Mission

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If we examine how "mission" was understood in the early modern Spanish world, and particularly in the evangelization settings of the Americas and Philippines archipelago, we find evidence for three clusters of ideas. I term these clusters "Mission Apostolic," "Mission Translated," and "Mission's Afterwards." To present these three understandings to the reader in a vivid but scaled manner, I select a single actor for each as the "human carrier" of his understanding of "mission."[1]

Mission Apostolic expresses a widespread sense that the Indies represented an enterprise foretold for the particularly Spanish brand of Roman Catholicism. Traces of a disciple's preaching, pre-Hispanic rituals hinting at a glimmer of natural light, and seemingly prodigious discoveries and conquests all pointed to an Indies folded within a universal promulgation of the salvific message for humankind. An attentive God could be expected to indicate His favor for the Spanish through their ushers, the new apostolic missionaries: one of these was Francisco Solano (b. Montilla, Spain, 1549–d. Lima, Peru, 1610).

The exemplar of Mission Translated is Luis Jerónimo de Oré (b. Huamanga, Peru, 1554–d. Concepción, Chile, 1630). Fluency in indigenous tongues allowed Oré and others like him to embark on an intercultural rescripting of both older Christian ideas and forms and non-Christian ones. Oré was also the author of the first *Life* of the "varón apostólico" Francisco Solano (1614), which reminds us of how understandings of mission and missionary blended for contemporaries.

Mission's Afterwards explores the consequences of evangelization and its fruitions in American lands, the process of untethering from the authorized and textualized moorings of the first and second senses of mission and missionization. Here Christianities were—deliberately and inadvertently—re-created around new devotional centers and "human carriers," one of whom was Juan Bautista Quispi (b. Copacabana, Peru, act. 1600–1630s).

Diego de Córdoba's *Life* of Francisco Solano, amplifying the earlier *Life* by Oré, was intended to fire efforts toward Solano's canonization.[2] The frontispiece of a German edition (Fig. 74) merges two miracles from Solano's life: his strength of faith in the face of a shipwreck off the Pacific island of Gorgona while en route to Peru and the otherworldly force of his preaching, especially among indigenous peoples in the remote province of Tucumán.[3] The engraving's concise fusion introduces us to contemporary understandings of the Mission Apostolic, and, more subtly, to the Mission Translated. To the far right and behind the central action is the shipwreck. Solano has just refused a place in a lifeboat. Like Christ choosing earth, "like a strong rock" keeping the sea at bay, he is to have scourged himself while he confessed and preached to the doomed, among whom were "more than eighty Africans fresh from Guinea, and many not baptized."[4] The engraver has not only spirited the slaves to dry land but also furthered their conversion. They have become the apostle's assistants and examples to all. Just left of center, an African woman holds the basin of holy water, helping with another's baptism; to the far right, an African man kneels and prays.[5]

To the far left in the frontispiece, a row of raised spears suggests a hearty column of Indians set for battle. Witnesses told of how, on "one Holy Thursday" in Tucumán, Solano had stepped among "an army of many thousands of Indian warriors" who were set on attacking Christians and began to preach "without knowing their language." Not only was Solano understood and war averted, but "more than 9,000 Indians asked to be baptized."[6] The background subscene illustrates how word spread. The warrior facing us is waylaid by another to the left, delivering his message. The former is still in the dark, but he seems to look inward, a convert at the point of rebirth thanks to Solano's preaching, gripping his body's core with both arms and resembling the transfixed person in the foreground right.

It troubled Córdoba that the reader of Oré's passage on Solano's preaching on this occasion in the earlier *vida* of 1614 might imagine the assembled warriors to have spoken the same tongue; so, drawing on the reports, he returned to sanctity's forge:

> While in Paraguay, Padre Solano preached a sermon to a great multitude of Indian infidels who, although they were gathered together, spoke different and distinct languages; and that each one understood just what the Servant of God had preached, which occasioned great astonishment in those provinces.[7]

The treatment by Solano's hagiographers—crucially including Oré—of "supernatural" linguistic facility in a

variety of the region's indigenous tongues holds a key for us. Captain Andrés García de Valdés, "who taught the Toconote tongue to the blessed Padre Solano," was the only witness to claim that the Franciscan's "perfection" in the language took any time at all: he achieved miraculous fluency "in less than fifteen days" and could correct the Indians themselves. As if "by an infusion of the Holy Spirit, he miraculously understood them [the various peoples of Tucumán] and began talking." Indigenous people reportedly said that "Padre was a magus and sorcerer, because there is no other way he could have spoken their languages and corrected their words."[8]

Effective evangelization required knowledge of indigenous languages and was inseparable from divine inspiration: this is the pivot upon which the relationship between the Mission Apostolic and the Mission Translated turned. The creole Luis Jerónimo de Oré, an experienced parish priest and peerless devotional composer and translator of Catholic Christianity into the Andean tongues of Quechua and Aymara, expressed a formidable vision for clerical language proficiency in his own work and writings.[9] It is important that one who did the hard work of finding and mobilizing an intercultural network of metaphor and meaning for indigenous Christianities embraced the apostolic example of Francisco Solano, whose facility in a cluster of indigenous tongues was understood to have come virtually if not wholly by miraculous gift.

It turns out that only one language mattered for a contemporary missionary, "the language of Christ," a tongue of exemplary word and deed translatable by only a most blessed "apostolic man" such as Solano.[10] If the early modern Spanish imaginary might first conceive of the apostolic missionary in sweet, necessary exile, "traveling far to come close to God,"[11] it was a saintly preacher's capacity to embody and translate the "words from Heaven" into any context, to stop all kinds of warriors in their tracks, that ultimately mattered. Oré was but the first to chronicle Solano's transoceanic translations; from Montilla, near Córdoba in Andalusia, through Tucumán's peripheries and back to Peru's urban centers of Trujillo and Lima, the mission of the "apostolic man" moved and only picked up force.

We land finally within the compass of a native Andean man, Juan Bautista Quispi, who on 17 August 1634, in Huamantanga in the highland province of Canta, found himself under investigation for "sorcery" (*hechicería*, a blanket concept for religious error and trickery in seventeenth-century Peru).[12] A series of gaps—between what some feared Bautista was doing, what he appears to have been doing in concert with established Christian practices and officials, and what he saw himself to be doing—drops us within one of Mission's Afterwards.

After Huamantanga's parish priest, Francisco de Rivera, raised the alarm, Luis Sánchez (parish priest in Canta) heard testimony from four witnesses and the accused. It was established that Bautista had appeared in town two months earlier, much anticipated by the townspeople, carrying a box of images—two of Our Lady of Copacabana and one Crucified Christ.[13] The *mestiza* María de Vargas watched the *entrada* from her home: the beloved images of saints were received, she explained, as living patrons and advocates welcomed at the town's entrance and escorted with burning candles to their church.[14] Isabel Sánchez remembered that the images were set up between Fray Francisco de Rivera and Bautista while "Indian men and women from this town voluntarily gave alms." According to the town council's notary, the friar exerted his priestly authority firmly in gathering twenty-seven *patacones* (slang for *pesos*, common silver coins), but without sign of tension: Padre Rivera "counted and gave the silver to the said Indian, who received it, [and was] instructed by the said father to take that money to Our Lady of Copacabana, and not waste it on himself." María de Vargas's testimony raised the possibility of a different edge to the exchange: after the voluntary alms-giving, she said, the priest approached the Indian and told him "to watch how he behaves with images."[15]

Beyond this point, testimony spreads in different directions. First, some claimed that, regardless of how cordially the day had begun, the priest eventually stopped the Indian's activities, seized the images, and banished him from town. One said that Bautista had thereafter returned, saying that he had been to Lima and brandishing a letter that he said was from the Mercedarian provincial, ordering that his images be returned—a letter which the priest claimed not to have read. Second, the character of the "holy Indian" was put in dispute. Two said that they had seen him prodigiously drunk, and three alleged that Bautista had not been averse to a little convenient eschatological prophecy. After a great noise and shaking in the mountains one day, the holy Indian was alleged to have struck fear in others, saying that that the din was "a sign that Our Lady was angry and that the world would end." With the whiff of charlatanry raised, the third and perhaps most damning of all subsidiary claims was made. Isabel Sánchez and Catalina Asto Quilla (of Spanish and indigenous descent, respectively) had independently visited Bautista with undisclosed ailments. Each woman claimed to have freely given four *reales* in alms, which they say prompted Bautista to observe to each that "since she was rich, she could give more alms."[16]

The trial evidence from Canta points in several directions. We might note the indigenous parishioners' enthusiastic reception of a messenger such as Bautista. The potential roles of Padre Rivera should also be considered. A venture that may have begun as a joint enterprise between Bautista and this Mercedarian appears to have given Rivera sufficient cause for suspicion to petition for a judge.

While others such as Catalina Asto Quilla seemed to want to protect the stranger, insisting that the Indians had given modest but (for most of these parishioners) significant alms without being asked, Bautista hid nothing. "He begged and collected alms" whenever he could.[17] The ecclesiastical archives suggest that alms-collecting was a widespread activity for fraudulent practitioners: if Bautista was aware of walking this line as a self-appointed missionary, he did not show it. When he collected alms, he did not claim that any religious order or sacrament of ordination validated his person and activity or to have come from any sanctuary, pilgrimage site, or monastery. The man born in Copacabana, site of the original miraculous image whose true likenesses he carried, did not even mention it.[18]

Bautista's self-authorized, image-based Christianity moved, went to people where they were, rather than waiting to be visited. Unlike the twice-biographied Solano, Bautista would not have his life written up, but his devotional activity appears to have spread over a number of years and a considerable territory. Juan Bautista Quispi is entirely recognizable within a baroque Spanish American understanding of mission, joined to a chain of actors and actions which includes his contemporaries Solano and the respected preacher and author Oré. Perhaps this holy Indian was not sanctioned as a missionary, but he certainly appears to have acted and been understood as one by some.

NOTES

1. Stanley Brandes, "Conclusion: Reflections on the Study of Religious Orthodoxy and Popular Faith in Europe," in *Religious Orthodoxy and Popular Faith in European Society*, ed. Ellen Badone (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1990), 187.

2. Diego de Córdoba y Salinas, *Vida, virtudes, y milagros del Apostol del Peru el B. P. Fr. Francisco Solano . . .* (Madrid: En la Imprenta Real, 1676); Luis Geronimo de Oré, *Relación de la vida, milagros del venerable padre F. Francisco Solano . . .* (Madrid: n.p., ca. 1614).

3. Oré (on the shipwreck), *Relación*, fols. 15r–15v; and Oré (on the preacherly peacemaking in Tucumán), fol. 18r.

4. Córdoba y Salinas, *Vida*, bk. I, ch. 9.

5. Ibid., bk. I, ch. 9, 29–34.

6. Oré, *Relación*, fol. 18r; Córdoba y Salinas, *Vida*, 46.

7. Córdoba y Salinas, *Vida*, 46–47.

8. Ibid., 43–44.

9. Oré worked, for instance, toward publication of the multilingual pastoral complements for the Third Lima Council (1585); in addition to the *Relación de la vida* of Solano (1614), he was the author most notably of the *Symbolo Catholico Indiano* (1598), the *Corona de la Sacratísima Virgen María* (1617), and his five-language compendium of texts, the *Rituale seu Manuale Peruanorum* (1607). This compendium included the Guaraní texts by Solano's illustrious contemporary in the Tucumán and Paraguay region, and a noted linguist himself, Fray Luis Bolaños (1550–1629). Oré's closest peer in the Quechua realm might have been Juan Pérez Bocanegra, author of the *Ritual formulario, e institucion de curas* (Lima: Geronymo de Contreras, 1631). On this allusive Christianizing Andean milieu leading into and following the Third Provincial Council of Lima (1582–1583), see Alan Durston's masterly chapter 8 in *Pastoral Quechua: The History of Christian Translation in Colonial Peru, 1550–1650* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press, 2007), 246–270.

10. Córdoba y Salinas, *Vida*, 148.

11. Ibid., 41.

12. Archivo Arzobispal de Lima, Hechicerías y Idolatrías (hereafter AAL), Leg. 1, Exp. 12, 1634, Huamantanga, Canta. "Causa seguida contra el indio Juan Bautista, natural de Copacabana, por hechicero," 6 unnumbered folios. Warm thanks to Peter Gose for sharing his transcription of this manuscript.

13. AAL, Leg. 1, Exp. 12, Ysabel Sanches, fol. unnumbered but 1r; Catalina Asto Quilla, fol. unnumbered but 2v; María de Vargas, fol. unnumbered but 4r.

14. Ibid., fol. 4r.

15. Ibid., fols. 5r–5v, 4r.

16. Isabel Sánchez at ibid., fol. 2r, and Catalina Asto Quilla at fols. 3r–3v. The matters of these purported consultations and replies are rendered with a suspicious degree of uniformity. Lying about God-given powers and a mission, pretending to divine, and seeking payment or, worse yet, alms for ostensibly spiritual services establish a textbook set of sins by a *hechicero* (one accused as a "sorcerer"), as Pérez Bocanegra explained in 1631: *Ritual formulario*, "Reprehension contra las hechizerias," fol. 391.

17. Ibid., fols. 2v, 6r.

18. "Making an Image and Shrine (1582–1621)," in *Colonial Latin America: A Documentary History*, ed. Kenneth Mills, William B. Taylor, and Sandra Lauderdale Graham (Wilmington, Del.: Scholarly Resources [now Rowman and Littlefield], 2002), selection 26, 167–172.

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