Formative Influences of Sixteenth-Century Spanish Catholicism**

The Spanish church of the sixteenth century was a historical product, the result of a series of forces that gave it its particular character. Among these elements, the following deserve mention.

#### *Roman and Visigothic Origins*

It is not possible to test historically the ancient tradition about the preaching of the apostle James, who built the first Christian sanctuary on the banks of the Ebro River, where the Virgin Mary is said to have appeared on a pillar.

Nor is it possible to ascertain either the meaning or historical veracity of the prophesies, specifically concerning Spain, that are set down in the writings of the apostle Paul (Romans 15:28). Whenever and however it occurred, the gospel took root in Roman Spain. Tradition speaks of the seven apostolic men who were sent by the first pope, Saint Peter, to evangelize Betica in the year 64, in the time of the Emperor Nero, when the great Roman persecution of Christians had already begun. The nascent Spanish church quickly adopted its own martyrology, even before the Emperor Constantine issued the Edict of Milan (A.D. 313), which permitted religious freedom. At the beginning of the fourth century, the Council of Elvira (Granada) was held and was attended by nineteen bishops from different Spanish provinces. Its eighty-one canons crystalize the first constitution of the Spanish church, not so much in doctrinal aspects as in rituals and disciplines created to establish relationships with a society in which the majority of the people were not Christian (Sotomayor 1979). With the Peace of Constantine and official protection, the church was further consolidating itself when, at the beginning of the fifth century, the Visigoths burst into the Iberian peninsula. They had already abandoned their primitive religion to embrace Arian Christianity, as had other barbaric peoples who were in contact with Eastern Christianity. Arian Christianity denied the divinity of Christ and had been condemned by the church at the Council of Nicaea in 325. Although the Visigoths easily dominated the Hispano-Roman population in the military and political arenas, they ultimately lost out in the cultural and religious sphere. Thus, Recaredo, the Visigoth king, publicly renounced Arianism and embraced

the Catholic faith at the Third Council of Toledo, which occurred in 589. Two years later, Pope Gregory the Great wrote, in response to a letter that the same Recaredo had sent him: "A new miracle has happened in our days; through your efforts, all the people of the Goths have gone from Arianism to the truth of our faith" (Menéndez Pelayo 1945, 2:208). In this way, Catholic unity was consolidated on the peninsula, with the exception of the Jewish population. The Visigothic church consolidated the Christianization of Spain. The most notable figure of the Visigothic church was Saint Isidore, bishop of Seville and author of the *Etymologiae*, a compendium of all the knowledge of the time. Although this work symbolized the Christianization of culture and knowledge in Iberia, the church nevertheless felt that it had to keep fighting against idolatry and superstition. In the Councils of Toledo, the church condemned the cult devoted to certain "rocks, trees, and fountains," the consultation "of heavenly bodies to celebrate weddings, to build houses, or to plant trees," the celebration of the Roman pagan calendric rituals known as *calendas*, and the recitation of "magic formulas or superstitions when [collecting] medicinal herbs" (González 1979, 609-10). This anxiety over persistent superstition reflected concerns that had already been addressed by the Council of Elvira, in which persistent "pagan religion" was officially condemned. In addition, the Visigothic church created its own liturgy, which is known as the "Toledo," "Isidoran," or, most commonly, as the "Mozarabic" liturgy, because it was later used by Christians in the regions dominated by the Arabs. It organized ecclesiastical life with a particular link to the elective monarchy of the Visigothic kings.

### *The Secular Fight against Islam*

In 711, the Arabs crossed the Straits of Gibraltar, defeated the Visigoths, and in a few years arrived at the Pyrenees, establishing a Hispano-Muslim civilization that reached its climax during the tenth century. Its center was the city of Córdoba. Very soon, in 722, Don Pelayo began the reconquest in Covadonga. It would not end until the capture of Granada in 1492. During these eight centuries, Christians and Muslims lived through dramatic epochs of military and religious antagonism, and both sides turned this conflict into a holy war. Nevertheless, they also learned mutual tolerance. Thus, in Muslim Spain, the "Mozarabs" continued to practice Christianity, and, at the beginning of the reconquest, the "Mudejars" continued to practice Islam in those areas that had been recaptured as "Christian Spain." In contrast, in certain Christian kingdoms of the peninsula, the Spanish church not only maintained its own Roman-Visigothic tradition, but also opened itself up to the influence of other European Christian peoples, who came to Santiago de Compostela as pilgrims. Indeed, Santiago de Compostela, located in the northwestern corner of the Iberian peninsula, was, with Rome and the Holy

Land, one of the great pilgrimage centers of the Middle Ages. Within medieval Spanish Christianity, there also persisted certain traits of the old religions and magic that had come to the peninsula earlier. Marcelino Menéndez Pelayo, in his interesting work *Historia de los heterodoxos españoles* (1911-32), includes a long chapter entitled "Magic Arts, Witchcraft, and Superstitions in Spain from the Eighth Century to the Fifteenth," in which he states:

The general decadence and retroactive barbarism of the fourteenth century, the continued trade and commerce with the Jews and Muslims, the contamination of these heretical sects . . . all helped to obscure the notion of free will and to encourage the spread of divinatory arts, although to a lesser extent than in other nations. Neither were some prelates free from accusations of magic. (Menéndez Pelayo 1945, 2:376)

Much of this magico-religious arsenal became a part of the popular Catholicism that was transplanted to America.

### *The Link between the Church and the State*

A third formative force of transplanted Spanish Catholicism was the close link between the church and the state. The Emperor Constantine, upon giving complete freedom to the church in the Edict of Milan in 313, nevertheless fused it intimately with the state by merging, to a certain extent, the functions of the "Grand Pope" (Pontifex Maximus) with those of the Caesar. After the division of the empire in 395, this situation existed particularly in the Greek church, in which the patriarchy of Constantine was somewhat subject to the emperor until the fall of the empire to the Turks in 1403. In the West, after the creation of the Holy Roman Empire and the coronation of Charlemagne in 800, the emperor and the pope were considered to be the two heads of Christianity, in spite of the frequent conflicts between the two leaders. Spain always lived in the cultural orbit of the West. We have already seen how Recaredo achieved religious unity in the country, with the exception of the Jewish minority, and how a close association between the church and state had already been established. With the Arab occupation, this unity was broken, but the reconquest ended by carrying the pattern of church/state unity to its ultimate extreme.

Although the Catholic kings (Ferdinand and Isabella), upon accomplishing the reconquest and establishing national unity, wanted to respect the freedom of the large religious minorities — the Jews and the Mozarabs — and expressly promised to do so in the agreements of Granada in 1492, the need to strengthen the political and religious unity of the newborn national state soon became imperative. For this reason, in June of 1492, between 150,000 and 200,000 Jews were forced to leave the peninsula, because they represented, according to the decree of expulsion, "a danger to Christians, being people who were trying to avoid our holy Catholic faith . . . and to pervert it by

their wicked faith" (González Novalín 1980, 135). Whatever the ostensible, religious reasons for the expulsion of the Jews, there were undoubtedly, in addition, other political and economic reasons that figured into the decision. With respect to the Mozarabs, they were initially tolerated, as they had been during the centuries of the reconquest throughout Spain. However, in 1499, Cardinal Cisneros, upon being named archbishop of Granada, forcibly converted them to Catholicism. Baptized Mozarabs were known as "Moriscos," and it is supposed that they maintained, underneath their external Catholic practices, a fundamental belief in Islam. Official policies were becoming harsher, and, consequently, various Moorish rebellions broke out, of which the most important was that of Alpujarra in 1568. Between 1609 and 1613, the expulsion of all the Moors from Spain was decreed. Although there are no definitive statistics on the number of those expelled, 300,000 is usually mentioned (Caro Baroja 1976, 237). The fundamental cause seems to have been the failure of their conversion, but there were also political motives, such as the danger of a general uprising supported from the outside by the Turks.

This close link between the church and the state would express itself in the American enterprise as the *Patronato Regio*, which has already been mentioned briefly above. The state was not only united with the church, but it also assumed, free from the control of the Vatican, certain functions of the church, thus converting the Spanish Empire into a "missionary state." This fundamental church/state unity came largely as a consequence of the discovery of America. The Catholic kings went to Pope Alexander VI to secure the newly discovered lands for the exclusive benefit of Spain, to guard against the interference of Portugal. The response was the bull *Inter Coetera* (1493), in which the pope required the kings to "lead the people who live in such islands to receive the Catholic faith," so that "with the fullness of our apostolic authority . . . we bestow, we concede, and we assign each and every of said discovered lands and islands" (Bruno 1967, 95). Whatever may be the correct interpretation of this controversial bull, there is no doubt that it sanctioned the duty of the kings to send missionaries. Later came the other Alexandrian bulls and, above all, the *Universalis Ecclesiae* (1507) of Julian II, which granted the kings the right of the *Patronato Regio* over the church with a series of privileges, among them the presentation of suitable candidates to occupy the bishoprics, the parish churches, and other ecclesiastical offices. Thus the Crown took effective control over the catechists, to whom it paid their monthly salary or benefice, and over many other elements of ecclesiastical organization. To cover the costs of sending missionaries and the other expenses of the church in America, it charged tithes. The regime of the *Patronato Regio* evolved until, at least in the interpretation of certain jurists of the period, in the eighteenth century it turned into the *Regio Vicariato Indio*, thus converting the king of Spain into a de facto vicar of Rome in the Indies. This is not the place to analyze the advantages that the regime

of the *Patronato Regio* had for the American church, but it is an important point for understanding transplanted Catholicism, for such royal patronage carried with it "the employment of political power in the service of God and the concept of the state as a missionary enterprise" (Bruno 1967, 131).

### *Spanish Medieval Popular Religion*

A fourth formative influence in transplanted Spanish Catholicism was Spanish medieval popular religion. For my purposes in this discussion, popular religion refers to the combination of beliefs, rituals, organizational forms, and ethical norms that are peculiar to each village. These were the result of local religious traditions of the peninsula as they merged with the pastoral actions of the clergy. I have already mentioned the principal religious traditions that came together in Spain: the native practices of the Iberians and Celts, the Roman tradition, the Visigothic and the Arabic. It is certainly the case that each community was, in sixteenth-century Spain, a unique expression of these combined traditions. It is also the case that the community undoubtedly reinterpreted that which the clergy transmitted to it. However, it is particularly relevant to an understanding of popular faith as it existed at the end of the medieval period to realize that the clergy was often ill-prepared and lacking in pastoral interest. Furthermore, parish priests were not well distributed throughout the dioceses. Although particulars of sixteenth-century popular religion will be discussed in more detail below, it is important to bear in mind the ironic pattern of localism and particularism that characterized popular religion in this period, at the very moment when a unified Spanish church and state had at last, after centuries of fighting the Moors, coalesced as a single entity. Thus, it is not surprising to find that the tension between the universal church and local belief and practice made its way to America. I shall discuss this at greater length below.

### **The Beliefs of Transplanted Catholicism**

In order to introduce the beliefs of any religion, it is necessary to talk about divinity and about those beings who are considered sacred, although they may not necessarily be divine personages as recognized by theology, mythology, or ritual representation. In religions that rely on revelation and upon people endowed by the wisdom of authoritative teachers, as is the case with Catholicism, many beliefs become dogmas. These dogmas begin as intellectual declarations about revealed truth as propounded by teachers, and then, sometimes, come to be declared as truths that should be accepted by all members of the church. Whatever their origins, beliefs are many and hard to pin down; some are not even "dogmas." What follows is an effort to capture some sense of transplanted Christian belief in both the official and popular realms.

In order to introduce the fundamental beliefs of transplanted Catholicism, I am going to quote from the *Totality of the Catholic Faith*, which brings together the trilingual catechism (Spanish, Quechua, and Aymará) of 1584, the first book published in South America:

That part of the longer catechism which one must teach those who are baptized because of a dangerous illness, and also to the old and mentally impaired, who are not capable of receiving the longer catechism, according to the last Council of Lima, is the following:

1. About God: There is only one God, creator of all things. After this life, he gives eternal glory to those good people who serve him, and eternal punishment to those evil ones who offend him.
2. About the Trinity: This is God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, who are three persons and have the same being. And thus they are not three gods, but only one.
3. About Jesus Christ: There is a true Son of God who was made for us, and this is Jesus Christ; he is the one who by his death and blood redeemed us from our sins, was resurrected, and lives forever.
4. About the holy church: That in order to be saved, a man has to become Christian, to believe in Jesus Christ, to think about his sins, and to receive holy baptism; or, if he is already baptized and has turned to sin, to confess his faults to the priest. Thus, by receiving the sacraments and keeping God's law, he will be saved. (Tercer Concilio Limense 1584, 12)

This page from the catechism of the Third Council of Lima can be considered the best synthesis of the Christianity (beliefs, rites, forms or organization, and ethical norms) brought by the missionaries. However, because of its intellectual formulation, it turned out to be cold, and by limiting itself to very basic teaching, was incomplete. For this reason, it is necessary to contextualize its meaning by analyzing its actual use in the missionization process. How was it actually interpreted?

The first and most sacred place in this pantheon was held, naturally enough, by God. In order to know the catechism about God, it is necessary to analyze the treatises on the subject of pastoral care and the sermons that were the most influential during the colonial epoch. In the first category, on the issue of pastoral care and responsibility, the major sources are Acosta (1954) and Peña y Montenegro (1668). In the second category, on the subject of sermons, the key sources are Avendaño (1649) and Avila (1646-48). In the interest of brevity, I shall limit this discussion to Avendaño's manual for sermon preparation. This was published in both Spanish and Quechua and was often used in the routine and obligatory catechism of the Indians. In order to clarify the reasons for believing in God, Avendaño enumerated not only the theological and philosophical reasons, but also those that might be of greater popular appeal, based on people's own experience. Among these personal reasons cited for believing in God were old standards of popular Spanish

Catholicism: the experience of revelation — the God who reveals himself — and also the God who punishes. In his first two sermons, Avendaño presented six arguments or reasons for believing in the existence of God. These were: (1) the revelation of God to Adam and Eve, which has been passed down from generation to generation; (2) the miracles performed by Jesus Christ and the saints; (3) the existence of the world, which requires the existence of a creator; (4) the prevailing order of the universe, which requires a maker; (5) the presence of the sign of the cross in nature; and (6) the punishments handed down by God in human history. If such arguments are analyzed, one's attention is drawn to the greater importance assigned to the manifestation of God in the miracles, signs, and punishments — essentially the raw material of mystical cult belief systems — than to classical theological and philosophical arguments for the existence of God.

In his argument about miracles, Avendaño underplays the miracles of the New Testament, preferring to emphasize all "that which God has worked with the Indians . . . in your land, things which your fathers or your grandfathers saw and knew." In the present, Avendaño calls Indians' attention to miracles of the early postcontact period. For example, he speaks of the miracle of the jasper cross, which is venerated by the Incas in the temple of Coricancha: "However many plans the devil made to destroy it — one time with fire, another with water to sink it in the lake — he could not do it." He also speaks of a miracle attributed to the Virgin Mary, when she appeared and put out the fire during the siege of Cuzco by the Indians who were trying to recapture their capital (Avendaño 1649, 8–10).

In the argument about the signs, Avendaño, with reasoning that gives great weight to symbols, maintains that, just as cattle carry the brand of their owner, this "God put his mark and his sign on all creatures, so that we would know that all beings are the work of God." This mark or sign is the cross that shines in the heavens as the Southern Cross, in the condor that flies in the form of a cross, and even in many plants. "Have you not also seen that when you cut a *lucina* at the top, there appears there a brown cross? And in bananas, if you cut them in half, you also see the same cross, and in the *granadilla* flower and in the *puche puche*, one also sees the sign of Jesus Christ's passion" (Avendaño 1649, 21). Finally, in the argument of the punishments, Avendaño refers first to the great general punishments that, because of their size, "we are not able to attribute to other than God," such as the flood or certain well-known cataclysms in indigenous mythology. He also refers to other more localized punishments, such as the loss of natural knowledge of God, passed down from fathers to sons from primordial revelation. This unfortunate loss Avendaño attributed to the sins of the Indians' forefathers (Avendaño 1649, 4r). He also noted that the fall of the Inca Empire at the hands of the Spaniards was the result of the sin of idolatry (Avendaño 1649, 75r). Not one to miss any opportunity, he observed that the huge demographic catastrophe that

reduced the native population by "much more than half" occurred because the Indians rebelled against God and formed a cult to the *wakas* (precontact Andean religious shrines) (Avendaño 1649, 25a).

Using sources such as these, one can construct an image of the transplanted God in which there are features of the official catechism and features of popular tradition. In general, one can say that the image of the transplanted God is as follows: for the majority of Spaniards, God, although he created the world and will, in the afterlife, sanction human conduct, is nevertheless a provident and accessible God. One makes promises to him, and he gives rewards and punishments during one's life on earth. This proximate God is experienced by believers in moments of difficulty, extreme danger, and on the occasion of making pilgrimages to great cult shrines. Dreams are also a way of experiencing God in that they sometimes produce revelations. Many people make "promises" to God or to some of the most venerated images; these are personal transactions that involve offering something in exchange for the favor the individual is requesting. In this way, the petitioner makes sure that he or she is being listened to; the promises are an expression, in the religious sphere, of the bartering of goods and social relations — this object or service for that object or service — that is so typical in the exchange systems of traditional societies. This pattern is of course typical of both Spanish popular religion and of Spanish traditional village culture. Many people believe that God gives rewards and punishments during the present life. While this is the product, in part, of church teaching, as in the context of sermons, it is also useful as a form of social control in a community of believers. It also permits a religious reading of history, allowing one to discover new meanings — rewards and punishments — in human events.

In order to complete this first section about God, I should refer briefly to the dogma about the Trinity and the incarnation. By the time Spanish Catholicism was moved to America, the church had already resolved the great debates about the nature of the triune God and the divinity of Christ. In good faith, people accepted both mysteries as church dogma defined them. The long confrontation between the Spanish Christians and the Jews and Muslims — who denied the Trinity and the divinity of Christ — served to emphasize the belief in both mysteries as a part of Christian identity. But the available data about medieval Spanish Christianity do not reveal a special "trinitarian spirituality" among the people, owing, no doubt, to the complexity of this mystery. In contrast, the figure of Christ — in large part through his humanity, not through the theology of the incarnation — does come to have central importance in popular spirituality. This elevation of Christ to the status of an important popular cult figure is no doubt influenced by the prominent place given to the life of Christ in the liturgy of the passion cycle. The cult of Christ has also been encouraged by linking

different images of him to the rituals of the *cofradías*.<sup>\*</sup> In effect, these are cults devoted to particular images of Christ, not to the "one" Christ of the New Testament.

Alvaro Huerga has discussed the subject of popular piety in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Spain and notes the important role played by emotional devotion:

The second trait of popular worship is its fondness for sentimental devotion. . . . People usually do not have a philosophy other than common sense, nor any other way of understanding that requires great abstract effort. The religion which suits them best is that which creates sensate images of the truths that they believe. In this sense, popular piety is always human and accessible; not, though, in the sense of academic humanism. Rather, it prefers what can be taken in through the senses, with lots of objects, complete with impurities; the pure and the abstract do not please. The passionate devotions — the cult to the Virgin, the saints, the sanctuaries, the *cofradías*, etc. — channel popular worship. . . . The atmosphere of the Crusades and Saint Bernard's preaching and the actions and example of the mendicant orders perfectly explain the development of the medieval passionate devotions and their deep penetration into popular worship.

Christian fervor was reinforced in formulas which reproduced the bleeding figure of the humanized God. The majestic Christ of Byzantine art and the triumphant Christ of Romanesque art appear now in his wounded nakedness, with cruel nails in his hands and with his heart exposed. This is a Christ, in the end, who is God and, at the same time, is man; a Christ who awakens sympathy and causes tears to flow. The "name of Jesus," "the heart of Jesus," the "most precious blood" are themes of popular worship. . . . The "soul of Christ" prayer probably developed in the first half of the fourteenth century; its short invocations resemble loving groans. (Huerga 1969, 62-63)

The second place in the pantheon of transplanted Christianity is held by the saints. It is certain that the official catechism does not talk much about the saints; thus, in the bilingual collection of sermons of the Third Council of Lima (1585), they are mentioned only in the seventh sermon about the church, which refers to the apostles and to many martyrs, confessors, and virgins in Christian history (Tercer Concilio Limense 1773, 93-96). Although the saints appear to have a low profile in official homiletics, the process of teaching the catechism undoubtedly required supplementary examples and illustrative materials; the lives of the saints and their miracles were thus a natural pedagogical resource. In addition, since the veneration of saints was a major focus of cultural activity, information about them was undoubtedly transmitted in many contexts of everyday life. All that one might say about the cults to saints can also, of course, be applied to the Virgin Mary, whom the Spanish people adopted from very early times for particular veneration.

Devotion to the saints carried with it a certain specialization with regard to which ones a petitioner chose for veneration over the others. Offerings and requests for favors were directed to particular saints, not all of them collectively. This personalization of devotional relationships of individuals with

<sup>\*</sup>Editor's note: Please see the discussion of *cofradías* in chapter 9 of this volume.

saints was no doubt encouraged by the custom of having patron saints for each of the guilds (*gremios*), which were the typical social units of occupational specialties in the Middle Ages. George M. Foster (1960), who carried out ethnographic field work in Spain to discover and analyze the Spanish contribution to peasant cultures of Hispanoamerica, synthesizes this specialization of the saints in popular worship with these words:

Thus, the sufferer from throat ailments appeals to San Blas; from toothache, to Santa Apolonia; from eye trouble, to Santa Lucía; from epilepsy, to San Pablo. San Antonio de Padua, with whose images one always seems to feel particularly at ease, will aid one in finding lost or desired objects, and should the good saint be slow, he may expect to find himself hung upside down in a well until he delivers the goods. And of the tormentors of the good saints, the most demanding are young maidens who, it seems, are forever plagued with the problem of sweethearts. The thief, who finds himself in a tight spot and momentarily decides the honest life is after all the best, appeals to San Dimas, the good thief on the cross beside Christ. Sterile women may appeal to Santa Ana, the mother of Mary, and those who fear they have been bewitched ask the intercession of Santa Cecilia. (Foster 1960, 163)

Foster also discusses the patron saints of the various guilds: "farmers, San Isidro; masons and bricklayers, San Antonio de Padua; carpenters, San José; midwives, San Ramón Nonato; silversmiths, San Eloy; doctors, San Cosme and San Damián"; and so on through an enormous list (Foster 1960, 162). With regard to the significance of the cults of the saints, it seems that, of the two dimensions a saint has in Catholic theology — that of intercessor before God and that of a model for Christian life — that of intercessor had much more importance in transplanted Catholicism. The saint, by being a follower and a messenger of God, participates in some way in divine power, and the worshipers experience the saint's power when he or she comes to their aid and listens to their prayers. The dimension of the saint as a model of Christian life may not have reached full development in popular devotion because of the people's lack of knowledge about the life of the saint. Although the community had some knowledge of the life of a saint — for example, knowledge of specialized powers as related to the saint's biography, as discussed above — this limited information tended to become mythologized, making it such that the saint became more worthy of admiration than of imitation. This is not to say that saints did not influence Christian life in its devotional aspects; as mythical personages they have sacred power, providing a foundation of security for the pious and even a reason to live in a Christian manner, although not a model of Christian conduct in the strict sense.

The devil had an important place in transplanted beliefs. For Spanish Christians, the devil was a "theological fact" because he was a part of Catholic doctrine that was frequently mentioned in sermons and religious tracts. Teachers of asceticism and mysticism pointed out his power and taught the best ways to free oneself from his malevolent designs. But the devil was also an

"ideological fact" through the role he had in sixteenth-century Spanish culture, to such an extent that Pierre Duviols comes to assert that "demonology was the most generalized theological science among the conquerors and colonizers of Peru," since "a self-taught soldier, such as Cieza de León, knows and says almost the same things as a scholar and specialist like Acosta" (Duviols 1977, 25). In general, everything bad and inexplicable was attributed to the devil, and thus that which was caused by the devil became a useful and universal category for explaining evil. When the Spanish missionaries came into contact with the religions of America, most of them thought that the devil was speaking through indigenous oracles and was thus the cause of the Indians' cannibalistic rituals, human sacrifices, and practice of sodomy. Beyond that, some, like Acosta, interpreted the resemblances between the American religions and Christianity as a "parody" invented by the devil to deceive the Indians and to bring to himself the worship that they wanted to give to God.

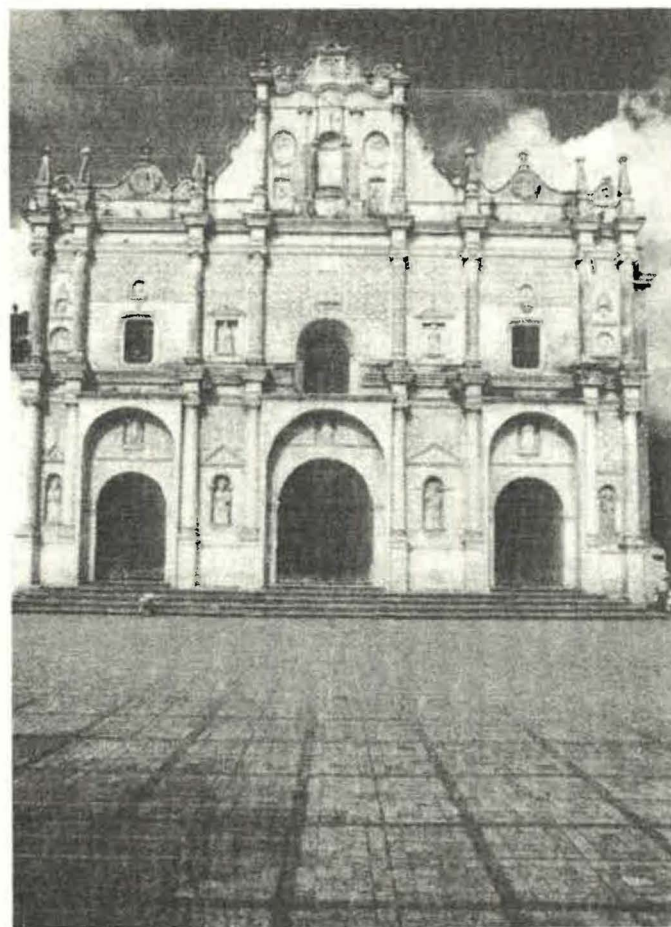
To complete this presentation of the beliefs of transplanted Catholicism, which thus far has drawn on materials from ritual practice and the catechism, I should now like to turn to the mythical tradition. At first glance it would seem that the encounter between Catholic beliefs and Amerindian religions was marked by a fundamental, qualitative difference between the two. While Catholicism presented itself as a theologically elaborate system of beliefs, the American religions, including those belonging to the high cultures, appeared to be unsystematized bodies of belief supported by a rich mythical tradition. Nevertheless, the reality was not so simple. Spanish Catholicism brought its own mythic tradition, not only in the collection of myths collected in the Old Testament, however the Spaniards then interpreted them in their most literal sense, but also and above all, in the body of legends concerning venerated images and their miracles. Ludwig Pfandl has perceptively observed the following regarding the difference between Spain and Protestant Europe:

Closely linked to the intensification of the cult to Mary and to the saints was a faith in miracles and legends. This was a body of tradition within medieval Catholicism that was ultimately experienced all over Europe, only to be placed in a moment of crisis with the advent of the doctrines of Luther. While [the Reformation] profoundly changed those communities where [Protestantism] took root, Spain was to achieve a second period of splendid flowering of faith during the Austrian dynasty. This occurred because the entire nation, collectively, and with rare unanimity, was predisposed, from its intense and severe historical experience, to behave and believe in this manner. Its medieval history — so rich in battles, fighting adventures, and marvelous events — permitted [Spain] to feel the warm radiance of the marvelous and to embellish religious events with the poetic enchantment of popular tradition, all of which came to be interwoven with the history of the exploits of the medieval heroes.

And imperceptibly, like a delicate net, the pious traditions came to evolve . . . along with the naive beliefs in miracles and marvels. Nothing was considered impossible or unbelievable, and from this inexhaustible reservoir of tradition, from popular legend



6. West Facade, New Cathedral of Salamanca, Spain.



7. Cathedral of San Cristóbal on main square. San Cristóbal de Las Casas, Chiapas, Mexico.

and poetry, Spanish art was nourished in its most genuine expressions: drama and ballads. (Pfandl 1929, 154)

It is not possible, within the limitations of this chapter, to provide examples of this rich tradition of miracles and legends about the saints, a tradition that continues to be re-created and enriched with new material from American indigenous sources. This must be recognized as a powerful creative force in transplanted Spanish Catholicism. Without doubt, the faith of the new communities of America was brought together not only in the catechism and in worship, but also in their own oral traditions.

### The Rites of Transplanted Catholicism

The most important category of rites of transplanted Catholicism was the celebration of the history of salvation in the mass throughout the ecclesiastical year (the liturgical cycle) and participation in the sacraments. A first part in the mass was called the mass of the catechumens because, long ago, before infant baptism became common, those adults who were getting ready to be baptized were permitted to attend this first part. This part included one reading from the Gospels and another from the letters of Saint Paul or some other book of the Bible; these were the most direct contact the majority of Christians had with the Bible. This contact proved to be insufficient; relatively few biblical texts were included in the masses throughout the year, and these were read in Latin, a language that most people did not understand. Knowledge of the sacred texts was also limited by the fact that the people were largely illiterate. Even those few who were literate did not have easy access to Spanish Bibles. Generally speaking, then, there were few accessible means for ordinary people to become acquainted with the scriptures.

However, in addition to central rites of the liturgical cycle and the sacraments, transplanted Catholicism devoted considerable energy to the celebration of the triumph of the saints (the calendar of the saints) and to a series of prayers and minor ritual actions known as sacramentals. These generally served the purpose of obtaining the protection of God.

As has already been considered in the first part of this study, Spanish Catholicism of the sixteenth century was the universal Catholicism of Christian Europe, as seen from the particular historical experience of the Spanish church. It is well known that the Spanish church played a key role in the political and theological thrust against the Protestant Reformation. Protestants, in the spirit of returning to the "original" Christianity and in opposition to the undeniable excesses of popular medieval worship, reduced the seven sacraments to two (baptism and communion), suppressed the cult of the saints, and condemned a number of the sacramentals and many forms of popular religion. It is thus not surprising that the Spanish missionaries who arrived

in America would emphasize many of the rites that had been condemned by the Protestants, such as the majority of the sacraments, the cult of the saints, and certain sacramentals. The official church emphasis on these "non-Protestant" customs was strengthened by Spanish immigrants themselves, whose religious practice centrally involved such practices.

To facilitate the analysis of the rites of transplanted Catholicism, I am going to divide them into four categories: festivals, penitentials, rites of passage, and rituals of petition and prayer.

### *Festive Rites*

The festive rites include both the festivals of the liturgical cycle and those of the saints' calendar. The liturgical cycle consisted of the ritual repetition — throughout the entire ecclesiastical year, which started at the beginning of December — of the story of salvation: that is, the coming down to earth of the Son of God to redeem humanity through his death and resurrection, and to found the church, as trustee of this redemption. The five most important times or periods in the liturgical year were Advent (the four-week period of penitence and preparation for the coming of the Lord); Christmas (the celebration of the birth of Jesus and other events of his infancy); Lent (the most important time for penitence — lasting forty days, beginning on Ash Wednesday, and concluding with the celebration of the passion during Holy Week, during which one should complete the obligation of annual confession); Easter (the celebration of the resurrection of Jesus, who, forty days later, ascended to heaven, leaving humanity with the presence of the Holy Spirit, which descended from heaven to found the church on the Sunday of Pentecost); and, finally, the time after Pentecost, which comprises the rest of the liturgical year. Although the most important celebration in this liturgical cycle was Easter, it had in reality lost importance in the Spanish context because, many centuries earlier, the liturgical celebration of the resurrection had been moved up to Holy Saturday, and also because of the emphasis Spanish worship gives to Maundy Thursday and Good Friday.

The saints' calendar was the honoring of the Christian saints on the day designated for each one in the calendar, which was ordinarily the day of his or her death. Through the saint's festival, participants sought the intercession of the saint and also the imitation of his or her virtues for the Christian community. The dynamism of the saints' calendar came not so much from the hierarchical church as from the community itself, which had discovered in that cycle one of the most important expressions of its religion. The cult of the saints had grown spontaneously from the first Christian communities' commemoration of their martyrs. There are testimonies as old as the community of Smyrna, where "in the middle of the second century, next to the tomb of St. Polycarp (c. 69–c. 155), they already celebrated his

martyrdom with a celebration of the Eucharist" (Righetti 1955, 917). At the end of the Roman persecutions in the fourth century, the Christian communities also began to remember their most exemplary members who had died, even though they were not martyred, so that one can say that "at the beginning of the fifth century, the cult of the martyrs, which had been integrated with the cult of the *santos confesores*, was practiced to a greater or lesser extent in all of the churches of Christendom" (Righetti 1955, 917).

The declaration of sainthood or "canonization" was the product of popular enthusiasm that then came to be sanctioned by the hierarchy and provincial synods. However, there were abuses. In particular, on the occasion of a case that occurred in a monastery in Lisieux, it seems that that religious community came to venerate a person who had died while inebriated. So, with the increasing number of monasteries, it became necessary to impose canonical authority on the evolving custom of venerating distinguished deceased brothers in the religious orders, for this was usually done without certification (*garantía*) of the individual's spiritual merits. In response to these abuses, Pope Alexander III, in 1170, reserved the official declaration of sainthood to the Holy See (Righetti 1955, 924).

A similar explosion of popular piety occurred with regard to the cult of relics, above all, in association with the Crusades. For this reason the Fourth Lateran Council in 1215 decided that the veneration of new relics would require the authorization of the pope. In spite of all this, it is certain that people continued committing excesses with regard to the veneration of saints and relics, for these become key issues in the Protestant Reformation. For that reason, in 1563, the bishops gathered for the Council of Trent for the purpose of establishing, among other things, firm church control over the cult of the saints. In the end, they were forced to take a compromise position. They condemned the abuses that existed and sought to underplay the value of the cults to the saints in the whole of Christian life; however, in firm opposition to the Protestants, they affirmed that it is "good and beneficial to involve the saints in our supplications and to have recourse to their prayers, aid and assistance to entreat the aid of God through his son Jesus Christ . . . and that the images of the saints should be kept and preserved, particularly in the churches, and should be given their rightful honor and veneration" (Denzinger 1963, nos. 984 and 986).

In spite of the efforts of the church hierarchy to encourage moderation, the people followed their own path. Rodrigo Sánchez Arjona, who has carefully studied the Spanish contribution to popular Peruvian Catholicism, has synthesized what is known about Spanish festivals in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries.

The patron saint festivals were celebrated in those days in the cities, town and hamlets of Spain. The festivals were usually organized by the *cofradías* in charge of them and

began with the songs of the vespers the evening before. On the day of the festival there was always a solemn mass and, occasionally, a sermon and a procession with the image of the saint. After the liturgical events, the people would amuse themselves with "food and banquets" [*yantares y convites*], with their masquerades and plays, with their balls and dances, with bullfights and horse races.

These festivals were not without their serious abuses in protocol. Church policy of the period prohibited the clergy and lay people, both men and women, from spending the night in the church engaged in festivities and from overindulging in food and drink. They were also supposed to avoid dancing and singing, and behavior that was of questionable propriety such that it might offend the community. (Sánchez Herrero 1978, 264-65; cited in Sánchez Arjona 1981, 87-88)

Foster (1960) and Gómez Tabanero (1968) have written good ethnographies about contemporary Spanish religious festivals, presenting not only the religious elements of them, but also the recreational, social, and cultural elements typical of a traditional festival. Although both descriptions refer to present-day Spain, I think that they convey, if not the letter, at least the spirit of the festivals of sixteenth-century Spain. I want to cite an observation of Foster's about the challenge European Christianity faced in having to adapt itself to a series of preexisting customs, along the lines of what was considered in the first part of this chapter. Regarding the festival of St. John the Baptist (June 24), Foster writes:

In its advance over Europe, primitive Christianity, through a process of syncretism, quickly captured and tamed most of the pagan rites and beliefs which might threaten it. The winter solstice was dominated by the birth of Christ, spring fertility rites became identified with the death and resurrection of the Savior, and vengeful spirits of the dead were cajoled in observances of All Saints' and All Souls' days. One day alone could not be subdued. Although the summer solstice with its purification by fire and water was early dedicated to St. John the Baptist, who was cleansed with water, it has remained an uneasy captive throughout Europe over nearly two thousand years, and the pre-Christian customs are still clearly evident. In Spain no other occasion equals the eve and morning of San Juan for variety and interest of folk activities. . . . Nevertheless, in spite of differences, there is a pan-Spanish pattern that recognizes both fire and water as purificatory agents, that associates magic and curing with this occasion, that allows amatory rites and activities of various types, and lets people persuade themselves that this morning they see the sun rise "dancing." (Foster 1960, 198)

In addition to the high festivals of the solstices and fall and spring, both the liturgical calendar and the saints' calendar encouraged the observance of holy days of special importance, days on which Catholics were obligated to go to mass and not to work. This gave liturgical practice an almost weekly rhythm, which actually was greater than it is now, for in the sixteenth century, the number of "precept days," in addition to the fifty-two Sundays, came to thirty-five — that is to say, nearly a quarter of the year. From the synods and other ecclesiastical documents of the time, we know that compliance with this norm was not complete in spite of the social control exercised by a

society in which everyone was a Catholic and in spite of the exigencies of the church, which regarded nonattendance at Sunday mass without good reason to be a serious error. Because the mass was an essential part of any festival of the liturgical or saints' cycle, the festivals came to be the most important religious rituals, even for those who, because of their scanty instruction in the catechism, did not understand their true significance.

### *Penitential Rites*

The penitential rites included a number of diverse observances. Pardon for sinners was achieved primarily in the prescribed sacrament of penance. However, other means of penitential expression included the following: observance of days of fasting and abstinence; practicing certain sacrifices that were very well established at the time — such as flagellation and long pilgrimages on foot to religious shrines; and the winning of indulgences. Annual confession was not only obligatory, as the Council of Constance in 1414–18 had established, but also the object of certain fiscal measures taken by the clergy to ensure compliance. There was a list or a census of everyone who should confess. Clergy presented a type of voucher to each person who confessed, and certain canonical punishments were established for those who were remiss. Fasting, which usually prescribed abstinence from meat, was very strictly enforced at this time. Christians were supposed to fast every day of Lent, with the exception of Sundays, and should not eat meat on any Friday of the year. Nevertheless, in transplanted Catholicism such penitential norms were softened, for the "Bull of the Crusade," executed by Julian II in 1500 in Spain and extended to the Spanish colonies in America by Gregory XIII in 1573, reduced the fast days to fourteen and the days of fasting and abstinence to ten during the entire year. It is not easy to ascertain the extent of compliance with these norms, but it is interesting to note Pfandl's observation, that "in the household of the noble Alonso Quijano there was not more than one plate of lentils for the whole repast on Fridays, and even in that run-down inn in which Don Quixote was armed, they observed the fast days" (Pfandl 1929, 146).

As for the bloody penances, these were peculiar to Spanish spirituality, as can be inferred from the biographies of many saints of the period, from certain studies about daily life of the Golden Age (Pfandl 1929; Deforneaux 1964), and from the testimony of the most representative book of the century, Cervantes's *Quixote*. Thus, for example, Pfandl states:

The Spanish *disciplinantes* of this period, who must be distinguished from the other European sects of flagellants . . . , with their mortifications and penitences, were nothing other than a lay adaptation of the lacerations and disciplines practiced in the convents since the eleventh century.

These penitential acts and exercises in mortification, whether in the churches or elsewhere, came to be centrally important to the observances of the *cofradías*, even for those who did not belong to them. The members would stage these penitential acts in the form of processions or public prayers, which were typical expressive forms of Spaniards in 1600, as can be clearly deduced from the passage of *Quixote* (I, 52) in which Cervantes describes a procession of *disciplinantes*; upon seeing it, everyone understands what it is about except the poor crazy Don Quixote. Thus, a procession of this type was very well known to all readers of the time and its detailed description was not, apparently, deemed necessary. (Pfandl 1929, 148-49)

With regard to pilgrimages, these were very frequent and involved, as destinations, shrines scattered throughout Spain. The most important of these many pilgrimage destinations were Santiago de Compostela in Galicia, the Virgin of Pilar in Aragón, the Virgin of Guadalupe in Extremadura, and the Virgin of Monserrat in Catalonia. The pilgrimage was a form of penance because of the long walks and other kinds of self-denial that were involved.

Finally, on the subject of "winning indulgences," this was seen as the culmination of penance for one's own sins — the last step in remediation, as it were — for by them one achieved remission of temporal punishment and suffering after death. Indulgences, however, were not useful to individuals unless they had first been pardoned through the sacrament of confession. In Spain, as in the other Christian countries, the prospect of obtaining indulgences conceded by the pope was one of the driving forces of penitence and religious fervor.

### *Rites of Passage*

Following the life cycle, rites of passage, or rituals of transition, began with the baptism of children. This became a common custom after King Recaredo, as it had already become common in the other countries where the majority of the population was Christian. Although the long coexistence of the three religions on the peninsula had contributed to maintaining the prescriptive necessity of baptism as a ritual of Christian initiation, this pattern became accentuated when political factors came into play. By the end of the fifteenth and beginning of the sixteenth centuries, Jews, as well as Muslims, were obliged to choose between baptism and exile. Thus the old theological axiom *extra Ecclesiam nulla salus* (No safety outside the church) became illuminated with a new light: baptism was considered to be the obligatory and unique entrance into the church and an indispensable requirement for eternal salvation. The theological-pastoral treatises of the Spanish missionaries who came to America reflect this vision. A classic example is the *Itinerarios* (1668) of the Galician bishop of Quito, Alonso de la Peña y Montenegro, which in its multiple editions significantly influenced the development of religion in wide areas of South America. Such a vision of baptism explains,

on the one hand, the baptismal dynamism of the infant Hispanoamerican church, because of which the missionaries would make the most incredible efforts to ensure baptism of Indians in the most isolated regions; indeed, this served as a just pretext for conquistadors to take their military campaigns into territories populated by unbaptized Indians. On the other hand, this zeal for baptism as an end in itself contributed to the treatment of baptism as a kind of magical rite, for it placed greater emphasis upon the ritual of individual salvation than upon the formation of the Christian community, to which the ritual was supposed to be the gate of entry. Although this vision of baptism had been imposed by the particular conditions under which it was administered in America, I am convinced nevertheless that transplanted Spanish theology was the determining influence.

Another ritual of transition was the sacrament of marriage. This did not have, in the context of the sixteenth century, the theological or judicial elaboration that it has in the latest codes of canon law (1917 and 1983). Its celebration included three distinct rituals: the betrothal, the wedding, and the nuptial mass and veiling. The betrothal was the promise to marry a specific person, and in cases in which the contract was not fulfilled, church custom allowed a "wronged" plaintiff to bring the case before ecclesiastical judges. The betrothal contract was supposed to be written and sworn before witnesses and involved the exchange of rings; however, it was considered binding even when made verbally and in secret. The wedding was the expression of consent to marry made by the betrothed couple in the presence of witnesses and an agent of the church. This ritual was carried out in a simple form in the entrance to the church, before going inside for the solemn ritual of the nuptial mass, but it could also occur outside the church a long time before the nuptial mass if there was a legitimate reason, as often happened during times of penance, such as Advent and Lent, when nuptial masses should not be celebrated. In this case the betrothed couple had to return to the church later for the mass. Finally, the nuptial mass was the sacred ritual celebrated in the church in front of the priest, who prayed and gave the nuptial benediction to the new couple. In reality, the ritual of betrothal was not obligatory, and the majority of people celebrated the wedding and the nuptial mass on the same day. However, the three rituals could be performed separately, which had certain repercussions in the encounter between marriage customs of Spain and those of Amerindian communities (Marzal 1977).

Another factor contributed to the ambiguity of the relationship between the various parts of the marriage ritual. This had to do with the theological argument about whether the sacramental nature of marriage — and, hence, its indissolubility — was linked to the wedding ritual or to the nuptial mass. Many theologians maintained that the sacrament was identified with the contract, legalized by the mutual consent of the betrothed (an opinion that the church later made official when it compiled the Code of Canon Law

in 1917). Others, such as the Dominican Melchor Cano, who participated in the Council of Trent, held that there could be a valid marriage between Christians that was not a sacrament. The pastoral solution adopted by transplanted Catholicism, already adopted by the Council of Lima (1551), was that Indians were to be wedded and blessed in the nuptial mass as parts of the same ceremony.

The last ritual or transition took place upon the occasion of a person's death. Spanish Catholics had a vivid preoccupation with death, as is demonstrated in the spiritual books of the time, in the content of wills, and, above all, in the customs that dealt with death. Although the church attempted to discourage exaggerated emphasis on death in popular tradition, the efforts were not particularly successful. Although some literary works of the Golden Age and the reports of illustrious travelers (García Mercadal 1952) give us scattered information about Spanish funeral customs, the above cited work of Foster (1960) is most useful for a more systematic description. In his report of field research on Spanish village ethnography, he gives a thorough description of funeral customs in Spanish villages from the period around 1900. Regarding omens of death:

Popular belief recognizes a number of signs of impending death. The importance attached to these presages varies according to whether all members of the family are in good health, or whether someone is already seriously ill. Omens most widely known, and taken as a sign of impending death, include the nocturnal hooting of an owl or the croaking of other birds, the crowing of a hen in the fashion of a cock, howling of dogs at night, the breaking of mirrors or the falling of pictures from walls, inexplicable taps or poundings on walls or furniture, or the mysterious opening and closing of doors. (Foster 1960, 144)

Later Foster describes each of the funeral patterns, alluding to many local differences in the different cultural traditions that converged in Spain: the ringing of the bells for impending death (*toque de agonía*) and for the moment of death itself (*toque de muerte*) in the countryside to permit everyone to participate in the event; the shrouding of the body; the wake over the corpse, during which, if it was a child, the "dance of the little angel" was performed; the participation of paid professional mourners (*lloronas* or *plañideras*); the burial, which happens twenty-four hours after the death; and the presentation of the offering for the priest and for the village poor. Although burials no longer happened in the churches themselves, but, rather, in the cemeteries, the cemeteries were under the control of the church, which did not permit burial in them of people who died under conditions deemed questionable with regard to ecclesiastical norms. For example, in transplanted Catholicism, Pérez Bocanegra's manual for administering the sacraments to Indians (1631) declares that church burial is not permitted for pagan adults, unbaptized children, or for suicides. Finally, Christian burial is denied to

those about whom it was publicly known that they did not receive the sacraments of confession and communion at church festivals at least once a year (Pérez Bocanegra 1631, 570).

### *Rites of Petition and Prayer*

Catholicism does not have formal divinatory rites like other traditional religions because of its very concept of God and human anatomy. Neither does it have curing rites, in the strict sense of the term, for the same reasons. However, popular worship has developed a wide range of rites that are linked to health and also a kind of division of labor among the saints with regard to the specialized ability to intercede for petitioners who have particular diseases, a subject that has already been discussed above (see Foster 1960).

However, the church does have a wide range of petitioning rites, which are public prayers, gestures, or actions in the form of a benediction or a supplication. These are called sacramentals. Canon law defines them as "sacred words, objects and gestures, through which, in the spirit of imitating the sacraments, spiritual ends are sought through the intercession of the church" (Canon 1166). Although it is not easy to reconstruct the history of all the sacramentals, for the church hierarchy ultimately defined them and controlled them, what we do know is that they were symbolic gestures established by, or at least associated with, Jesus as a means of designating and communicating grace. Nevertheless, in the sacramentals there was greater freedom for creativity on the part of the clergy and the community itself to incorporate different religious traditions. In our time, the church still pays close attention to the sacramentals — in spite of the secular trends of the modern era — because it continues to have a Christian conception of the world, one in which the world is believed to have been created by God, and even when subject to the laws of nature and human reason, is nevertheless a world that exists by divine providence and is thus filled with the spiritual forces of God. Judging from this rationale that exists today, I am certain that these sacramentals had much more power and greater general appeal in the premodern era of the sixteenth century than they do today.

Various reasons can be enumerated for explaining the prominence of sacramentals in transplanted Spanish Catholicism. One is that holy water, candles, benedictions, and other sacramentals were considered by many priests to be the most suitable religious practices for the "poor Indians" because of their lack of sophistication. Another is that the administration of sacramentals was an additional source of income for the priests. In the colonial diocesan archives of Peru there are many records of judicial proceedings of the Indians against the priests in which one of the accusations is the abuse of the sacramental "kissing of the maniple." This gesture, which refers to the custom of the faithful kissing the ornamental band worn by the priest

on his left arm, came to be converted by some priests into an occasion for charging an obligatory "offering" of one *real* on certain days of the year. In spite of these abuses, I am convinced that the popularity of sacramentals was related to the great faith that many priests, as well as the majority of Spanish Catholics of the time, had in them. In support of this statement I should like to cite a passage from the autobiography of Teresa of Ávila, a doctor of the church and one of the individuals who most influenced the spiritual renewal of Spain in the Golden Age. This passage reflects the spiritual climate of the period with regard to the devil and the use of holy water:

The Lord must have wanted me to understand the nature of the devil, for I saw near me a revolting small black being. He was scolding and raging in a most desperate fashion, claiming that where he sought to gain influence, he was always losing. . . . Some women who were there with me [saw this] and had no idea how to make sense of it, nor much less, any idea of how to deal with such a moment of torment, for he was forcing me to flagellate myself violently, beating my body, head and arms. The worst of it all was the great disquiet within my inner being. . . .

I did not have the courage to request holy water because I feared that it would frighten my companions, for they might not understand what was going on. But, I can vouch from much experience that nothing is more effective than holy water for driving away [devils] so that they will stay away indefinitely. The Cross will also drive them away, but they will sometimes return. Holy water must really have great power. Indeed, I find it to be a great source of consolation for my soul when I take it. (Teresa of Ávila 1957, 125)

## Organization and Ethics of Transplanted Catholicism

Although religious organization does not have as much influence on the configuration of spirituality as do the other elements of the religious system (beliefs, rites, and ethics), it does nevertheless contribute to an understanding of transplanted Spanish Catholicism. This presentation will have to do with the ways in which the church encouraged among its faithful a feeling of belonging. In particular, I will consider the basic organizations and hierarchical organization of the church.

It is first of all important to remember that transplanted Catholicism was national Catholicism. Although there was considerable tolerance of religious pluralism among Christians in medieval Spain, national unity that came with the Catholic monarchs Ferdinand and Isabella was forged in the name of the cross, and for that reason, the Spanish church and the Spanish state came to be identified together as a single entity. This church-state unity was strengthened by the important role played by Spain in the aftermath of the Reformation. The same was true, as we have seen above, in the joint church-state enterprise of the colonization and missionization of America under the authority of the policy of *Patronato Regio*. Catholicism was becoming more and more identified with virtually all aspects of Spanish life,

and thus came to be what might be called "cultural" Catholicism. This development brought with it an undeniable ambiguity. Catholicism was, on the one hand, stronger, for it was supported not only by its internal structures and by the mechanisms for social control within the church, but also by national political structures and cultural mechanisms of socialization. On the other hand, the church-state unity (and power) weakened the church because more than a few Catholics felt that the "Catholicization" of Spanish cultural tradition placed the authority of this national culture over and above their own personal convictions.

With respect to the organization of the faithful, they were assigned to a territorial parish and, frequently, to one or more religious sodalities (*cofradías*). The parish had as its center the church, which had as one of its functions that of serving as the physical and symbolic focus of people's lives, as they moved through the life cycle from birth to death. The parish church also had a focal cultural and fiscal role in the community. This pervasive presence of the church in people's everyday lives was strengthened by the reforms of the Council of Trent. In America, this revitalized role of the church had an important influence on the organization of thousands of forced resettlements of Indians in what were known as *reducciones*. The *cofradía* was a central part of life in these "new Indian towns," just as it was in the towns of traditional Spain. An example of this comes from the *cofradías* of the old kingdom of León in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, which were studied by Sánchez Herrero (1978).

This is not the place to analyze the reasons why the Spanish *cofradía* was so widely accepted by the blossoming Hispanoamerican society, but Celestino and Meyers (1981) explain why this was so in colonial Andean society: "The *ayullus* [traditional kin groups] managed to revitalize themselves by functioning as *cofradías*" (Celestino and Meyers 1981, 127). However, it is undeniable that they had already been widely accepted by peninsular Catholicism.

Finally, regarding the hierarchical organization of the transplanted church, this was shaped by the bishops, who, in accordance with the *Patronato Regio*, were appointed in practice by the king of Spain in consultation with representative clergy. Under the *Patronato Regio*, no papal representative was involved in the process of naming bishops. The Spanish clergy was composed, as in other Christian countries, of the secular clergy, who reported directly to the bishops, and the regular clergy, who were part of religious communities such as convents or monasteries of mendicant friars.

The clergy who initially brought Catholicism to America were primarily regular clergy — that is, priests affiliated with religious orders (Bayle 1950); however, Hispanoamerica came to have, by the beginning of the seventeenth century, its own abundant secular clergy, recruited almost exclusively from the Creoles because of the hierarchy's policy of not ordaining Indians. Borges (1977) has done a careful study of all of the missionary expeditions sent to

America during Spanish rule. His findings are summarized in the following table (Borges 1977, 481-535):

| <i>Religious Order</i> | <i>16th C</i> | <i>17th C</i> | <i>18th C</i> | <i>19th C</i> | <i>Total</i> | <i>%</i>    |
|------------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|-------------|
| Franciscans            | 2,782         | 2,207         | 2,736         | 711           | 8,436        | 56.13       |
| Jesuits                | 351           | 1,148         | 1,690         | —             | 3,189        | 21.22       |
| Dominicans             | 1,579         | 138           | 116           | 4             | 1,837        | 12.22       |
| Capuchins              | —             | 205           | 571           | 26            | 802          | 5.34        |
| Mercedarians           | 312           | 73            | —             | —             | 385          | 2.56        |
| Augustinians           | <u>348</u>    | <u>31</u>     | <u>1</u>      | <u>—</u>      | <u>380</u>   | <u>2.53</u> |
| Total                  | 5,372         | 3,802         | 5,114         | 741           | 15,029       | 100.00      |

To appreciate these statistics, one has to take into account that they only refer to the "expeditions paid for by the throne" and that some expeditions went that were paid for by their own religious orders (Borges 1977, 479), so that the total number of missionaries sent to the New World was larger. Of the 15,029 missionaries, the great majority were priests, although about 8 percent were students studying for ordination (Borges 1977, 538-39). As one can see, more than half of those sent were Franciscans, and more than a fifth were Jesuits, although they were expelled from Spain and its colonies in 1767. The number of Dominicans and Augustinians greatly decreased after their initial arrivals, no doubt because of the impossibility of simultaneously taking care of their missions in America and those in the Far East.

In addition to these demographic statistics, what were the characteristics of the transplanted clergy that can shed light on their own spirituality and that which they endeavored to pass on? Although this is a very ambitious question, I think that the following can be pointed out by way of framing an answer. Each order's adherence to divine faith — as much in its own spirituality as in its apostolic methods — permitted the discovery of some territories with definite borders on the religious map of the continent. The definitive role played by the priest in Spain in his religious function, in his ethical function, and in his role as agent of social control in a universally Catholic society, would come to replicate itself in America and would take on even renewed vigor through the promotion and defense of Indians that many of the clergy carried out.

In summary, the following are some thoughts on transplanted morality. The "official" morality was nothing more and nothing less than the Decalogue that God revealed to Moses, that was refined by Christ in the Gospels, and that was taught by the missionaries, who were sons of Spanish historical religious experience. The "catalogs of sins" that appear in the confessional manuals of the period (see, for example, Pérez Bocanegra 1631) seem to give excessive importance to some sins, such as sexual sins and idolatry, but a

simple comparison of these books with similar moral treatises of Europe makes one conclude that there are not major differences. In spite of the demographic cataclysm and institutions of undeniable oppression that Spain brought upon Amerindians, there emerged from transplanted Spanish Catholicism a respectable lineage of reflection and moral praxis that would be the origin of doctrines of human rights as outlined by great theologians such as Vitoria or Suárez. The faith that Spanish clerics took to the New World also yielded a striking number of utopian experiments, some of them successful and long-lived, that appeared throughout colonial history.

With respect to the "popular" morality of the great majority of the conquistadors and colonists, this was a reflection of the morality found in the characters of Golden Age Spanish literature, such as *Quixote* or the exemplary novels of Cervantes. These were characters, like those who ventured to the New World, who found themselves in situations of social displacement, exile, and conflict. Thus, the few existing studies about the religious personality of the conquistadors (see Velasco 1964, 1965, 1967, 1971) demonstrate a deep faith and also moral behavior that were not very consistent with their faith. It can be said that the expression "believe firmly and sin strongly" (*crede firmiter et pecca fortiter*), credited to Luther, was practiced by other Christians who presumed to be faithful to the See of Saint Peter.

*Translated from the Spanish by Eleanor A. Gossen*

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