

THE VANITY OF A VISIONARY: A CLOSE READING OF THE INQUISITORIAL TRIAL OF
FRANCISCA DE LOS APOSTÁLES (DE AVILA)

by

Tabitha Rice

A thesis submitted to the faculty of
The University of North Carolina at Charlotte
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Master of Arts in
Religious Studies

Charlotte

2023

Approved by:

Dr. Joanne Maguire

Dr. Barbara Thiede

Dr. William E. B. Sherman

ABSTRACT

TABITHA RICE. *The Vanity of a Visionary: A Close Reading of the Inquisitorial Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles (de Avila)*

(Under the direction of Dr. JOANNE MAGUIRE)

This thesis explores the trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, a woman who lived in Toledo, Spain, during the mid- to late-sixteenth century. Her Inquisitorial trial provides insight into the subversion of female authority and autonomy by the Spanish Inquisition through the labeling of women as vain and prideful. The thesis examines the ways in which women tried to counter this subversion, with Francisca's trial serving as a case study. The thesis discusses how inquisitors used accusations of vanity to denounce women who defied social order and how their methodology included making the accused question their own reality. The thesis also examines Francisca's defense methods and her struggle with her positionality in defense against the Inquisition while remaining faithful to her religious vows. The thesis argues that Francisca's trial serves as a powerful illustration of the marginalization of women, and further study is recommended.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First, I would like to extend an overwhelming amount of thanks to Dr. Joanne Maguire. I was running in circles for most of the time in this project and our chats in her office were centering and directing. Her guidance and mentorship led me down many paths, some of which are not seen here in the final draft yet, enlightening paths, nonetheless. I also wish to thank Keaton, the service dog that Dr. Maguire was training for most of the Fall 2022-Spring 2023 academic year. He was the recipient of many head pats, nose boops, and belly rubs and gave back sweet cuddles and puppy kisses in return. Thank you to my friend, partner-in-crime, and Ernie to my Bert, Oliver. They were essential in being the wind beneath my wings with their chaotic energy and there is no one I would rather go through an MA program with. Lastly, I want to thank my parents for their unyielding support throughout my academic career and this thesis writing process. Thank you for the late-night phone calls and coffee shop gift cards.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
METHODOLOGY	2
LITERATURE REVIEW	5
BIOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT	10
ANALYSIS OF THE TEXTUAL RECORD	20
LEVERAGING “VANITY”	26
THE PARADOX OF DEFENDING AGAINST ACCUSATIONS OF “VANITY”	33
CONCLUSION	38
APPENDIX A: ACCUSATIONS AGAINST FRANCISCA	41
APPENDIX B: FRANCISCA’S RESPONSES TO ACCUSATIONS	43
APPENDIX C: SENTENCE AGAINST FRANCISCA DE LOS APÓSTOLES	45
BIBLIOGRAPHY	46

Introduction

Francisca de los Apostáles' trial record showcases how the Inquisition subverted female authority and autonomy through labeling women as vain and prideful and highlights the ways in which women tried to counter this subversion. Francisca de los Apostáles lived in Toledo, Spain, during the mid- to late-sixteenth century. All that is known about her life comes from her Inquisitorial trial, which also contained some letters and her personal vows. Francisca spent two and a half years under Inquisitorial custody where every interaction she had was documented. In the spring of 1578, Francisca was sentenced, whipped, and exiled by the Toledan Inquisition and from there the rest of her life is lost to history. Although there is so much about her life that is unknown, her trial gives insight to who she was close with, her personal religious ideals, and social problems she advocated to change. More importantly for the case of this thesis, Francisca's trial serves as a case study of the marginalization of women by the Spanish Inquisition, how "vanity" and "pride" were used by the Inquisition in order to subvert women's authority, and what methods of defense were used to combat this tactic.

Inquisitors often used accusations of the sin of vanity to denounce women who defied social order. Women who were outspoken, independent, or resisted the status quo were easy targets for an organization whose mission was to weed out misconduct. For instance, one of the key ways in which the Spanish Inquisition marginalized women was through its suspicion of midwives and healers. These women, who often had a great deal of experience and knowledge about reproductive health and medicine, were seen as a threat to the Church's authority. The root of the suspicion was not in their actions as medical practitioners but in the decentralized status of

knowledge.¹ As a result, midwives and healers were often accused of witchcraft and subjected to harsh punishments, including torture and execution. For example, in 1610, the Inquisition in Logroño, Spain, accused and burned at the stake nine midwives and healers on charges of heresy and witchcraft.² “Vanity” became the label for any act by a woman that didn’t qualify as subservient, humble, or chaste. This permitted large gaps in interpretation. Interpretation empowered inquisitors to utilize the word choice as they saw appropriate, which included labeling any resistance to their authority as a demonstration of vanity. Thus, any resistance or defense by the accused was rendered as rebellious, vain, and highly suspicious.³

In addition to exploring the use of vanity as a tool of oppression, this thesis also examines the methods that Francisca used to defend herself. An analysis of Francisca’s trial with supporting case studies as comparison show her approach in advocating for herself and her ideals. Although her defense was not ultimately successful in her goal of the dropping of charges and release from prison, it provides an illustration of her character and how she struggled with her positionality in defense against the Inquisition and remaining faithful to her religious vows.

Methodology

I will be using a microhistory methodology for this paper. Microhistories are a compelling way of analyzing history because they show a more “real” or “average” life experience. The life of King Phillip II could say a lot about early modern Spain, but studying his life alone would leave out the nuances of thousands of others lives who weren’t born to the singular role of king. Peasant and middle-class experience are historically, for a multitude of

¹ Cabre, Montserrat. *Secrets and Knowledge in Medicine and Science, 1500–1800*. Routledge, 2016. 173.

² Waite, Gary K. *Heresy, Magic and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.

³ Homza, Lu Ann. “How to Harass an Inquisitor-General: The Polyphonic Law of Friar Francisco Ortíz.” *A Renaissance of Conflicts: Visions and Revisions of Law and Society in Italy and Spain*, 2004, 299–336.

reasons, not been shared. This may be due to what scholars find most interesting or to a lack of data and material artifacts from these groups. The Spanish Inquisition provides the material artifacts necessary to look into these groups through something called the “exceptional normal.”⁴ The term “exceptional normal” was coined by Italian historian, Edoardo Grendi. The genre of microhistory and the use of the “exceptional normal” was further popularized by other Italian historians Simona Cerutti and Carlo Ginzberg in their codirected series *Microhistorie*.⁵ The people in these records are “exceptional” because there is writing left behind about them or written by them yet normal in that they aren’t widely known within their communities’ history. The “normal” is what is left behind after the “exceptional” is taken out. An example of this from Carlo Ginzberg’s *The Cheese and the Worms* is that if you take out the part of the text where Menocchio is testifying about his theological understanding of the world, you can examine the witness testimonies to better understand village life in Montereale in the sixteenth century.⁶ The “normal” is not central to the text but can be found in the periphery statements and questions. What that person’s family structure looked like, common habits, living conditions, and other tertiary details contribute to construct a portrait of the life of someone in the marginalized or fringe groups of society.⁷

Francisca’s trial records allow us a glimpse into an “exceptional normal” example of a lower-middle class woman in sixteenth-century Toledo. Her story is not just important for religious history but also for women’s history. Francisca’s trial offers pieces of information that touch upon the opportunities that women had especially in religious life. She additionally

⁴ Homza. “How to Harass an Inquisitor-General: The Polyphonic Law of Friar Francisco Ortíz.” 12.

⁵ Trivellato, Francesca. “Microstoria/Microhistoire/Microhistory.” *French Politics, Culture & Society* 33, no. 1 (2015): 128.

⁶ Ginzburg, C., J. Tedeschi, and A.C. Tedeschi. *The Cheese and the Worms: The Cosmos of a Sixteenth-Century Miller*. Johns Hopkins University Press, 2013.

⁷ Some notable microhistories are *The Cheese and the Worms* by Carlo Ginzberg and *The Return of Martin Guerre* by Natalie Zemon Davis.

showcases the barriers and obstacles that women had to overcome in order to obtain autonomy and agency under systems rife with sexism and misogyny. This makes Francisca's case the "exceptional normal" because if you take out what makes her exceptional (mystical ideals), what is left is the life of a normal woman that would typically not be documented. The richness of what's left behind leads to a better understanding of the "lived experiences" faced by women in her time.⁸

It is important to recognize that what is said in the trial record is assumed by the Inquisition to be properly and completely written by the court scribe. Inquisitorial trial records often exclude the line of questioning by the Inquisitor and only write what the defendant or witness is saying. These statements are then written in the third-person perspective, although deviation from this pattern does occur. Francisca's trial has a mixture of these writing styles and is dominated by third-person perspective. Unfortunately, something we lose from having a mostly one-sided dialogue is that it is impossible to know if the Inquisitor is leading the witness into an answer. It may also be unclear how many times the Inquisitor repeats a question due to not being satisfied with a response. This is seen a few times in Francisca's trial where it is noted that the Inquisitor repeats or restates a question. The other thing that is lost in trial records is the knowledge of physical surroundings. Did the Inquisitor take a calm, gentle approach or was he loud, threatening, and domineering? These factors play into the experience of the witness and whether they are being coerced into an answer.⁹

Violence was also used as a tactic during the Spanish Inquisition; this also impacts how trial records should be approached. In some cases, it is clear when violence was used because it

⁸ Paechter, Molly. "Microhistory as Ethnographic Exploration." *Ethnographic Encounters* 11, no. 1 (2021): 12–18.

⁹ Homza, Lu Ann. *The Spanish Inquisition, 1478-1614 : An Anthology of Sources*. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub Co., 2006.

is annotated by the scribe. Torture was implemented by Inquisitors and in the case of Francisca, it was recommended.¹⁰ Torture was seen as a device to force defendants to tell the truth. There were many forms of torture, but the overall goal was to exhaust the body so that the mind would submit. The torture would not stop until the defendant relented and “confessed” to whatever crime they were being accused of. The torture would then stop and later the Inquisitor would confirm with the defendant if they stood by this new confession. If the defendant said yes, then the trial would continue to sentencing but if the defendant said they confessed under duress and did not truthfully mean what they said the torture would be restarted. This cycle of torment led to many confessions, whether truthful or not. This impacts the way that scholars should approach Inquisitorial records because it is likely that people confessed to accusations that were not true in order to avoid torture and violence.¹¹

With these caveats in mind, this study will approach the trial records of Francisca through a close reading that asks how “vanity” and “pride” are deployed by inquisitorial authorities and interrogates how Francisca defends herself against those characterizations, which she rejects. Francisca herself is relatively understudied within the copious literature on the Inquisition itself, as a review of the secondary literature shows.

Literature Review

The scholarship on the Spanish Inquisition has evolved over time especially since 1970. During the centuries following the end of the Inquisition the scholarship surrounding it was primarily non-Spaniard and Protestant, which contributed to an anti-Catholic narrative. This can

¹⁰ In accusation 144, the Inquisitor recommends that torture be used on Francisca in order to force her to tell the truth.

¹¹ Homza, Lu Ann. *The Spanish Inquisition, 1478-1614 : An Anthology of Sources*.

be seen in William H. Prescott's *History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella the Catholic*. Prescott plays into the narrative of the Black Legend and asserts that the violence of the Inquisition was due to it being Catholic. The Spanish Inquisition was portrayed as a period of blood lust where torture and anarchy ruled over the country. This in a large part can be attributed to the idea of the Black Legend. The Black Legend was the idea that Spain or Spaniards were backwards, barbaric, and/or violent.¹² Prescott's analysis of the Inquisition enhances the Black Legend through asserting that the cruelty of denunciations and sentencings were Machiavellian and necessary. Once again, the Black Legend resurfaces but does so through an anti-Spaniard context. Prescott praises King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella for their iron fist which asserts that Spaniards needed strong authority figures; otherwise, left to their own devices, the people would live debased and inhumane lives.¹³

In the early 20th century, scholars continued in the use of the Black Legend in their analyses of the Inquisition. Scholars such as Henry Charles Lea were critiqued by Spanish historians like Julián Juderías for their use of anti-Catholic and anti-Spanish rhetoric.¹⁴ Scholars such as Lea used Spain almost as a foil for America. Where America was "free" and idealized human rights, the Spanish under the Inquisition were set on limiting individual autonomy and agency. America was progressive and Protestant where Spain was archaic and Catholic. Lea was criticized by Spaniards for his clear bias even though Lea was considered the authority on Spanish history in America.¹⁵

¹² Ingelbien, Raphaël. "Historical Fiction, Cultural Transfer and the Recycling of the Black Legend between the Low Countries and Britain." In *Literary Hispanophobia and Hispanophilia in Britain and the Low Countries (1550-1850)*, edited by Yolanda Rodríguez Pérez, 299–316. Amsterdam University Press, 2020.

¹³ Prescott, William Hickling. *History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, the Catholic*. Vol. 4. Routledge, 1895.

¹⁴ Dewey, R.S. "The Latest Historian of the Inquisition." *American Catholic Quarterly Review* 13, no. 51 (1888): 385.

¹⁵ Lea, Henry Charles. *History of the Inquisition of Spain*. New York City and London: Macmillan, 1906.

In the mid-20th century, the Spanish historian Henry Kamen published several influential works on the Inquisition, including *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* and *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Perspective*. Kamen is one of the most significant Iberian scholars of the 20th century. His work represents an overall movement in scholarship to revise earlier study of the Inquisition and depart from harmful rhetoric such as the Black Legend. One of the ways that he does this is by contradicting the narrative of an all-powerful Inquisition. Kamen discusses how the Inquisition did not have widespread influence over all of Spain and that it would be a mistake to assume that they had social control because of the material artifacts of their legal codes. Kamen asserts that “normal” life for a sixteenth century Spaniard was not mired by the Inquisition as earlier scholarship would lead one to believe.¹⁶ Towards the end of the 20th century there is a surge in scholarship in Iberian studies due to the death of Francisco Franco. Franco was the dictator of Spain from 1939 until 1975. During that time historians and writers were heavily censored and there were limitations on who could access archives. In 1976, Spain transitioned away from dictatorship and towards democracy which created new pathways for scholars to access materials, such as Inquisitorial trial records, which had been unattainable for over three decades.¹⁷

More recently, scholars have continued to study the Inquisition from a variety of angles. Some of these themes are transnational in how the Inquisition impacted Spain’s colonies such as those in South America and the Philippines. Marginalized groups are also a key point of study since they have been historically grouped as a monolith in their treatment. Another contemporary method of scholarship has been the use of microhistories. Microhistories allow historians to view

¹⁶ Kamen, Henry. *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014.

¹⁷ Ruiz, Julius. “Seventy Years on: Historians and Repression during and after the Spanish Civil War.” *Journal of Contemporary History* 44, no. 3 (2009): 449.

an isolated moment in history that revolves around an individual or event that has limited source material. The closer examination leads to minor details being given analysis in comparison to larger quantitative studies where they would be ignored.¹⁸ Overall, the scholarship on the Spanish Inquisition has evolved significantly over the past three centuries. While early scholars leveraged the Black Legend to fanaticize the Inquisition, newer scholarship is challenging it. Methodological approaches are evolving to have a multidimensional perspective on the Spanish Inquisition and give light to marginalized groups who haven't been given enough consideration.

Despite this turn to looking at marginalized groups, study of Francisca herself has been rare. Dr. Gillian Ahlgren is the primary scholar of Francisca de los Apostóles. Her publication in 2005 *The Inquisition of Francisca* was the first English translation of the trial record. There is an overwhelming number of trial records in Madrid, and few are digitized, which makes this thesis' access to Francisca's case only possible through Ahlgren's work. There are some key moments when Ahlgren includes the original Spanish translation which helps in having a more nuanced understanding of Francisca's vows. Ahlgren focuses her analysis of Francisca through Francisca's visions and advocacy surrounding Archbishop Carranza. Towards the end of her analysis Ahlgren includes a section on *alumbradismo* and how closely it was connected with vanity denunciations in women. Here Ahlgren contextualizes Francisca among her contemporary *beatas* as a woman who was ambitious but due to her visionary experiences was deemed threatening by the Inquisition.¹⁹

Ahlgren is forthright with her choice to focus on translating the trial record with a focus on Francisca's voice. *The Inquisition of Francisca* is an abridged version of her trial, which

¹⁸ Hargadon, Andrew B, and R Daniel Wadhvani. "Theorizing with Microhistory." *Academy of Management Review*, 2022.

¹⁹ Ahlgren, Gillian TW. "*Francisca de Los Apóstoles: The Inquisition of Francisca: A Sixteenth-Century Visionary on Trial.*" University of Chicago Press, 2005. 2.

leaves some gap in the trial record, especially since she does not clarify what specifically was left out. Ahlgren's choice to focus on Francisca's voice is an admirable one in trying to see Francisca for who she says she was, but it creates complications in validating who she was as a community member. The lack of engagement with witness testimony in Ahlgren's analysis is a weak spot in her argument that should be bolstered. Francisca's claims about life events and her social comportment would benefit from having more witness testimony available in the translation.²⁰

Francisca's case has also been studied by some Spanish and Catalan scholars who base their work off of Ahlgren's translation. Maria Giordano is one of these scholars who contextualizes Francisca's life through her advocacy surrounding Archbishop Carranza.²¹ This interpretation is a departure from Ahlgren's in that it labels Francisca almost as an advocate for church political change. Giordano focuses on how Francisca's visions supported her views of Carranza rather than her visions being central to her trial. Moreover, there are very few journal articles written about Francisca and the only book chapter about her is also written by Ahlgren. The lack of scholarship surrounding Francisca's relatively complete case is astonishing. Francisca seems to be used more frequently as an example or footnote leveraged to emphasize another person or concept.²²

This thesis aims to complement this existing scholarship by assessing the trial of Francisca de los Apostáles through the lens of vanity. Francisca offers an interesting case study in comparison to more popularized female Inquisitorial trials. Francisca is different from Teresa of Avila, who was also living in Toledo during the same time period, in several key ways:

²⁰ Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 2.

²¹ Giordano, María Laura. "Proyecto Político y Aspiraciones Reformadoras En Las Cartas de Una Beata Del Siglo XVI En España." *Manuscrits: Revista d'història Moderna*, no. 17 (1999): 57–68.

²² Scully, Kathleen. "A Contradictory Subject: Reform, Resistance, and Holy Women in Early Modern Spain," 2022.

Francisca is not a canonized saint in the Catholic Church and she has not been the object of study by scholars as much as Teresa. Francisca is also unlike women such as Maria de Cazalla and Francisca Hernández, who were relaxed to the secular arm.²³ Francisca is not killed because of the result of her trial and presumably lives for years afterwards. By examining her trial, we gain insight into the ways she expressed her religiosity and how the Inquisition sought to suppress her autonomy and agency through the use of sexist and misogynistic rhetoric.

Biographical Context

Francisca was born in 1539 in Noves, Spain. Not much is known of her upbringing and childhood since all of our knowledge on Francisca comes from her Inquisitorial trial. When she was a teenager, Francisca and her sister Isabel were sent to Toledo to live with a community of *beatas*. Sixteenth century Toledo was not a prosperous city full of opportunity. Toledo had been hit with years of poor crops due to the mismanagement of the land which led to a massive food shortage.²⁴ To add to the city's growing problems was its growing population and continued cycle of failing crops.²⁵ During this time of economic instability, living in a religious community gave Francisca and her sister an education as well as protection, since her father was working in

²³ When a person was “relaxed to the secular arm” it meant that they were being sentenced to death. Inquisitors could not kill a person for heresy but a Spanish secular official could.

²⁴ Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 9.

²⁵ This difficult time had a disproportionate impact on women, especially those that were young and single and those that were widowed. Job opportunities were limited for women especially considering the fact that work was gender oriented. Men and women did not work side by side for most jobs so even if there was space for additional workers women were barred from entering due to their gender. Realistically, women were left with three options in life: marriage, prostitution, or religious life.

Madrid and her mother had died years earlier.²⁶ Her time with the nuns was impactful for Francisca and influenced her life's work to advocate for women and teach them to support themselves in ways that were socially acceptable.²⁷ A *beata* was a laywoman who lived in a religious community called a *beatario* with other laywomen. These religious women lived together, prayed together, and would take direction from a local priest. *Beatas* were never rich and typically *beatarios* struggled financially. In order to sustain themselves they would produce crafts and use their hands to produce sellable goods. It is clear in her testimony to the Inquisition that Francisca was knowledgeable of what choices women had during this time period.²⁸ For instance, she even stated that one of her motivations for teaching women skills was to help them avoid prostitution.²⁹

Around 1570, Francisca's life changed when her sister became sick with what appeared to be an incurable illness. There were no medical treatments that seemed to work. There was also a growing concern that Isabel was being possessed by the devil. She was thought to be an *endemoniada*³⁰ and some began to refer to her as being spiritually dirty and immoral.³¹ Rumors of Isabel being a demoniac were only enflamed when she apparently had been spotted walking the streets of Toledo at night by herself in a trance-like state. This led Francisca to seek aid from a cleric who was supposed to be proficient in spiritual illnesses. Alonso Hernández performed

²⁶ One point that is unknown about Francisca is her heritage. Historian Dr. Ahlgren suggests that her family might have been conversos. Conversos were Jewish converts to Christianity. This potential tie to Judaism represented a threat to Francisca and her sister had it been true and made public since the Inquisition was suspicious of those of Jewish heritage.

²⁷ Francisca taught women how to sew. Sewing was an effective occupation for women since it would keep them in the home and off the streets. It was also an accessible occupation for women due to the gendering of the job itself and although there were male tailors, women in this environment could try to do this full-time or part-time as a way to make extra money.

²⁸ Ahlgren, *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 12.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

³⁰ An *endemoniada* was a person that was thought to be possessed by the devil. This person would need to go under a priest's care with a special license in order to cast the demon out of the person's body. This ordeal can be very taxing on the body. The person might undergo multiple exorcisms if the priest feels like he is unsuccessful.

³¹ Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 12.

many exorcisms on Isabel which again led to no improvement. As Isabel's caretaker, Francisca watched as her sister continued to be wracked with illness and weakness while spiritual and medical professionals attempted to treat her. Hernandez went on to use Isabel as a case study for other exorcists and would perform extensive and lengthy rituals on her in front of audiences of clergymen. As time went on Francisca began to be very wary of Hernandez. Isabel's health was only declining, and Hernandez even told Francisca that he thought she was also being influenced by the devil. He advised that she come to him for an exorcism. This led to Francisca fearing Hernandez and asking someone else to bring Isabel to her appointments with him. One comment that seemed to stick with Francisca from her interactions with Hernandez was about why God chooses certain individuals to be afflicted with demons. He told her that God only sends these types of trials to those he intends to use later.

All of these trials culminated in Francisca seeking out Miguel Ruiz, another cleric who was known for healing *endemoniadas* "through increased devotional practices like prayer and the sacraments."³² Initially Ruiz rejected the idea of helping Isabel since he had not been given the appropriate license by the local church to cure *endemoniadas*. Eventually he conceded and Ruiz took Isabel into his care and transformed her lifestyle. There was routine and structure which reflected a devotion to prayer and living modestly. According to Francisca, within eight days there was a clear change in her sister, and it was as if her sister was never ill.³³

The transformation in both her health and lifestyle propelled Isabel into two actions. She encouraged Francisca to live as she was, frequently taking communion and mortifying herself through prayer. Rejecting the desires of one's own flesh was a long tradition within Christianity. Asceticism had been practiced for centuries by Christians in order to withdraw from worldly

³²Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 13.

³³ Ibid.

temptations like lust, gluttony, or any other sin.³⁴ The second action that Isabel was propelled towards was to create her own convent. The convent would be associated with the Dominican order and modeled after the restorative lifestyle that had cured her. Isabel soon left Toledo in order to obtain permission to establish the convent from the Papacy in Rome. Isabel's first request to establish a convent was rejected. One possible reason for this was because she wrote her own rule for the convent. Writing a unique rule was against the norm since she was a woman and would raise doubt and suspicions by the local clergy. While her sister was away, Francisca began living in community with other religious women who confessed to Ruiz and regularly met to pray and fast together.³⁵

Francisca further consumed her life with prayer and penance in the months after Isabel left. One day she was in the main Cathedral in Toledo when she was struck with her first vision. Francisca saw "Our Lady interceding before Christ on behalf of the church of Toledo and on behalf of Archbishop Carranza, imprisoned in Rome."³⁶ This vision was only the first of many. In her second vision, Francisca was approached by Jesus. He asked her if she was willing to let demons enter her body so that she might come to know of the sins of humanity. Francisca was not quick in her answer and prayed for this decision for six months. During her time of prayer and reflection she turned to the life story of Catherine of Siena.³⁷ Francisca read the story of her life and learned of how she had allowed demons to enter her body so that she might suffer for the

³⁴ Addison, David. "Layperson, Ascetic, and Cleric in Iberian Christianity, c. 500-711," Oxford, England: University of Oxford Press, 2021.

³⁵ Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 13.

³⁶ Ibid.

³⁷ Catherine of Siena (1347-1380) was an Italian saint. She pursued religious life against her parents' wishes and lived with women following the Dominican order. Her life is well documented due to many letters that she wrote as well as biographies written by the men around her. She was influential during her life and even was in contact with the Pope. Catherine held a position of religious authority that was unlike any other woman in the Church and was canonized less than a century after her death. She became a role model for some religious women including Francisca de los Apostáles.

Church and have the sins of humanity revealed to her. This encouraged Francisca to lean into future suffering and accept demons into her body so that she too might be dutiful to Christ's calling.

Francisca claimed to be plagued by demons for the next five months of her life.³⁸ During this time, she was often ill and bedridden. Francisca claimed that the demons she allowed to enter her body were not just passive cohabitants. Instead, the demons would speak through Francisca to her confessor. Miguel Ruiz then made a list of the different demons who possessed Francisca in order to document the sins of humanity. The sin that seemed to visit her most was pride. To pay penance and counteract these sins, Francisca leaned into religious life and ascetic tradition even more. To battle the sin of pride she strove to live more humbly and frugally. To battle lust, she continued her vow of celibacy and strove to live a chaste life.³⁹

Her demonic encounters also emboldened Francisca to advocate for God's will to the people of Toledo. She believed that God was calling her to share God's love with humanity and encourage women to join the convent that she and her sister were establishing. The convent would align with Francisca's purpose to atone for humanity's sins. The convent was also to function as a house of prayer where they would pray for the salvation of humanity. Francisca believed that humanity was enslaved to sin and that the only way to have salvation was to live an ascetic life where you were constantly praying over your actions and misdeeds so that God might

³⁸ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, December 5, 1575, in *The Inquisition of Francisca*, ed. Gillian Ahlgren (University of Chicago Press, 2005), 67.

"And right after this protestation, which would be a month or so, around the Octave of the Holy Sacrament of last year, the defendant felt within her new tribulations and torments in which demons came to her to make a declaration to Miguel Ruíz, and they told her that they were the ones who had possessed all the world with pride."

³⁹ Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 14.

forgive you. She and her fellow nuns were “to awaken the passion of Christ because it has been frozen by continual sin and our desire to flee from troubles and our love of our bodies.”⁴⁰

The introduction of Francisca’s vows establish how Francisca saw herself as a servant of God, her obedience to him, and promise of sexual purity.

In the name of Jesus Christ crucified and the glorious Virgin Mary: I, Francisca de los Apóstoles, say that I oblige myself to live in perpetual righteousness of spirit all the days of my life, basing all of my works in only pleasing God and mortifying myself for the satisfaction of sins that we have committed, particularly churchmen, who serve and love God with hypocrisy, pretending to be holy with our half-hearted works, not to give honor to God but instead to gain honor and authority, crucifying Jesus Christ again with each of our works. Come priests, come to the righteousness of this spirit of God who descended from heaven to earth in your hands. May your works be worthy of the great office that you have been given in perpetuity, living in perpetual purity of soul and body, so that this Lord may be revered and served for His own sake and not for any other interest. Because to Him should be given all the honor and glory of all of our works. Amen.⁴¹

There are a few recurring themes in Francisca’s vows. One theme is how she lives in subjugation and humility to God. This is important for Francisca to point out because she is trying to form her credibility in what she claims. If she is living completely under God’s will then whatever she says comes from divine insight. Additionally, she talks about her life’s purpose. Francisca thought that she was specially called by God to serve Toledo. One group that she felt she was called to serve in particular was “... particularly churchmen, who serve and love God with hypocrisy, pretending to be holy with our half-hearted works, not to give honor to God but instead to gain honor and authority.”⁴² Although Francisca never directly names specific

⁴⁰ Apostáles, Vows of Francisca de los Apostáles, undated, in *The Inquisition of Francisca*, ed. Gillian Ahlgren (University of Chicago Press, 2005), 59.

⁴¹ Apostáles, Vows of Francisca de los Apostáles, undated, 59.

⁴² Ibid.

clergymen, she is still calling into question the status quo of the religious government body. This offense coupled with how outspoken she was only made her more of a target.

Francisca's defense of her humility and sexual purity was anchored in her own personal vows which presented a complication during her trial. She is relying on her own words to validate the truthfulness of what she says. The inquisitor uses the weakness of her argument to assert that her knowledge was not enough. He connected her confidence in her defense with vanity.

She was told that the error is not in loving God and desiring the salvation of one's neighbor because this is a very holy and virtuous work and in it is based all our good but that what is reprehensible is her vanity, the inappropriate things she recounts that she has seen and sees and the security with which she speaks of them and that she wants them to be understood as true.⁴³

The other major theme in her vows is her sexual purity. She discusses living a life of righteousness and not tainting herself with sexual immorality as well as being chaste to prove her holiness. Virginity was a necessity of being linked to the holiness of the Virgin Mary and played a role in the perception of a religious women's advocacy. The statement about her virginity is important later during questioning from her Inquisitor about her possibly getting married after trial.

Francisca's vows also give insight into the root of her advocacy for church reform and her role as an intercessory figure. She emphasized that humanity was wicked and flawed and how in order to achieve salvation, people needed to repent of their sins and transform their lives to be more God-honoring. At the beginning of her vows, she discusses Jesus' life and how he took on humanity's sins. She says that,

⁴³ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, December 2, 1575, 87-89.

This great God, vanquished by love for humanity, left the bosom of His Father and threw Himself down to drink the bitterness that sin had caused in order to make satisfaction for sin to His Father. Furthermore, so that humanity would not lose its inheritance as children of heaven, He bore our sins and had a continual war with hell, which crushed his strength. He covered himself in the sin of Adam, so that He lived in continual poverty and subjection, persecutions, affronts, burdens, defamation, lashes, and finally death on the cross...⁴⁴

Francisca listing off the different trials shows how she knew the great lengths of suffering Jesus had to go through for the salvation of humanity. She leverages this knowledge to comfort herself in times of hardship and acknowledge the fact that living and dying like Jesus was not an easy path. Instead, it was a life of constantly rejecting one's desires and giving up safety and comfort. Francisca frequently told people about her "life of struggle" and how God had called her specifically to take on trials for the good of Toledo and humanity at large. These public displays were leveraged during Francisca's trial against her since the Inquisitor marked it as an act of vanity rather than showcasing herself as a humble example for others.

This conviction to live in poverty, chastity, and dedication to God led Francisca to question the Toledan clergy. Francisca compared her lifestyle with that of the clergy and found that many of them lacked her virtues. This was important to her because these men were seen as the standard for Christianity and if they were not acting in submission to God then the people of Toledo were doomed to be perpetually enslaved to sin. She was very outspoken in her disapproval of the Toledan clergymen and would not shy away from listing their faults. She did not see them as authoritative in certain matters because in her eyes they were not as dedicated to God as she was. Her vows reflect these thoughts and show how she was calling for reform from a religious point of view. Her visions also give us a window into her worldview and self-conception.

⁴⁴ Apostáles, Vows of Francisca de los Apostáles, undated, 59.

An important aspect of Francisca's visions was that most of them happened in public. This fact would later be drawn out in her Inquisitorial trial because it was seen as a call for attention rather than true divine intervention. Her visions varied in topic but would typically include the Toledan Church and how the clergy was corrupt. She would also see visions of the archbishop and testify of his holiness. Although most of her visions were in public, she did have some visions where she lived. One of these visions was so powerful that she woke up the entire household in the middle of the night. For the following three days she was on bedrest since the vision was so draining to her health.⁴⁵ Even though this vision happened in her home, in the eyes of the Inquisition it was still public because Francisca went on to tell others about what happened and made it open knowledge.

Comparing Francisca's visions with those of other mystical women of the time shows that having the visions in public was not that unusual. One trend that is common among many visionaries is that they often received a vision within a Church, especially after the taking of the Eucharist. No matter the validity of the visions, it is clear that Francisca was situating herself to be equal (if not above) other female saints.

Francisca continued to have visions until November 1, 1574. She had finally come to a point where she had seen all of the sins of humanity and felt as though she had overcome them all. Theologically this put Francisca in a precarious position. Although Francisca never claimed to have the same divine power as Jesus and the Virgin Mary, she began to see herself as an intermediary between humanity and God. The only way for her to get to this position was through overcoming all sin which according to most Christians, has only ever been done by Jesus.

⁴⁵ Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 15.

Francisca was repeatedly questioned on her visions to ensure that they were from God and not demonic. An example of this is during Francisca's defense against accusation ninety-nine the Inquisitor said,

She should say how she knows that this was from God and not from the demons, since, as she has said in this session and in others, during those same days she was tormented by demons and they spoke through her mouth and she was tormented in her interior by them in such a way that internally and externally they spoke with her. So it remains to be seen whether this tenderness that she speaks of is from God and not the devil.⁴⁶

The reason that the source of her visions was so important had to do with the religious climate in Spain. There was a group known as the *alumbrados* that represented a heretical threat to the Catholic Church. Alumbradismo was a mystical sect of Christianity that began in the early sixteenth century. Their practices centered on enriching one's faith through prayer and held visions as being very important. What was particularly threatening to the Church was the lack of censorship over prayer and visionaries. An *alumbrado* could sit in prayer for hours with some of that time being silent. Strangely enough it was the silence that was perceived as dangerous. During times of silence the Church worried that the person was more vulnerable to their thoughts wandering and having revelations. They were concerned that these revelations might be of their own creation or of demonic origin instead of being divine. This creates a more hostile environment for visionaries during the sixteenth century since there is a more critical view and hesitation on the Church's behalf to recognize someone's visions as being valid and from God.⁴⁷

According to trial witnesses, Francisca was connected with the *alumbrados* movement, however, Francisca never claims any affiliation with the group. One witness stated, "For Francisca to say that she was taught in spirit that God would make her holy and reform the apostolic life, insofar as she says that she was taught in spirit, this is the language of the

⁴⁶ Trial of Francisca de los Apostóles, February 9, 1576, 138.

⁴⁷ Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 21.

alumbrados and the rest is heretical.” Another witness said “For a person to say of herself that, having risen to heaven in spirit, Our Lord said to her, ‘Do not go. My pleasure is to be with humans and even more with you because you please me greatly’ is a proposition of the *alumbrados* and arrogant.”⁴⁸ Francisca never claimed to be connected to the group nor did she share their theology but her emphasis on prayer and “connection” with the holy spirit placed her as potentially a part of their group. Ahlgren discusses this assertion; however, it is more likely that Francisca was labeled an *alumbrada* by witnesses because *alumbradismo* was a key heresy in Toledo. In the decades right before Francisca’s trial, Toledo had seen multiple *auto-de-fes* that consisted of *alumbrados*. Most of the heretics in the *auto-de-fes* were described as outspoken and firm in their theological beliefs. Francisca’s connection with them has more to do with her personality than position on spirituality. Her vows, her visions, and her possible connection with a purportedly heretical sect led to her trial, which is the focus of this analysis.

Analysis of The Textual Record

Francisca’s trial was in many ways typical in its process and outcome. Before there is an inquisitorial trial, there is always a period of confession. The confessional period was the time used by the inquisitor to assess if there was enough evidence to bring an accused person to trial. During this period the inquisitor and the accused person who was referred to as the confessor would sit together and discuss some of the potential points of heresy without it being directly mentioned as to where the accusations came from. At the beginning of Francisca’s trial, she was asked if she knew why she had been detained. She responded that she did not know why the Inquisition called her in. Francisca went on to state how if she believed anything to be wrong

⁴⁸ Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 21.

with her theological beliefs or actions that she would have turned herself over to the Inquisition. Turning oneself over to the Inquisition was an encouraged practice ushered in by the “Edict of Grace.” The edict stated that within a certain time allotment of an Inquisitor coming to town, if someone turned themselves over to the Inquisition for heretical beliefs and practices that the punishment would be private and less strenuous than if someone else accused them. This edict, however, created a tool for the Inquisition to question the accused with more suspicion. If the person had an inkling of what they were doing was unorthodox in any way, then they must be hiding even graver heresies because why wouldn’t they have turned themselves over to the Inquisition?

After the confessional period the inquisitor compiled an overwhelming one hundred and forty-four accusations against Francisca.⁴⁹ This number is staggering in comparison to other trials and indicate that the Inquisitor was building the case as much as possible to ensure that Francisca was punished in some way.⁵⁰ Although the trial record includes witness testimony, Francisca would never find out who her accusers were. The Spanish Inquisition held a stance that accusers were to be kept anonymous. This protected their identity and allowed accusers to come forward without repercussions. This had potential to be problematic due to the anonymity of it; however, if someone was found to be lying to the Inquisition, they in turn would be punished.

Francisca's defense began with how she met the criteria for being a visionary. The Catholic Church had very strict guidelines on what made someone a visionary to ensure that their visions were divine and not demonic. According to Gillian Ahlgren, there are five key components to verifying if a visionary is divine or not. The first is that the vision is internal and

⁴⁹ Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 20.

⁵⁰ In Homza’s anthology source book of Inquisitorial trials, no person surpasses thirty-six accusations. Most of them are in the single digits or low teens such as notable *alumbrada* Maria de Cazalla who only had four accusations brought against her.

that it creates an extranormal experience for the individual. The vision also takes the individual away from their body to another location that is typically a celestial plane. The second component is that the vision induces a feeling of rapture. Visions from God were blessings, so the individual needed to have a feeling of internal glory from receiving these heavenly visions. The third component is that the individual would come out of the vision even more subservient to God. The fourth component is that on top of coming out of the vision subservient to God, the individual would also feel even more called to live a virtuous life. All of these components lead to the final one. The fifth component is that the individual would be filled with endurance and strength to take on trials.⁵¹ A visionary in the Catholic Church's eyes was someone who had extranormal experiences and came out of said experiences stronger.

Francisca ran into trouble, however, when the Inquisitor began to express doubts and further question Francisca on her visions. He began to say that her claims of having visions after taking mass was not enough because the Devil is always there, searching, affecting. He also argued that her visions were not authentic because she was prideful and didn't have humility when she received them. The fact that she had them in public which attracted a crowd was problematic.

She was told that this vanity has completely possessed her because she has said and made public to many people what she has confessed and declared in this inquiry. Thus it is clear that the accused knows well that all that she has said is something from the devil, not from God, and this she is admonished to say and declare what is really going on and what truth there is in it.

⁵¹ Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 22.

The inquisitors' line of questioning also reveals a key detail in Francisca's trial, which was that her actions were not the issue, but her thoughts were. He situated his argument on knowledge and emotions and the possibility of internal corruption⁵².

One way that Francisca responded to that was through proving that she had counsel. Francisca noted that she discussed every vision with her confessor and that her confessor even approved of these visions. He said that he saw a spiritual growth in her which would have proved that the visions were in fact from God. Having a spiritual advisor and confessor was extremely important. This gave Francisca credibility because she was doing her Catholic duty of regularly going to confession and talking with a priest. It also starts to shift the perception on if Francisca was willingly being heretical. If she was receiving counsel and following her confessor's advice, then she was simply doing what she was told and obeying Church authority. Her deference to her confessor would also contradict the thread of vanity that the Inquisitor claimed she had.

The Inquisitor was still not convinced that Francisca was a true visionary. Throughout the entire trial Inquisitor keeps insinuating that Francisca is overstepping and using her visions for public notoriety. Many clergy during this period believed that women were more easily deceived by the Devil. They believed that women were the weaker sex and did not have the ability to protect themselves from demonic entities. Therefore, a woman's obedience to the Church was paramount since the clergymen were the only ones with the ability to provide spiritual protection. The Inquisition looked to see how obedient Francisca was to her male superiors within the Church. The problem was that she was a *beata* and her confessor (who was similarly imprisoned) was the only other male that would be able to testify for her. Although it was a good

⁵² Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, December 1, 1575, 86.

thing that she had one confessor for a prolonged period of time, Francisca had no other allies. As a test of her humility, they told her to accept the inquisitional accusations.

There are many points throughout Francisca's trial where the Inquisitor questions Francisca's ability to know herself and her experiences. The origin of Francisca's "inner voice" is contentious to the Inquisitor. After asking Francisca to explain her understanding of it, the Inquisitor calls it a "kind of fiction."⁵³ He goes on to invalidate Francisca's logic through stating that the transmission of feelings cannot be explained with the sense of hearing. "She was told to say if it is true that God responds to the soul through what it sees; she was told to speak about and clarify this because the devil can also do the same to fool her and to cause vanity in her."⁵⁴ Here the Inquisitor is trying to undo the logic of Francisca and make her question herself or at least have reasonable doubt of her own experiences. The goal for the Inquisitor was not in correcting the theological claims that she was making but instead to destabilize her confidence in herself.

Directly after likening her sense of "inner voice" to fiction, the Inquisitor questions Francisca on her confidence that the inner voice is divine and not possibly from the Devil. His line of questioning proves that theological correction was second to shaking her confidence. Essentially the Inquisitor is pushing Francisca to consider the possibility that if her visions were from the Devil then her visionary experience would be fraudulent. Her advocacy surrounding Carranza's return would no longer have divine support and her role as an intercessor for Toledo would be unfounded. Leveraging his argument on this possibility functions to not only force Francisca to consider the validity of her own knowledge of self but also the implications of the validity of her visions for other people.

⁵³ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, December 5, 1575, 94.

⁵⁴ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, December 5, 1575, 94.

The Inquisitor's incessant use of the Devil was a ploy to undermine Francisca's intelligence.

She was told that since she cannot see who is speaking, with the other indications that exist in her history, it seems that these are works of the devil, either because she understands them to be such or because he is deceiving her, which is very easy for him to do because of the vast experience he has in such things and the long time he has been doing these things and because it is so easy for us to be persuaded to be esteemed and to have our works held in good repute.⁵⁵

Throughout the trial, the Inquisitor sometimes offers two interpretations to Francisca of her own words or experiences. Although worded differently they have the same implication which is that she must be wrong about what she thinks is true. The first interpretation that the Inquisitor offers Francisca is that she might come to understand that her "inner voice" is the Devil. For the Inquisitor, option one represents a consented realignment by Francisca to his authority. The second interpretation that the Inquisitor offers allows Francisca to remain in her truth; however, he also instills a message that she is still being tricked. Even if she chose to not agree with the Inquisitor's statement, the Inquisitor maintains that Francisca is morally in jeopardy.

The Inquisitor's tactic of moral questioning is also seen when Francisca is denied a lawyer. After hearing all of the accusations against her, Francisca requested that she be appointed a lawyer to advise her during the second half of the trial.⁵⁶ Francisca's request for a lawyer was denied as the Inquisitor stated that he would only advise her in the same way he did now: to tell the truth. The Inquisitor manipulated her by implying that if Francisca truly wanted a lawyer, then she must want to hide something. The inquisitor isn't trying to rewrite any of Francisca's experiences or feelings but is putting moral implications on her actions. Francisca is left helpless because either choice she makes leaves her without legal defense and at a distinct disadvantage.

⁵⁵ Ibid.

⁵⁶ Before the accusations are read the person being questioned by the Inquisition is a confessor and witness. This is the investigating phase and once the Inquisitor has compiled his accusations and formally accused the person of heresy the confessor then becomes a defendant who must prove their innocence beyond a reasonable doubt.

If she chooses to follow the Inquisitor's advice and go on without a lawyer then she is showing some semblance of obedience; however, that one act won't sufficiently dispel the accusations of vanity or pride. On the other hand, if she chooses to persist in asking for a lawyer then she is only helping the Inquisitor in formulating evidence against her.⁵⁷

Leveraging "Vanity"

Above all, vanity is the root of the accusations against Francisca, as shown in various ways in her trial record. The Inquisitor's line of questioning as well as his assertions in the final accusation against Francisca boil down to three issues. The first issue was her "vanity" within her visionary experience, the second was her claims about Archbishop Carranza and the Toledan clergy, and the third issue was her behavior towards other *beatas*. Sin was viewed by the Inquisition as a disease and threat not just to the individual but also the community at large. Heretical beliefs held silently were much less worrisome than someone openly speaking about unorthodox theology and blasphemy. In the eyes of the Inquisition, openly speaking equated to the spreading of unorthodox ideology that could corrupt the minds of others. People weren't to be trusted nor strong enough to guard themselves from heresy, which is why the Inquisition needed to act quickly and diligently when hearing about potential heretics. It wasn't only the soul of the heretic that they needed to save. They also needed to prevent the impact of the heresy on the rest of their congregations.

A recurring theme in some of the accusations against Francisca was how she continually claimed her sister to be holier than others. Accusation eight claims that Francisca got into an argument with another person over Francisca's statement that her sister Isabel was "holier than

⁵⁷ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, January 5, 1576, 118.

many in heaven” and was angered by being questioned by another person over the validity of this statement. This accusation demonstrates a method of discreditation and defamation deployed by the Inquisitor. The accusation discredits Francisca as a reliable source of Christian theology because she is claiming her sister (who is apparently known by others to not be pious) as holier than canonized saints.⁵⁸ The accusation then defames Francisca through illustrating her character as prideful and arrogant.

8. In addition, she said that her sister had experienced demons for the glory of God and was holier than many in heaven, and she named some of the holy martyrs, and when a certain person chastised her for saying that she grew angry with her because she had been contradicted.

In response to the eighth accusation, Francisca claimed that she had no knowledge of even having this conversation and that she must not have said it. “To the eighth point that was read to her, she said she certainly never said that nor does she remember hearing that.”⁵⁹ What is notable about this response is that Francisca did not then go on to defame or take guesses as to who the anonymous witness was that they mentioned. Guessing the name of an accuser was a tactic often used by defendants to redirect the accused heresy. If the defendant could name and speak poorly of the accuser’s reliability, then that accusation could be dismissed. Francisca outright saying that she does not recall the conversation ever occurring would not have been enough to dissolve that charge.⁶⁰

The twenty-second accusation outlines Francisca’s claim of atoning for the sins of the world. A notable word that is used in this accusation is that Francisca “boasted” to others. This accusation does not directly point to the atonement experience as the problem nor the fact that

⁵⁸ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, January 5, 1576, 97.

⁵⁹ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, January 27, 1576, 122.

⁶⁰ Homza, Lu Ann. “How to Harass an Inquisitor-General: The Polyphonic Law of Friar Francisco Ortíz.” *A Renaissance of Conflicts: Visions and Revisions of Law and Society in Italy and Spain*, 2004, 299–336.

she “overcame” certain sins. Francisca responds with the fact that she had already defended herself in the confessional period. She also states that the conversation is being told incorrectly. This is a new defense that Francisca takes in comparison with the one used against the eighth accusation. Here Francisca acknowledges that there is some truth in that a conversation was had between her and the accuser. However, she claims it is being used in a distorted way to make her look bad. The technique of twisting words reinforces the point that the inquisitor is using a methodology of making Francisca question her own reality. The conversation between Francisca and her accuser is being portrayed as factual from his perspective only. Francisca’s explanation of what happened cannot coexist within the same reality of the Inquisitors.⁶¹

22. In addition, she boasted and said that while she was saying her prayers and fasting for the sins of pride in the world, she felt many legions of demons come over her of the kind who tempt people in this sin and that they tempted her to be very prideful and, while she was suffering these temptations, those demons came into her and through her mouth confessed to a certain person, whom she named, that they would let go of their stranglehold on humanity. And thus she made satisfaction for the sins of the world.⁶²

Pride seems to be the Inquisitor’s driving force behind the twenty-second accusation. The word choice being used in the accusation is very significant because it changes the way that Francisca’s character is being portrayed. Had the sentence read that she “confessed” or “thought,” pride would not have been as central to the accusation. By using the word “boasted” Francisca is made out to be a prideful woman who is openly sharing and spreading her views. This also points to the assertion that the Inquisitor was primarily focused on denouncing Francisca for vanity and the way she comported herself rather than on theological beliefs and practices. Francisca’s behavior as a woman is in conflict with how the Inquisitor expects a woman to act.

⁶¹ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, January 5, 1576, 99.

⁶² Ibid.

Accusation twenty-four discusses how Francisca publicly spoke about how she was taught “in spirit” to lead the religious house her and her sister were creating. Francisca told people about her role as an abbess and that her undertaking of this position would grant her holiness from God. The accusation also states that Francisca was claiming to have the ability to take power away from demons. Francisca responded with the fact that yet again her words were being misconstrued. What she claims to have actually said was that she had undergone torment from demons and that through that experience she learned to counteract them. She was not able to take power away from demons but rather had learned ways to counteract sin through virtue.⁶³

24. In addition, she said publicly that she was taught in spirit that she had to be the abbess of that convent; and that God would give her so much holiness that she would create anew the apostolic life; and that she would go about taking the power away from the demons who have darkened the state of humanity; and that this was a tremendous undertaking.⁶⁴

One possible reason for the disparity between accusation and Francisca’s defense is that the accusation was based on a witness claiming Francisca was an *alumbrada*. It’s unclear in certain accusations where the inquisitor is drawing their reasoning from. However, given the number of testimonies connecting Francisca’s public speech and potential *alumbradismo* theology it is likely that the inquisitor developed the accusations with wording that coincided with the more mystical spirituality of the *alumbrados*.⁶⁵

To accusation 24, she said it did not happen the way the accusation says and that what happened is that when the defendant had that struggle with the demons over the vices, as she has said, after it was all over she understood clearly the way the demons could make people offend god with those vices. And in satisfaction for those vices she understood the way that virtues could counter the same vices, as she has written in the vows that she has written in her own hand, which were contained in the box and recopied by Miguel Ruíz

⁶³ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, January 5, 1576, 99.

⁶⁴ Ibid.

⁶⁵ Fowler, Jessica J. “Assembling Alumbradismo:” In *After Conversion*, edited by Mercedes García-Arenal, 251–82. Iberia and the Emergence of Modernity. Brill, 2016.

on some papers like a small book and that that is what happened and what this accusation says.⁶⁶

Francisca's claims about her sister are frequently brought up in her accusations.

Accusation thirty-two states that Francisca told people that Isabel "had to go to Rome to be received by the pope." Once she was there the pope was going to "take her advice on how to rule the church." The accusation also claims that the pope was going to install five women to be head advisers to the church and that these women would teach about God to the papacy. In response to this accusation, Francisca said that she had never said those things and that they were wholly untrue.⁶⁷

32. In addition, she has walked about saying that her sister Isabel Bautista had to go to Rome to be received by the pope; and that the pope had to take her advice about how to rule the church; and that the matters of the church would be governed on the advice of five women who were to collaborate on these things; and that they would have to take the advice of these women, consulting them so that they would pray about things and be taught about God by them.⁶⁸

Accusation thirty-two is an example of the subtle way that the inquisitor subverts Francisca's credibility. The accusation doesn't directly state that Francisca was prideful or vain but contextualizes her words as grand assertions that only a prideful, misaligned person could make. The accusation alone is not enough to denounce Francisca, but it plays a key role in supporting other accusations regarding her character and authority.

Accusation thirty-eight is unique in comparison to how Francisca's relationship with God is typically portrayed throughout her trial. The accusation outlines how Francisca said that Saint Peter had spoken with her, and that God had taken her as a bride. Saint Peter had apparently been sent to ask permission from Francisca's father for her to be wed to God. God also said that Francisca was "a just and holy" soul and that God gave her "virtue to be holy" and resist

⁶⁶ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, January 28, 1576, 126.

⁶⁷ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, February 7, 1576, 129.

⁶⁸ Ibid. January 5, 1576, 100.

temptation. Francisca responds to this accusation by saying that she was not wed to God but rather that she felt a strong pull of God loving her. She said that God came to her after she took communion and that she had an overwhelming sense in her body that God was reaching out with love for her and that this love provided her strength to be virtuous and overcome the temptation of sin.⁶⁹

38. In addition, she has said that when the points of her feet were on the floor and her body in the air Saint Peter had come; and that God had taken her as a spouse; and that He had sent him [i.e., Peter] to ask her father for permission to marry her; and that in her He had found a just and holy soul and she would make satisfaction for the world and sinners; and that she had asked for the dowry for her betrothal to God and she was given virtue to be holy or to resist temptation.⁷⁰

Francisca never claims in her writings or anywhere in her trial defense to be the bride of Christ.

This accusation seems like an outlier because Francisca's writing situates her as having a servant/worker relationship with God versus a spousal one.⁷¹ This accusation most likely stems from the fact that in the medieval and early modern periods there were women claiming to be the bride of Christ. These women were typically nuns and similarly to Francisca had some kind of divine encounter with God whether that be through a vision or experience during communion. This seems to be the only real connection between Francisca and the "bride of Christ" phenomena.⁷²

Vanity as a label created an intersection point for misogyny and the Inquisition as an institution. Vanity was a threatening sin to not just the individual but also the order of society

⁶⁹ Ibid. January 28, 1576, 127.

⁷⁰ Trial of Francisca de los Apostóles, January 28, 1576, 127.

⁷¹ The accusation is strange in that it's stating that Francisca is claiming to be the bride of God and not Jesus. I am not sure what word the original Spanish translation uses which could change my interpretation of the accusation. If the original Spanish was referencing God the father and not Jesus then it would solidify my interpretation that the accusation isn't founded in theological heresy but rather misogyny.

⁷² Gonzalez, Cristina Cruz. "Beyond the Bride of Christ: The Crucified Abbess in Mexico and Spain." *The Art Bulletin* 99, no. 4 (2017): 102–32.

which made the Inquisition's response to it swifter and graver. Vanity represented the willful nature of a person and an obstinance to obedience. It is an easier task to realign a heretic's view if they are teachable or quick to denounce past errors due to "not knowing any better." Claiming to not be aware of heresy and immediately complying with the Inquisitor was a tactic that demonstrated the obedience of the accused.⁷³ Obedience could then lead to realignment of the accused into orthodox beliefs and practices which was a goal of the Inquisition. Resistance to realignment was seen as rebellious and created an even more difficult kind of heretic. A heretic who would not reject the heresy that they were accused of nor say that their past actions or beliefs were wrong was seen as needing harsh correction either through torture or potentially death if they were considered unredeemable to the faith by the Inquisitor.⁷⁴

Notably, Francisca's trial is one instance of a pattern: "vanity" was leveraged as a label disproportionately against women. In Homza's *The Spanish Inquisition*, there are thirteen trial records where eight of them are about women with various heresies. Gendered epithets are found in high frequency within these eight trials. Isabel de la Higuera was condemned as a heretic by her Inquisitor due to her remaining "in her damned opinion."⁷⁵ Marina González' relationship to her spiritual practices were described by her Inquisitor as "she returned, like a dog to its vomit."⁷⁶ María González was shamed for "persisting in her denial" after giving her testimony.⁷⁷ In the five trials of the men in Homza's book, none of them are described as vain, prideful, or

⁷³ Homza, Lu Ann. "How to Harass an Inquisitor-General: The Polyphonic Law of Friar Francisco Ortíz."

⁷⁴ Argüello, Gaspar Isidro de. "Instructions of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, Handled Summarily, Both Old and New (Madrid, 1627). Translated by LuAnn Homza." *The Spanish Inquisition 1478–1614: An Anthology of Sources*, n.d.

⁷⁵ Homza, An Anthology of Sources. 13-16.

Isabel was later relaxed to the secular arm after being declared a heretic and apostate.

⁷⁶ Ibid, 27-49.

Marina was considered a relapsed heretic and underwent water torture by the Inquisition. She was convicted of relapsed heresy and relaxed to the secular arm.

⁷⁷ Ibid, 50-60.

María was tortured via the rack and water torture. She was relaxed to the secular arm.

uncooperative with their Inquisitor. Instead, there is even a statement starting with the phrase “everyone knows what men are” that then proceeds to excuse his behavior towards blaspheming about the Virgen Mary.⁷⁸ Francisca is also not alone in finding ways to defend herself against these accusations.

The Paradox of Defending Against Accusations of “Vanity”

One way that Francisca responded to the accusations of vanity was through talking about her interactions with her confessor, Miguel Ruiz. Francisca noted that she discussed every vision with her confessor and that her confessor even approved of these visions. He said that he saw a spiritual growth in her which would have proved that the visions were in fact from God. Having a spiritual advisor and confessor was extremely important. This gave Francisca credibility because she was doing her Catholic duty of regularly going to confession and talking with a priest.⁷⁹ It also starts to shift the perception on if Francisca was willingly being heretical. If she was receiving counsel and following her confessor’s advice, then she was simply doing what she was told and obeying Church authority. Her deference to her confessor would contradict the threat of vanity that the Inquisitor claimed she had. It also creates a different narrative from the one that the Inquisitor is trying to perpetuate through the feminine binaries of misogyny. As stated earlier according to Manne there are two binaries of femininity according to a misogynist, the serving helper woman and the rebellious woman. Francisca describes herself as being subservient to her confessor and therefore would align with the virtuous binary of femininity.

⁷⁸ Homza, *An Anthology of Sources*. 248-251.

⁷⁹ Bilinkoff, Jodi. *Related Lives: Confessors and Their Female Penitents, 1450-1750*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005.

Unfortunately, Francisca's utilization of discussing her relationship with her confessor was not enough to combat the accusation of vanity. Her mention of seeking counsel with Miguel Ruiz is found only briefly in her defense. Most of the defense against vanity was about her willingness to be obedient to the Inquisition. This would indicate that the Inquisitor was not questioning her relationship with Miguel Ruiz or her actions of going to a confessor. What appears to be important to the Inquisitor is Francisca's subservience to the Inquisition and socio-political structure of the Catholic Church. As mentioned earlier, the emphasis of her unvirtuous feminine qualities is seen when Francisca asks for a lawyer after being read the one hundred and forty-four accusations against her. The Inquisitor denies her the ability to have a lawyer and tells her that the lawyer would only echo his advice to tell the truth. Francisca cannot win in this scenario because if she keeps asking for a lawyer then that gives the Inquisitor more leverage to say that she is prideful. However, if she follows the Inquisitor's advice and demonstrates obedience to him then she is without legal counsel and must defend herself alone against someone trained in the law.

In Francisca's trial defense, she is resolute in her beliefs and defends them with an unyielding conviction. This may be why vanity is so central in her denunciation. The Inquisitor continually questioned Francisca on how she could be sure that the visions were divine and not from another source. Her defense centered on her belief that if she had a shred of doubt about their origin then she would not have said anything to anyone. She stated that after every vision she would say "If this is from God, I accept it. If this is from the devil, I deny it."⁸⁰ Francisca's resolute nature pinned her into a dangerous predicament. Francisca's ability to hold knowledge and beliefs was not threatening but her ability to share it was.

⁸⁰ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, December 5, 1575, 93.

She was told that here she is not being told not to believe that she did not suffer those torments that she says she experienced nor all that about the devil speaking through her mouth or other such things,... and the decree and all the other revelations that she has talked about, she must not believe are from God... but rather an illusion of the devil or a weakness in her mind... and to speak about it is a thing worthy of great punishment...”⁸¹

The Inquisitor is allowing Francisca to have some semblance of internal autonomy over her beliefs; however, he is insistent that her internal beliefs remain internal. It seems like a negotiation is happening between Francisca and the Inquisitor over what level of autonomy she is allowed to have. Francisca wants both internal and external control over her beliefs and speech. The Inquisitor cannot allow her the level of external autonomy that she wants due to the potential of her spreading heretical and possibly demonic beliefs.

The Inquisitor pressed Francisca to be obedient to the Inquisition; consequently, to demonstrate her lack of vanity, she was expected to wholly accept the accusations against her. Francisca resisted this because if she said that the accusations were true and that her visions were a lie, then whatever credibility and religious authority she had would be taken away. She was pitted against herself in choosing between obedience to the Inquisition or obedience to what she felt was the truth. Choosing either decision, Francisca would lose something; however, going against the Inquisition most likely meant death for her.⁸² However, she eventually relents and agrees to take the Inquisitor’s opinion over her own.

She was told that it remains for her to say what opinion she has about those things and revelations, whether she believes that they were from God or from the devil.

She said that she will not make a determination about whether they were from God or from the devil any more than to say that whatever the Lord Inquisitor says and instructs her, that is what she will believe.⁸³

⁸¹ Ibid. February 14, 1576, 148

⁸² See earlier examples of inquisitorial trials resulting in relaxation to the secular arm.

⁸³ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, February 14, 1576, 147.

Ultimately, Francisca is required to show humility, obedience, and an inability to judge her own case in order to escape condemnation and death. This is a shift from her earlier protestations and it shows how effective the inquisitors were in shaping her view of herself and her own self-concept.

Before the trial could move on to the denunciation, the defendant needed to ratify their confession and trial record written by the scribe. There is a major shift in language by Francisca and she describes herself to be “as a woman ignorant” and “a person of little insight.” It is significant that in her final statement of the ratification of her case Francisca pleads that the two years she had spent in prison during her trial be considered as penance for “her ignorance, lunacy, and vanity.”⁸⁴ It is clear to see that Francisca was no longer defending herself against the accusations. Instead, she is embracing them, most likely as a show of obedience. At this stage of her trial, Francisca was not in a position to continue defending herself against the Inquisitor if she wanted to continue to live. As stated previously, the more that she argued with the Inquisitor, the stronger the case he could make that she was disobedient and vain. Her best defense now would be to acquiesce to the advice of the Inquisitor and take on all of her accusations as truth. Her deference pays off as in her sentencing it is said that “we recognize her good confession and the signs of repentance she has given.”⁸⁵

Francisca’s description of herself and her knowledge is in sharp contrast to how she described herself in a letter to her sister three years prior to the ratification of her trial. In a letter to Isabel Francisca states that “God knows I have not done anything out of negligence, but rather because I understood clearly that it was the will of God, since this is what I always want to do

⁸⁴ Trial of Francisca de los Apostóles, August 9, 1577, 156.

⁸⁵ Ibid. August 9, 1577, 156

even if it costs me my life.”⁸⁶ Francisca’s tone had shifted drastically in the time of three years and indicates two possibilities. On one hand, maybe she truly believed her Inquisitor and no longer supported her prior theological claims. On the other hand, it seems more likely Francisca realizes that she needs to act like a “reformed woman” in order to survive her trial.

In 1578, Francisca received her final sentencing.⁸⁷ The Inquisitors do not directly state the heresies that they are convicting her of but rather state that she should be punished for her “vanities and errors.”⁸⁸ Along with her denunciation, Francisca was forced to make an appearance at an *auto-de-fe* on April 14, 1578.⁸⁹ An *auto-de-fe* was a mass gathering of people who were found to be committing some form of heresy by the Inquisition. An *auto-de-fe* looked different for each individual since their crimes were different and warranted varying degrees of punishment.⁹⁰ While her trial was being read aloud for the public she was labelled “an arrogant, bold and miserable heretic, blasphemer and perjurer.”⁹¹ Socially these statements ruined Francisca; however, her punishment did not stop there. After these statements were read to the crowd, Francisca received one hundred lashes and was ordered to leave Toledo for a minimum of three years.⁹² Her reputation was completely degraded at this point and the Inquisition had ensured that there would be no platforms left for her.

⁸⁶ Ahlgren. *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 43.

⁸⁷ See Appendix C for sentencing.

⁸⁸ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, August 9, 1577, 157.

⁸⁹ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, August 9, 1577, 157.

⁹⁰ There were some cases where people were killed at an *auto-de-fe* and other cases where someone had already died so they simply burned an effigy. It also depends on how compliant you were with your Inquisitor during your trial. If you admitted to the heresy and promised that you had now learned better and would never do it again, your punishment was typically reduced to something less publicly humiliating or harmful. This might include an increase in confession, wearing certain penitent clothing, or saying a certain amount of prayers.

⁹¹ Ahlgren, *The Inquisition of Francisca*. 32.

⁹² Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, August 9, 1577, 158.

What happened after Francisca's banishment is unknown and up for speculation. One theory about Francisca after her banishment is that she went on to get married. This theory comes from her trial when the Inquisitor questioned Francisca on her relationship with a man. This man had claimed that he and Francisca had spoken while in custody of getting married after the trial was over. Although this could have been a ploy by the Inquisitor to get Francisca to confess to trying to leave the religious lifestyle and her chastity, it is plausible given the economic state of Toledo. Francisca needed a back-up plan in case the trial did not end in her favor. Her family had spent a great deal of money on her trial so they would not be in a position to take her back into their house and fund her religious aspirations. She would no longer be able to start a convent with her sister or live in a religious community since she was marked as a heretic, so she only had two options left. One of these options was prostitution, which her moral values would never accept. The second and more appealing option was marriage. Within marriage, Francisca could have a new start and be more socially and financially protected. We will likely never know the fate of Francisca de la Apostáles; nevertheless, her trial record stands as an example of resilience under adversity and oppression.

Conclusion

Francisca de los Apostáles' inquisitorial trial centers on her visions and alleged sin of vanity. Through the trial we can see how the Inquisitor leverages confidence and knowledge to challenge Francisca and her ability to be sure of herself. The methods that he used varied; however, in each one it is clear that he was trying to chip away at any authority or autonomy that Francisca had. Francisca is not special or remarkable in comparison to the treatment of other women under the Inquisition. She was not unique in how torture was suggested or how her status

as a woman made her susceptible to sin. Yet Francisca is notable in how she underwent three years of trial and managed to survive, especially with the overwhelming number of accusations brought against her.

Although in her eyes, Francisca's message was important, it also played a role in the end of her religious career. Her outspoken nature and resoluteness were seen as a rebellion against misogynistic inquisitional authority. Francisca was a member of the Toledan religious community and the platform she had been building for herself only made her more of a target. In essence the more she pursued her calling, the more highly she was putting herself at risk. Her trial proves this further in how the Inquisitor continually questioned how confident she could be in herself and that it would be an act of humility just to take on the charges put against her. Francisca was just one of many women that lived in this risk and struggled in their desire for autonomy and agency under social constraints that would rather see them silent.

Francisca's trial is worthy of study and there are many more questions that need to be explored regarding her case. One area that deserves additional study is a comparison of Francisca's trial with her sister Isabel's and her confessor Miguel's. These records were inaccessible for this paper. Within Isabel or Miguel's cases there might be additional material like how Francisca's letters and vows were in her portfolio. The three trials put together would be complementary to one another and give greater insight to Francisca's case.

Another way that Francisca's trial could be studied is through a comparison with other visionaries. One avenue that was almost pursued for this project was a comparison between Francisca and Teresa of Avila. Both women were in Toledo around the same time and were in contact with the Inquisition. This project would be better suited for a longer time frame since the

scope of material on Teresa is so large and finding connecting materials would be time consuming given the timeframe.

In conclusion, Francisca de los Apostóles' trial record serves as a powerful illustration of the marginalization of women during the Spanish Inquisition. The Inquisition's use of the label "vanity" to denounce women who defied social order and the methodology of Inquisitors to make the accused question their own reality highlights the ways in which women's authority and autonomy were subverted. Francisca's trial provides valuable insights into how women tried to counter this subversion and defend themselves against accusations of vanity. While her defense was ultimately unsuccessful, it shows her character and struggle to remain faithful to her religious ideals while advocating for herself.

Appendix A: Accusations Against Francisca

Accusation 8

“8. In addition, she said that her sister had experienced demons for the glory of God and was holier than many in heaven, and she named some of the holy martyrs, and when a certain person chastised her for saying that she grew angry with her because she had been contradicted.”⁹³

Accusation 22

“22. In addition, she boasted and said that while she was saying her prayers and fasting for the sins of pride in the world, she felt many legions of demons come over her of the kind who tempt people in this sin and that they tempted her to be very prideful and, while she was suffering these temptations, those demons came into her and through her mouth confessed to a certain person, whom she named, that they would let go of their stranglehold on humanity. And thus, she made satisfaction for the sins of the world.”⁹⁴

Accusation 24

“24. In addition, she said publicly that she was taught in spirit that she had to be the abbess of that convent; and that God would give her so much holiness that she would create anew the apostolic life; and that she would go about taking the power away from the demons who have darkened the state of humanity; and that this was a tremendous undertaking.”⁹⁵

Accusation 32

⁹³ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, January 5, 1576, 97.

⁹⁴ Ibid. 99.

⁹⁵ Ibid.

“32. In addition, she has walked about saying that her sister Isabel Bautista had to go to Rome to be received by the pope; and that the pope had to take her advice about how to rule the church; and that the matters of the church would be governed on the advice of five women who were to collaborate on these things; and that they would have to take the advice of these women, consulting them so that they would pray about things and be taught about God by them.”⁹⁶

Accusation 38

“38. In addition, she has said that when the points of her feet were on the floor and her body in the air Saint Peter had come; and that God had taken her as a spouse; and that He had sent him [i.e., Peter] to ask her father for permission to marry her; and that in her He had found a just and holy soul and she would make satisfaction for the world and sinners; and that she had asked for the dowry for her betrothal to God and she was given virtue to be holy or to resist temptation.”⁹⁷

⁹⁶ Trial of Francisca de los Apostóles, January 5, 1576, 100.

⁹⁷ Ibid. 101.

Appendix B: Francisca's Responses to Accusations

Accusation 8

“To the eighth point that was read to her, she said she certainly never said that nor does she remember hearing that.”⁹⁸

Accusation 22

“To accusation 22, she said that she has already confessed in her general confession to what this accusation says and that it does not happen the way this accusation says but rather how she confessed it in the confessions to which she refers.”⁹⁹

Accusation 24

“To accusation 24, she said it did not happen the way the accusation says and that what happened is that when the defendant had that struggle with the demons over the vices, as she has said, after it was all over she understood clearly the way the demons could make people offend god with those vices. And in satisfaction for those vices she understood the way that virtues could counter the same vices, as she has written in the vows that she has written in her own hand, which were contained in the box and recopied by Miguel Ruíz on some papers like a small book and that that is what happened and what this accusation says.”¹⁰⁰

Accusation 32

“To accusation 32, she says that she never said that, it is not true, and it did not happen to her.”¹⁰¹

Accusation 38

⁹⁸ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, January 27, 1576, 122.

⁹⁹ Ibid. January 28, 1576, 126.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid.

¹⁰¹ Ibid. 127.

“To accusation 38, she said that it is not that way and that what happened to her regarding the betrothal mentioned in the accusation is that after the victory of the devils, one day after receiving communion, the defendant gave thanks to Our Lord because He had given her that victory, asking Him that He give her those virtues to which she had committed herself against those vices. She felt a very great fervor in her heart and a great communication of the love of Our Lord, and she esteemed Our Lord greatly for what had happened with the devils. And in payment for that, the defendant felt within herself a desire that Our Lord be wed to her soul, and she felt a great movement in her heart out of that love that Our Lord communicated to her. And from that feeling, a great strength remained in her to resist all the vices and to exercise with ease the virtues that she had vowed to uphold. And that is what happened and what she has to say about this accusation.”¹⁰²

¹⁰² Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, January 28, 1576, 127.

Appendix C: Sentence Against Francisca De Los Apóstoles

We have followed with attention the acts and merits of this case and the guilt of Francisca de Avila, alias de los Apóstoles, and if we were to act within the rigor with which we can rightfully proceed we could punish her most gravely, but we recognize her good confession and the signs of repentance she has given. And for other reasons that move us, using kindness and mercy with her, we order that she be punished for these vanities and errors to give others an example and that she walk in this present auto de fe in person with a wax candle in her hands, a rope around her neck, where her sentence will be read, and that she abjure her fault de levi. And after that we order that she be given one hundred lashes on the customary streets of this city and her crime be read publicly and she be exiled from this said city of Toledo and five leagues around it for the time of three years, and if that exile is broken, this time will be doubled. And we warn her that from now on she must refrain from committing the crimes or any other similar ones and that if she does the opposite she will be punished with all due rigor. And this our sentence is to be spread as we pronounce it and order it.

Signed: El Doctor Juan de Llano de Valdés, El Licenciado Antonio Matos de Noroña, El Licenciado Alonso de Reinoso, and El Doctor Juan de Obregón.

[The auto de fe was held in the main square of the city on April 13, 1578, and Francisca abjured her errors. The lashes were administered on April 14, 1578.]¹⁰³

¹⁰³ Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, October 5, 1577, 157-158.

Bibliography

Primary

Apostáles, Francisca de los. *Vows of Francisca de los Apostáles, n.d.*, in *The Inquisition of Francisca*, ed. Gillian Ahlgren (University of Chicago Press, 2005)

Trial of Francisca de los Apostáles, 1575-1578, in *The Inquisition of Francisca*, ed. Gillian Ahlgren (University of Chicago Press, 2005)

Secondary

Addison, David. "Layperson, Ascetic, and Cleric in Iberian Christianity, c. 500-711," Oxford, England: University of Oxford Press, 2021.

Ahlgren, Gillian T. W. "Negotiating Sanctity: Holy Women in Sixteenth-Century Spain." *Church History* 64, no. 3 (1995): 373–88.

———. *Francisca de Los Apóstoles: The Inquisition of Francisca: A Sixteenth-Century Visionary on Trial*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2005.

Argüello, Gaspar Isidro de. "Instructions of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, Handled Summarily, Both Old and New (Madrid, 1627). Translated by LuAnn Homza." *The Spanish Inquisition 1478–1614: An Anthology of Sources*, n.d.

Bilinkoff, Jodi. *Related Lives: Confessors and Their Female Penitents, 1450-1750*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2005.

Dewey, RS. "The Latest Historian of the Inquisition." *American Catholic Quarterly Review* 13, no. 51 (1888): 385.

Fowler, Jessica J. "Assembling Alumbradismo:" In *After Conversion*, edited by Mercedes García-Arenal, 251–82. Iberia and the Emergence of Modernity. Brill, 2016.

Giordano, María Laura. "Proyecto Político y Aspiraciones Reformadoras En Las Cartas de Una Beata Del Siglo XVI En España." *Manuscripts: Revista d'història Moderna*, no. 17 (1999): 57–68.

Gonzalez, Cristina Cruz. "Beyond the Bride of Christ: The Crucified Abbess in Mexico and Spain." *The Art Bulletin* 99, no. 4 (2017): 102–32.

Hargadon, Andrew B, and R Daniel Wadhvani. "Theorizing with Microhistory." *Academy of Management Review*, 2022.

Homza, Lu Ann. "How to Harass an Inquisitor-General: The Polyphonic Law of Friar Francisco Ortíz." *A Renaissance of Conflicts: Visions and Revisions of Law and Society in Italy and Spain*, 2004, 299–336.

———. *The Spanish Inquisition, 1478-1614: An Anthology of Sources*. Indianapolis: Hackett Pub Co., 2006.

- Ingelbien, Raphaël. “Historical Fiction, Cultural Transfer and the Recycling of the Black Legend between the Low Countries and Britain.” In *Literary Hispanophobia and Hispanophilia in Britain and the Low Countries (1550-1850)*. Edited by Yolanda Rodríguez Pérez, 299–316. Amsterdam University Press, 2020.
- Kamen, Henry. *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2014.
- Lea, Henry Charles. *History of the Inquisition of Spain*. New York City and London: Macmillan, 1906.
- Paechter, Molly. “Microhistory as Ethnographic Exploration.” *Ethnographic Encounters* 11, no. 1 (2021): 12–18.
- Prescott, William Hickling. *History of the Reign of Ferdinand and Isabella, the Catholic*. Vol. 4. Routledge, 1895.
- Scully, Kathleen. “A Contradictory Subject: Reform, Resistance, and Holy Women in Early Modern Spain,” Thesis, Haverford University, 2022.
- Waite, Gary K. *Heresy, Magic and Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe*. Bloomsbury Publishing, 2019.