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The making of a transnational disaster saint

Francisco Borja, patron saint of earthquakes from the Andes to Europe

Monica Azzolini

How do saints acquire intercessory powers, and how are these powers functional in supporting and expanding their cult? How do saint cults travel and change over time to reflect both the local and global interests of political and religious powers? This essay attempts to answer these questions through the lens of one of the many ‘disaster saints’ that grace the pantheon of Catholic Christendom, St Francisco Borja (1510–1572). Through the story of how a painted image of Francisco Borja started to perspire miraculously and inexplicably in the small Andean town of Tunja in 1627, this essay investigates the relationship between nature and the divine in the deeply Catholic Kingdom of New Granada and suggests that this relationship was framed by local and political interests that supported, promoted and legitimised miraculous events aimed at cementing Borja's saintly reputation with the help of both the Jesuits and the local and global powers of the Spanish Empire.

In 1627, an image of Francisco Borja (1510–1572), 4th Duke of Gandia and prominent member of the Jesuit Order, started to perspire profusely under the eyes of a young boy in the small Andean town of Tunja, in modern-day Colombia. All attempts to dry up the picture were futile: the moisture kept resurfacing over and over. If this fact was not wondrous enough, with the passing of time the expression on Borja's face became increasingly sad and doleful, ‘as if to indicate a forthcoming calamity’.¹

Borja died in 1572, after devoting nearly 25 years of his life to serving God as a member of the Jesuit Order. During this period, he had raised through the ranks of the Order to the highest level, that of Superior General (the third member to take on that role). His earlier life as a Jesuit, however, was not without controversy and ambivalence, so much so that very early on he had a brush with the Inquisition due to his highly

unorthodox ideas.² Despite all of this, a few years before the events in Tunja, in 1624, Urban VIII had beatified him. By the seventeenth century, several *Lives* celebrated his heroic virtues and his miracles both when he was alive and after his death. Unsurprisingly, many of these works were written by Jesuits: they were clearly aimed at boosting the cult of the former Duke of Gandía to pave the way to the next step: his canonisation.³ It would take over 35 years, however, before Clement X canonised him in 1670; 35 years in which both the Jesuits and the House of Borja worked tirelessly to plead Francisco Borja's cause.

The story that will be recounted in this essay constitutes a neglected part of this saint's life and his canonisation, the latter of which took many years, involved numerous people, demanded great resources and produced a remarkable amount of documentation.⁴ The facts sketched briefly at the beginning of this essay constitute the rough contours of a story about the creation of a disaster saint cult in the Andes, a cult that then travelled back to Rome, Naples and other cities in Italy and Europe in the wake of other calamities. It is one of many stories that illustrate the way in which early modern men and women made sense of catastrophes and connected them to the divine.⁵ At a broader level, moreover, it is a story that exemplifies how earthquakes are never quite simply natural phenomena; they are cultural constructions that acquire social, political and cultural significance. In short, much like the case of the Magdeburg earthquake with which Grégory Quenet's monumental study of France opens, an earthquake is never just an earthquake. The 'curious history' of how the King of Prussia, Friederick William II forbid everybody from talking or even acknowledging the natural event for fear of being thrown in prison is indicative of the political and social import of these events. Small (like the Magdeburg earthquake) or big (like the famous Lisbon one), these events were never inconsequential, no matter the intensity or the damage.⁶ Finally, this is also a story of how cult-making is dependent on place and space, on power dynamics and on historical conditions that may determine both its development and its lasting success (or lack thereof, as in this case). The birth of this cult in the Andes, as we shall see, may not have been entirely accidental: it was Borja who had sent the first Jesuits to the Americas with the aim of converting the indigenous population through peaceful means. For this reason, both within and outside the order, Borja's name was strongly associated with the Jesuits' evangelisation of the New World.⁷

In this essay, I shall attempt to situate the case of St Francis Borja within the broader contours of political colonial power, natural disasters and the relationship between the Jesuits and the political establishment in the Iberian Empire, in Rome and in the Kingdom of Naples in the early years of the order. In doing so, I rely on incomplete evidence: while the miracle of Tunja is significant enough to have been transmitted in several sources, it seems that some of the documentation may have not made it as far as the Roman Curia: so far, I have been unable to locate this particular miracle among the numerous documents that constitute Borja's canonisation process.⁸

In exploring these historical events, my aim is threefold: to draw out the implications of this complex web of political and religious connections stretching across the Iberian Empire from Bogotá to Rome and the rest of Italy; to examine how conceptions of nature, sin and salvation in the early modern period shaped and were shaped by local religious and political interests; and, finally, to shed some light on the rich historiographical and textual tradition that sustained this cult from the moment it emerged until the dawn of the Enlightenment. In doing so, this case study represents an additional lens through which we can explore the cultural nature of disasters and the way they generated new forms of religiosity besides sustaining old ones.

A rebours: Seeking protection against earthquakes in enlightenment Bologna

When the city of Bologna was struck by an earthquake in June 1779 its civic, religious and intellectual community was seemingly unprepared. Tremors were felt already on 1 June 1779: the first earthquake stroke the city on the 4th of June (MCS VII), followed by another of similar intensity on the 10th, and another on the 14th. Two more earthquakes followed, on 23 November 1779 and 6 February 1780, leaving Bologna's citizens shaken and confused.⁹ Being unusual for its intensity in and around Bologna, this sequence of earthquakes left the community wondering about the most appropriate response. Copious correspondence between members of the Academy of Sciences of the Institute of Bologna and members of the Académie de Sciences in Paris as well as other documentation in the State Archives bear witness to the ample echo that the tremors had within the city and beyond.¹⁰ One of the most typical responses in these cases was

to create collective moments of expiation and community building in the form of religious processions and cults of intercession, and Bologna was no different from other places. Not without tensions and disagreement, for lack of a local cult devoted to these kinds of events, the city turned to the Virgin Mary and to Sant' Emidio for intercession.¹¹ As we shall see, however, other cults seem to have emerged within more localised communities.

The prolific Bolognese printer Stamperia di San Tommaso d'Aquino was quick to exploit the dramatic event for commercial purposes, publishing a series of works related to the theme of earthquakes. Three short books appeared in quick succession: a short history of earthquakes by the Olivetan monk Michele Augusti; a pamphlet detailing the meteorological conditions and the atmospheric phenomena surrounding the shocks and aftershocks of 1779–1780; and a religious text written by an anonymous Spanish priest entitled *Notizie della protezione speciale di S. Francesco di Borgia contro i terremoti*. These were followed by *De effectibus terraemotus in corpore humano* (1784) by the physician Vincenzo Domenico Mignani a few years later, indicating the lasting impact of the events among the Bolognese medical and scientific community.¹²

The variety of approaches presented by these publications suggests that they were targeting different audiences, but it is the religious text documenting the special protection against earthquakes offered by St Francis Borja that is most relevant here. While Bologna had no direct historical connection with the House of Borja, the city attracted numerous Spanish students and had long-standing connections with Rome and the Iberian Empire. Loyola had been a guest of the famous Real Colegio de España in Bologna.¹³ A visit by Francis Xavier to Bologna in 1537/1538, moreover, prepared the ground for the establishment of a Jesuit College in the city, which officially opened its doors in 1551. The Bolognese Jesuit College was always in stiff competition with the *Studium* to attract students, and this meant the Jesuits did not always have an easy life in Bologna; yet the Order was able to build a privileged relationship with one important historical figure, Cardinal Gabriele Paleotti (1522–1597), bishop and archbishop of Bologna (from 1567 and 1582, respectively) and a great patron of the arts and sciences. Paleotti looked at the Jesuits favourably and chose a Jesuit, Father Francesco Palmio (1518–1585), as his trusted confessor.¹⁴ In short, even in a city like Bologna, long-standing ties with both Spain and the Jesuits can explain the genesis of such a unique publication.

Despite its distance – geographical as well as temporal – from the New Kingdom of Granada, Bologna was not an utterly outlandish place where to trace the cult of Borja. The *Notizie* marks the end point of a long-lasting cult that started in the early seventeenth century with the miracle with which I opened this essay. To the best of my knowledge, this ephemeral publication survives in only four copies, all presently housed in or around Bologna. Its impact, therefore, may have been very limited. The story that it recounted, however, had a venerable pedigree that spanned the long swath of land and sea stretching from Tunja and Santa Fé di Bogotá, in the New Kingdom of Granada, to the Kingdom of Naples, Portugal and Spain (Figure 11.1). At some point after Borja's death, this cult consolidated into a set of events that celebrated Borja's ability to intercede with God in times of catastrophe.



Figure 11.1 Detail from the frontispiece of *Notizie della protezione speciale di S. Francesco di Borgia contro i terremoti raccolte da un sacerdote spaguolo divoto del santo* (Bologna, Stamperia di San Tommaso d'Aquino, 1780), showing the towns that had elected Francis Borja patron saint of earthquakes. Fondo Piancastelli. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Aurelio Saffi, Forlì.

The anonymous author of the *Notizie* explained how the cult of Borja emerged in Bologna: after the tremor of the 4th of June, a relic of the Spanish saint was exposed in the church of St Sigismund, right in the heart of the city, together with those of St Catherine of Saragozza (thus reinforcing the hypothesis of a Spanish origin of Borja's cult in Bologna). After a second, milder tremor, on 4 March (presumably of the following year), prayers were directed to Borja, together with St Joseph, Ignatius Loyola and Francis Xavier (this time bringing out the evident Jesuit connection).¹⁵ The anonymous Spanish priest also recounted how he had accidentally discovered a copper plate with the image of Borja in ecstasy in front of the consecrated host. The image was accompanied by the phrase: 'S. Francis Borgia, elected defender against the earthquakes first by the New Kingdom of Granada, then by the Kingdom of Naples under the authority of Innocent XII, then also by other cities, especially in Italy, Spain, and Portugal'.¹⁶ Bologna was only the last of a series of cities that had prayed for the saint's intercession.

In the opening pages of the work, the printer – possibly under the guidance of the author, possibly independently – included an image of the saint and the eucharist and a map of the places that elected him as patron saint (Figure 11.2). As historians of religion have pointed out, the iconography of Borja praying in front of the eucharist was based on the accounts of some biographers who reported how Borja was particularly devout to this practice and had addressed a letter to Loyola asking if the deep piety felt after communion, which engendered copious tears in his eyes, was appropriate. The picture thus functioned as a reminder of Borja's deepest moral qualities of humility and piety.¹⁷



Figure 11.2 Saint Francis Borja, Patron Saint of Earthquakes, venerating the Eucharist, in anon., *Notizie della protezione speciale di S. Francesco di Borgia contro i terremoti raccolte da un sacerdote spaguolo divoto del santo* (Bologna: Stamperia di San Tommaso d'Aquino, 1780), frontispiece. Fondo Piancastelli. Courtesy of the Biblioteca Aurelio Saffi, Forlì.

The image also encloses another iconographic detail that allows us to identify the saint, namely, the crowned skull, a reference to the moment of Borja's 'conversion' upon seeing the decomposing corpse of Queen Isabel of Portugal, Charles V's wife, a poignant representation of the transience of life and an apt metonymy for the Christian concept of *vanitas*.¹⁸ Borja's popularity in the Americas can be also evinced by the many colonial representations of the saint in salient moments of his life that are still extant.¹⁹ According to the author of the *Notizie*, it was the discovery of this particular image that encouraged him to write about Borja and his special powers of intercession: for this, as he indicated in the text, he drew both on Cardinal Alvaro Cienfuegos' *Vita* of Borja and on various other sources, both in manuscript and in print (including printed images, paintings and medals he had access to).²⁰

A patron saint of earthquakes is made in the New Kingdom of Granada: The evidence

The core of this Bolognese text articulates in chronological order events in the saint's life that God set in his path to 'train' (*esercitare*) him in his role of intercessor against earthquakes. From his illness at the age of 12 during an earthquake in a small town in the Kingdom of Granada, to the miraculous escape from the destruction of the convent dedicated to him (set up by his uncle, Ercole II d'Este, upon his visit in 1550) when the city of Ferrara was hit by a devastating earthquake in 1570, the author listed a series of events that hinted at how this special gift had punctuated Borja's life.²¹ These powers of intercession, however, were only fully understood after his death, and especially after the miracle of the New Kingdom of Granada with which I opened this essay.²² The second chapter of the *Notizie* emphasises how this event, at a time when Borja had just been made *beato*, finally revealed to the faithful of the New World his powers of intercession; according to the anonymous writer and his source (once again Cienfuegos), this event was instrumental to his canonisation. Drawing heavily on Cienfuegos' account, but also on other sources in Spanish and Portuguese he did not openly name, the anonymous author traced the broad contours of how the miracle happened in Tunja, and then explained how the cult spread, slowly but steadily, across southern Europe, first to the Kingdom of Naples, then to the Kingdom of Valencia, then

to Madrid and Seville and, finally, to Lisbon and Portugal when the region was hit by the ruinous earthquake of 1755.²³

It is not clear when the story of Borja's apotropaic powers against earthquakes crossed the ocean, moving from Tunja and Santa Fé to Europe. The process of canonisation was put in motion in 1607, well before the Tunja event, when a relic of Borja was credited with having miraculously healed Mariana de Padilla Manrique, daughter-in-law of Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas, Duke of Lerma and one of Borja's grandchildren.²⁴ The time seemed ripe to pursue Borja's canonisation and this also meant collecting testimonies of miracles. The Jesuit order was relatively new to the practice. Indeed, Loyola's first process of canonisation under Clement VIII in 1599 failed on the grounds that too few miracles had been attributed to the founder of the Order.²⁵ While Pedro de Ribadeneyra, who wrote Loyola's first *Vita* on behest of Borja, and Claudio Acquaviva, the fifth Superior General of the Order, were reluctant to overplay Loyola's miracle-making qualities,²⁶ the seven bound volumes of Borja's canonisation material, which together count thousands of pages, bear clear testimony that a hard lesson had been learned. The Jesuits and everybody else involved had a clearer understanding of what was needed to succeed beyond holy virtues: plenty of miracles. Borja's was a long-drawn case, but one that had a better chance of succeeding.

The petitions for the opening of Borja's process in 1611 were signed by the Duke of Lerma himself, but also by the Spanish monarch and high members of the Jesuit Order, clearly revealing that a strong partnership between the Borja family, the Crown and the Jesuits was there from the very beginning.²⁷ The Congregation of Rites headed by Cardinal Roberto Bellarmino approved these related processes in 1615. On 3 April 1617, Juan Esterlic, bishop of Drago, carried the official papers from Madrid to Rome, thus officially opening the second phase of the canonisation proceedings, the 'apostolic' phase.²⁸ The *processus ordinarius* material collected mainly in the Iberian Peninsula dates to 1611–1617, but the *processus apostolicus* did not come to a close until 1650–1651, and a further phase collecting new miracles continued until 1668, two years prior to his official canonisation under Clement X. This created an enormous amount of documentation in three languages: Spanish, Italian and Latin. I could count 163 witnesses that were interviewed just for the apostolic phase. Over a century after his

death, Francis Borja had made it to sainthood and these witness reports, and many others collected before, were crucial to its success.

Attempts to locate traces of the Tunja miracle in the huge amount of documentation about Borja's canonisation in the Archivio Apostolico Vaticano have so far come to nothing, but I have been able to locate other significant sources that corroborate and enrich Cienfuegos' account. The first is a short manuscript note in a miscellaneous printed collection held at the Biblioteca Casanatense in Rome entitled *Divotione a S. Francesco Borgia contro i Terremoti*.²⁹ As it turns out, this anonymous note is a translation of a passage in Pedro de Mercado's *Historia de la Provincia del Nuevo Reino y Quito de la Compañia de Jesús*, a Jesuit history of the Order in the Kingdom of New Granada which was not printed at the time, but that clearly circulated in manuscript well beyond the New World at the end of the seventeenth century.³⁰ As both the note and Mercado's original text explain, the cult of Borja patron saint of earthquakes started in Bogotá shortly after the sumptuous celebrations of 1624–1625 that took place following his beatification. Both Mercado and our anonymous scribe state that it was around this time that Borja was elected patron saint of earthquakes, as – the note vaguely explains – he had already proven himself to be efficacious in protecting the city of Santa Fé from tremors.³¹

What the manuscript note failed to include (but Mercado had fully documented) is that the lavish celebrations that took place in Bogotá were sponsored by no other than Borja's grandchild, Juan Buenaventura de Borja y Armendia, who at the time was holding the most powerful post in the region as General Captain of the Kingdom of New Granada and head of the Real Audiencia de Santa Fé de Bogotá, the high tribunal of the Spanish crown in the Kingdom of New Granada (a post that he held for twenty years).³² The other sponsors mentioned, unsurprisingly, were the top religious authorities in the region, especially the Archbishop of Santa Fé de Bogotá, Bogotá-born Ferdinando Arias de Uguarte, son of a local *encomandero*.³³ It was under the newly elected archbishop of Santa Fé de Bogotá, Julian de Cortézar, however, that progress was made to document Borja's intercessory powers against earthquakes. And this is where the events of 1627 in the small town of Tunja become especially relevant: the miracles of Tunja become a catalyst for renewed efforts to advocate for Borja's special powers. It is under Cortézar's

leadership that the local authorities collected vital testimonies to support the efforts of the Borja family and the Jesuits to further Francis Borja's canonisation.³⁴

A second, much more significant document records the numerous testimonies that Cortézar had collected and had planned to send to Rome.³⁵ At the start of this extraordinary document, Cortézar indicates that he had heard news of how within Sebastián de Mojica Buitrón's estate in Chitagoto, near the city of Tunja, there was a chapel that housed the image of St Francis Borja 'through which Our Lord operated some marvels and miracles' on the 6th of May of that year.³⁶ In order to shed light on these unusual events, which were witnessed by many people over the course of several days, Cortézar decided to send a commission to Tunja to investigate the facts and entrusted the vicar of Tunja, Sancho Ramírez de Figueredo, with the task of ascertaining the truth 'with due care and diligence' and then write a report about the events.³⁷ This report – as the notary Martin de Velasco, who collected the testimonies states – contained declarations (*autos*) about the miraculous events that occurred in Tunja and was to be sent to the archbishop 'closed and sealed through a trusted person' to make sure it reached him safely. The document was dated 13 September 1627.³⁸

Among the testimonies included, we can read that of the Franciscan brother, Adriano de Ribera, who visited the chapel in Tunja to give mass on the day of St John before the Latin Gate (the 6th of May) and witnessed how the image of St Francis Borja in that chapel exuded profusely and mysteriously. Initially, the sweat exuded from the face, hands and body. De Ribera and another Franciscan friar cleaned it and dried it up and then moved it to the centre of the altar, but the image started to exude sweat drops once again. This time only the face became wet and, Ribera testified, it was as if the saint was crying. The two friars cleaned the image from the tears and sweat once again and left. When they returned two days later, however, the image was once again wet. As they witnessed this phenomenon for eight to nine days in a row, news of the miraculous occurrence spread, and many people came to see Borja's exuding image.³⁹

But the miracles, unsurprisingly, did not end here: when Ana de Oquendo, the wife of Juan Gómez, head servant of Sebastian de Mojica Buitrón, was ill and crippled by pain, a cloth with the droplets collected from the exuding painting was applied locally and the woman was miraculously healed. Likewise, the daughter of Sebastian de Mojica Buitrón, who was unwell, was treated similarly and recovered. In his testimony, de

Ribeira also mentioned how the colour of the face of the saint changed from a moment to the other, first being very pale and then turning red like if the saint had exercised or was suffering. Moreover, his hand, which was holding a crucifix, opened and closed. De Ribeira asserted how he had seen these things with his own eyes, and he believed they were miraculous and supernatural. He concluded his testimony swearing to have told the truth and declaring his age (he was 37).⁴⁰

Subsequent testimonies corroborate the story of the first witnesses: they all confirmed that the image miraculously exuded droplets which, if collected on a cloth and applied, healed various illnesses. Among the testimonies, there is also that of Sebastian de Mojica Buitrón, the owner of the image. His account adds some details to the story. It was his children, he tells us, who saw the image exude for the first time. Sebastian had sent them to clean the chapel for the celebration of the Feast of St John before the Latin Gate, and it was his youngest, Luis, who was eight years old, who run back home to tell him that the image of Francis Borja was exuding profusely.⁴¹

The hazy details of these testimonies become much clearer once we read Cienfuegos' *La heroyca vida, virtudes, y milagros de el Grande San Francisco de Borja*, the key source of our eighteenth-century Bolognese text. Here Cienfuegos dedicates a chapter to the 'portentous image of Borja in the New Kingdom of Granada'.⁴² His account enriches our understanding of the events with key details. To start with, Cienfuegos mentions once again that Francisco Borja was elected patron saint of earthquakes after earth tremors in the Province of New Granada. Then he continues by introducing the story of the painting: he adds the interesting detail that the first owner of the painting was a Jesuit, who used to travel with it from town to town, until one day he lost it. A strong Jesuit connection is thus established. Then we are told that the painting was found by an indigenous man, and this man sold it to Sebastian de Mojica Buytron, who decorated his chapel with it. We also learn another important detail: Buytron's celebrations in honour of St John the Evangelist on 6 May were made to ask him to intercede with God and send away the locusts that had been plaguing his fields. We can only speculate that Buytron was already aware of Borja's powers of intercession against natural calamity, but the events clearly made the connection visible to all.

Cienfuegos then recounted how Buytron had sent his three children to the chapel to prepare it, and it was then that Luis de Mojica Buytron, Sebastian's youngest son

(who, Cienfuegos specified, was 'particularly innocent', and thus, we may assume, an extremely reliable witness) observed Borja's image crying and sweating, with the expression of somebody fainting. Luis ran to call his father, who verified the miracle. Tears were coming down from the portrait's eyes and forehead, and he had drops of blood on his left hand as if he had been crucified. Buytron sent two servants to call Father Pedro Zavaleta, the priest in charge of the chapel. Even the weather reflected the events happening within the confined space of the altar: the sky was ominously dark, and a storm was raging. Zavaleta tried to dry up the streams of water oozing off the painting, unsuccessfully. Zavaleta gave mass and prayed God to send an explanation for such an event; then he dried the painting a third time and left.⁴³ When they returned and found the image still oozing, they decided to remove it from the altar to check that the water did not have a direct source; but the wall was dry. Their conclusion was, therefore, that the water was coming from the canvas itself and that it was due to the 'aching heart' of Borja's portrait. They dried up the painting once again, they locked the church, and when they returned the same phenomenon had taken place. The image was exuding copious water. The same phenomenon repeated itself for 22 or 24 days.

The mayor of the neighbouring town of Duitama (also in modern-day Colombia), Don Martin de Berganza Gamboa, travelled to Tunja to see the miracle.⁴⁴ During his visit, once again, Borja's portrait exuded profusely, his hand holding the crucifix and opening and closing it as it had happened before. His complexion, moreover, changed colour from pale to red to dark. In Cienfuegos' words, everybody was astonished at the sight of what looked like a living portrait of a dying man.⁴⁵ Gamboa decided to write to the Archbishop of Santa Fé to ask for witness accounts to be collected to document the saint's posthumous *fama*.⁴⁶ But to make things particularly momentous, the earth started to tremble and shake the mountains around Tunja: 'the beautiful machine of nature' started to quiver.⁴⁷ Cienfuegos saw a strong connection between the catastrophic natural events and the miraculous vision of the suffering Borja: around the same days, the dead body of Borja was being transferred to Spain to be buried in the Jesuit professed house in Madrid built for this very purpose by the 1st Duke of Lerma, Francisco Gómez de Sandoval y Rojas. The process, however, had been a contested one, and Cienfuegos connected openly the pain expressed by the painting with the treatment of Borja's remains and with the death of Borja's grandson, Juan Borja y Armendia, the

President of the Real Audiencia de Santa Fé de Bogotá.⁴⁸ But there were also some positive effects: the drops and tears exuded by the image could heal: this was the case of Sebastiana, the daughter of Sebastian de Mojica Buytron, who was healed miraculously when her life was in peril; and also of Ana de Oquendo, one of Buytron's servants. The miraculous water treated also both deafness and blindness.⁴⁹

As noted, the new archbishop of Santa Fé, Julian Cortézar, initiated the investigation, and many of the towns in the area declared Borja their patron saint to protect them from calamities like droughts and earthquakes. The major authorities involved, including the rector of the Jesuit College and the Provincial superior, wrote to Urban VIII pledging for Borja's canonisation. Yet, not all the cities in the region had initially elected the saint as their patron and intercessor. However, when in 1641 the earth trembled again, their people run to Santa Fé to pray at the Church of its patron, Francisco Borja, and vow their devotion to him – and the earthquake stopped. Borja was seen as the intercessor between the inhabitants of the Kingdom and the natural powers of air and earth: it was he who could placate the elements in the name of God. Not too far away from where these events took place, in present-day Ecuador, another Borja, Francisco Borja y Aragon, Principe de Esquilache (Squillace), Viceroy of Lima, funded the city of San Francisco de Borja extending ‘the fame of his grandfather from place to place’.⁵⁰ Political power, the religious authorities and local personalities all conspired to make Francisco Borja a disaster saint of the Andes.

The cult crosses the Atlantic: Borja's cult in Rome and the Kingdom of Naples

The birth and development of the cult of Borja in the Andes reflects the power of the Borja family within the Kingdom of New Granada, but also of the Jesuits as a religious order deeply linked with Spanish political power. But the story of Francisco Borja, patron saint of earthquakes and calamities, does not end here. As stressed also by Ida Mauro, who focused on documents that trace the cult in the Kingdom of Naples, all branches of the family worked collectively towards Borja's canonisation, and not just in the Americas. It is not a by chance that the rise of Borja's cult within the Kingdom of Naples coincided with a series of strategic marriages between important local

aristocratic families and the Borja throughout the sixteenth century, while the Jesuits were establishing themselves more firmly in the region.⁵¹ The earliest trace of Borja as patron saint of earthquakes in Italy seems to date to the years around 1688, when, following a devastating earthquake near Benevento, Francisco Borja was elected patron saint of Massa Lubrense – a town that had had two Borgias (a Girolamo and a Giovan Battista) as bishops – and Naples. The sponsor of the cult was Francisca de Aragón y Sandoval (1647–1697), wife of the Viceroy, distantly related to Borja via both the Aragón and Sandoval blood lines.⁵² The links with the Kingdom of Naples and its cities, however, predated the terrible events of 1688; they go back as far as 1624, the year of Borja's beatification, when the wife of the then Viceroy was Catalina de la Cerda y Sandoval (1580–1648), daughter of Francisco de Sandoval y Rojas, 1st Duke of Lerma, and great-granddaughter of Francisco Borja. With a charitable act, Catalina bequeathed a considerable sum of money to the Jesuit College dedicated to St Francis Xavier that was being built but she asked that it be dedicated to both Xavier and 'the Blessed Francisco Borgia'.⁵³ Despite the fact that the construction of the Jesuit College was severely delayed, the building was finally inaugurated in 1665. In 1671, the Neapolitan Jesuits were thus able to celebrate Borja's canonisation with great pomp.⁵⁴

As Mauro highlights, the accounts of the celebrations of Borja's canonisation are revealing of substantial synergies between the Spanish political power, represented by the Viceroy, Pedro Antonio de Aragón (whose brother was once married to Marianna de Sandoval y Rojas, Duchess of Lerma and thus, a Borja) and the Jesuits. The procession's path across the city was typical of the celebrations dedicated to Naples' patron saints like San Gennaro.⁵⁵ It is not surprising that the staging of these celebrations included an image of Borja praying in front of the Eucharist. The catalyst of Borja's success in the Kingdom may have been the earthquake that hit the region around Naples on 8 September 1695: the people of the kingdom turned their gaze to Borja pleading for his intercession (who, in the meantime, had also acquired the additional power of intercession against tertian fever!).⁵⁶ It was the Viceroy at the time, the Count of Santisteban, and his wife, Francisca de Aragón y Sandoval, who elected Borja patron saint of Naples, as Cienfuegos documented copying a passage from a Spanish publication that reminded his readers that Catalina de la Cerda y Sandoval had been instrumental in introducing the cult.⁵⁷ In this way, Borja was admitted officially to

the pantheon of Neapolitan patron saints – over 50 – responsible for protecting Naples from calamity.⁵⁸

As it has been pointed out, the cult was sponsored by the highest levels of the Neapolitan aristocracy, but lacked the fervour characteristic of other, more popular cults. It is for this reason, probably, that it is not still present within the religious social fabric of Naples and neighbouring cities, unlike others, and particularly St Januarius. Yet, the cult of Borja left traces well beyond Naples, demonstrating that even when not directly connected with the political parties that had created the compelling narrative of his intercessory powers, the Jesuit order continued to promote his cult, through devotional practices as well as textual transmission.⁵⁹ The Suppression of the Order in the eighteenth century, however, must have weakened the cult of Jesuit saints sufficiently to erase it from more recent memory.

Conclusions

Why did communities as far apart as Bogotá, Naples and Bologna elect a disaster saint? And why Francis Borja? Fear (of God), it has been pointed out by numerous historians, is an emotion so deeply rooted in Catholicism and in other Abrahamic religions to make it impossible to separate fear and guilt from these faiths. Medieval practices of confession and penance had only made this theology of sin, both individual and collective, more articulate and refined over time. Indeed, according to French historian Jean Delumeau, this emphasis on death, the wrath of God, and the inescapability of divine judgement is a key trait of the Western modern self.⁶⁰ At the same time, natural disasters, with their disruptive force and with their unpredictability, naturally engender deep uncertainty and fear. Therefore, to the social and political crises that formed the backdrop of Delumeau's 'Western guilt culture' – plague epidemics, protracted wars, riots and rebellions – we can certainly add natural disasters such as earthquakes.⁶¹ The disruptive nature and sudden onset of an earthquake could provoke fear, both mortal and soteriological.⁶² If we then add the fact that pre-moderns had a very imprecise understanding of the cause of earthquakes that veered between the divine and the natural, it is not hard to understand why in a Catholic worldview, natural disasters could be interpreted as the action of an angry God.⁶³

A rich array of historical figures populates the pantheon of Christian saints, and some of these, as in Borja's case, came to be associated with natural disasters. The use of these intermediaries is as old as Christianity, and this practice was both powerfully reaffirmed and expanded after the Council of Trent.⁶⁴ The use of saint cults was clearly functional to the process of evangelisation of the Americas, and the cult of Borja described in this essay is just one example among many of how the process of beatification and canonisation could intersect with evangelisation within the framework of Jesuit expansion and conversion. This does not mean, however, that the symbols and the figures that acted as mediators between God and its people were always the same across time and space. The choice of a specific intermediary to venerate was not casual. The factors that contributed to this choice could be multiple. As Borja's case amply illustrates, the election of patron saints was often a political affair: the elevation of Borja as patron saint of earthquakes in the New Kingdom of Granada saw the concerted effort of the Jesuits and the Borjas, and it was dictated by the need to support the cult as much as possible through the collection (one could even say 'creation') of miraculous stories that would amplify the cult locally to the point of generating documentation that could be sent to Rome through the channel of local religious hierarchies. Once established, moreover, this cult could be transferred to faraway places: once Borja's intercessory powers against earthquakes and other calamities were known, other calamitous events could be associated with his name, promulgating the cult, but also potentially multiplying the examples that could end up in the hands of the Roman religious tribunals in charge of his canonisation. This was indeed the case in Naples, where the presence of various descendants of the Saint in the capital of the Kingdom made it possible by 1695 for St Francis Borja to become one of the patron saints of the city.⁶⁵ But even this act, which was generally driven by popular devotion, was orchestrated by the Viceroy, thus revealing the deep connections between the Borjas, other Spanish and Neapolitan families and the Jesuits.⁶⁶ To make a saint, and especially a disaster saint, nature needed to be read both politically and theologically. Calamities could be signs of God's wrath, but they were also powerful instruments of social containment and control to be deployed for the political advancement of both the aristocracy and the clergy. Through rituals of expiation and collective demonstrations of contrition, disasters could restore order and promote the interests of the clergy and

local governments. Within a society that ultimately rested on the authority of God, the destructive power of nature could be appeased through the intercession of old and new figures, all of whom served the purpose of abating fear and restoring faith.

Acknowledgements

In writing this essay, I incurred many debts: I am very grateful to Rodrigo Cacho for kindly lending his precious expertise in Spanish palaeography at a crucial time in the development of this project. I wish to thank the students and colleagues who attended the Shelby Cullom Davis Center Seminar at Princeton University in April 2017 for listening to a very early incarnation of this story. My deepest thanks go also to Simon Ditchfield, Jonathan Greenwood, Domenico Cecere and the colleagues of the York Workshop 'Saints and Science', who discussed with me some of this material as I was working through it in 2018. A final thank you goes to the editors, Ovanes Akopyan and David Rosenthal, for inviting me to present a shorter version of this paper at the RSA in 2019. The anonymous reader's comments and the editors' constructive criticism have improved this essay substantially. All errors remain my own.

Notes

1

Notizie della protezione speciale di S. Francesco di Borja contro i terremoti (Bologna: Stamperia di S. Tommaso d'Aquino, 1780), pp. 17–8. The earliest printed account of these events I could find is in Àlvaro Cienfuegos, *La heroyca vida, virtudes, y milagros del grande S. Francisco de Borja*, available in various editions (1702, 1717, 1726, 1754). I have used Cienfuegos, *La heroyca vida* (Madrid: Bernardo Peralta, 1726), bk. 7, chap. 8, pp. 590–95.

2

Stefania Pastore, 'Francisco de Borja, santo', in *Dizionario storico dell'Inquisizione*, 4 vols, ed. by Adriano Prosperi et al. (Pisa: Edizioni della Normale, 2010), vol. 2, pp. 622–24. On Borja and his time, see *Francisco de Borja y su tiempo: política, religión y cultura en la Edad Moderna*, edited by Enrique García Hernán and Maria del Pilar Ryan (Valencia; Rome: Albatros Ediciones and Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2012); Enrique García Hernán, *Francisco de Borja, Grande de España* (Valencia: Ediciones Alfonso el Magnánimo, 1999); Maria del Pilar Ryan, *El Jesuita secreto. San Francisco Borja* (Valencia: Biblioteca Valenciana, 2008) with earlier bibliography.

3

On early biographies, see now Henar Pizarro Llorente, 'Política y Santidad: los biógrafos de San Francisco de Borja durante el Barroco', in *La Corte del Barroco. Textos literarios, avisos, manuales de la corte, etiquetas y oratoria*, edited by Antonio Rey Hazas, Mariano de la Campa Gutiérrez, and Esther Jiménez Pablo (Madrid: Ediciones Polifemo, 2016), pp. 685–712. See also below.

4

Amparo Felipo Orts, 'La actitud institucional ante el proceso de canonización de san Francisco de Borja', in *Francisco Borja y el suo tiempo*, pp. 59–78; Archivio Apostolico Vaticano (AAV; formerly Archivio Segreto Vaticano), Congr. Riti, Processus NN 2443–2447.

5

For a wealth of examples and references, see now Rienk Vermij, *Thinking on Earthquakes in Early Modern Europe. Firm Beliefs on Shaky Ground*, London-New York, Routledge, 2021, pp. 22–5, and part 2 ('Early modern confessionalized science'). For some eloquent case studies exploring the connection between natural disasters, religion and politics that have shaped my approach, see the essays of Gerrit Schenk, Elaine Fulton and Grégory Quenet in *Historical Disasters in Context: Science, Religion and Politics*, edited by Andrea Janku, Gerrit Jasper Schenk, and Franz Mauelshagen (London-New York, Routledge, 2012).

6

Grégory Quenet, *Les tremblements de terre aux XVIIe et XVIIIe siècles: La naissance d'un risqué* (Seysse: Champ Vallon, 2005), pp. 7–12. Quenet remains the most impressive and thorough cultural study of earthquakes in early modern Europe.

7

Borja promoted three separate missions, one in 1567, another one in 1569, and a third one in 1572. Sergi Doménech García, 'La imagen de San Francisco de Borja y el discurso de la Compañía de Jesús', in *Francisco der Borja y su tiempo*, p. 325.

8

AAV, Congr. Riti, Processus NN 2443–2447. I checked these volumes swiftly in the summer of 2017, and I have been unable to return to the AAV since to conduct more

thorough research. The processual documents amount to thousands and thousands of pages.

9

Historical data and further details can be found in Emanuela Guidoboni et al., “CFTI5Med, the New Release of the Catalogue of Strong Earthquakes in Italy and in the Mediterranean Area,” *Scientific Data*, 6, 80 (2019), doi: <https://doi.org/10.1038/s41597-019-0091-9>. Details about the documents identified so far about this particular event are at: <http://storing.ingv.it/cfti/cfti5/quake.php?o2388IT>

10

These documents will be the topic of a separate article.

11

Archivio di Stato di Bologna (henceforth ASBo), Governo misto, Senato, Filze, vol. 105 (1779), Preghiere pubbliche per la disgrazia del terremoto, Bologna, 5 giugno 1779 (fol. 246r-v); Voto pubblico per la disgrazia del terremoto, Bologna, 11 giugno 1779 (fols. 266r-267v); Voto pubblico per la disgrazia del terremoto, Bologna 19 giugno 1779 (fols. 302r-304v); Governo misto, Senato, Filze, vol. 106 (1780), Elezione di Sant’Emidio Patrono, Bologna, 8 e 16 agosto 1780 (fols. 305r-307v); Decretum super electione sanctorum in Patronos a Sac. Rit. Congreg. de ordine SS.mi D.ni N.ri, Urbani VIII (fol. 309r-v); Documentazione relativa alla costruzione nella piazza di Castel S. Pietro di una statua dedicata alla Beata Vergine del Rosario per la liberazione dal terremoto, Bologna, 22 agosto 1780 - 4 dicembre 1780 (fols. 594r-596r); Governo misto, Senato, Partiti, reg. 42 (1778-1783), Provvedimento deliberativo del Senato di Bologna relativo alle messe da celebrare in onore della Madonna in seguito ai terremoti, Bologna, 19 giugno 1779 (fols. 66v-67r); Provvedimento deliberativo del Senato di Bologna relativo alla concessione a favore dell’arciconfraternita del Santissimo Rosario per erigere una statua dedicata alla Beata Vergine per la liberazione dal terremoto, Bologna, 18 dicembre 1780 (fol. 126v). Governo misto, Senato, Vacchettoni, reg. 80 (1778-1779), verbale di seduta del Senato di Bologna relativo alla esposizione di immagini sacre e alla proibizione degli spettacoli pubblici in seguito ai terremoti, Bologna, 5 giugno 1779; verbale di seduta del Senato di Bologna relativo alle cerimonie da officiare in onore della Madonna in seguito ai terremoti, Bologna, 19 giugno 1779; verbale di seduta del Senato di Bologna relativo alle messe da celebrarsi in onore della Madonna in seguito ai terremoti, Bologna, 26

novembre 1779. For the controversy that arose between the magistrate of the Anziani Consoli and the Senate regarding the religious processions for the Virgin's intercession, see ASBo, Archivio Salina-Amorini-Bolognini, b. 526, Atti del Senato di Bologna per il terremoto del 1779.

12

Dei terremoti di Bologna. Opuscoli di d. Michele Augusti monaco olivetano (Bologna: Stamperia di San Tommaso d'Aquino, 1780) (a second, augmented edition appeared later in the same year); *Lettera risponsiva ad altra in cui richidevasi, che diligentemente si notasse quanto accadeva in Bologna in occasione de' terremoti dello scorso anno 1779* (Bologna: Stamperia di San Tommaso d'Aquino, 1780); *Notizie della protezione speciale di S. Francesco di Borgia contro i terremoti* (Bologna: Stamperia di S. Tommaso d'Aquino, 1780); Vincenzo Mignani, *De effectibus terraemotus in corpore humano* (Bologna: Stamperia di San Tommaso d'Aquino, 1784).

13

Originally founded in 1364, the institution received the royal title in 1530, during Charles V's momentous visit to the city. Together with the Collegio dei Fiamminghi, it is the only remaining college to represent the *nationes* of the University of Bologna and it is still fully operating.

14

Paul Grendler, *The Jesuits and Italian Universities, 1548–1773* (Washington: The Catholic University of America Press, 2017), pp. 282–83.

15

Notizie, p. 6. The triad Loyola-Borja-Xavier had become a shorthand for the Jesuits' evangelisation of, respectively, Europe, the Americas and Asia. Doménech García, 'La imagen de San Francisco de Borja y el discurso de la Compañía de Jesús', pp. 325–32. On the Jesuits in Bologna, dated but still useful are Natale Fabrini S.J., *Lo Studio pubblico di Bologna ed i gesuiti* (Bologna: Parma, 1941); idem, *Le congregazioni dei gesuiti a Bologna* (Roma: Stella Matutina, 1946). An overview is offered in *Dall'Isola alla Città. I gesuiti a Bologna*, edited by Gian Paolo Brizzi and Anna Maria Matteucci (Bologna: Nuova Alfa Editoriale, 1988), with bibliographical references. On the Jesuits' expulsion from Spain and Portugal and Spanish overseas territories in 1759 that led to many of them living in the Papal States, including Bologna, see *La presenza in Italia dei gesuiti iberici espulsi*.

Aspetti religiosi, politici, culturali, edited by Ugo Baldini and Gian Paolo Brizzi (Bologna: CLUEB, 2010).

16

Notizie, p. 1. Antonio Pignatelli, later Pope Innocent XII, may have had an interest in supporting the cult of an earthquake saint as he probably experienced the Sannio earthquake of 1688. See my 'Coping with Catastrophe: St Filippo Neri as Patron Saint of Earthquakes', *Quaderni Storici*, 52, 3 (2017), pp. 727–50.

17

Doménech García, 'La imagen de San Francisco de Borja', p. 321. See Pedro de Ribadeneira, *Vida del Padre Francisco de Borja* (Madrid: En casa de P. Madrigal, 1592), pp. 320–22; Ivan Eusebio Nieremberg, *Vida del santo padre, y gran siervo de Dios el B. Francisco de Borja* (Madrid: Maria de Quiñones, 1644), pp. 45–7. The image of the Spanish saint in ecstasy in front of the eucharist is common to other sources of the saint, like the *Epitome de la vida de San Francisco de Borja* (Naples: Parrino & Mutio, 1695). In the two editions I consulted, the images (which are different in the two copies but portray the same iconography) were not accompanied by the writing that attributed to Borja the election of patron saint of earthquakes. The two copies are, respectively, in Biblioteca Nazionale Centrale, Roma, and at the Complutense in Madrid.

18

This is also a common iconographic theme, possibly the most common as it is sometimes presented alone, sometimes in composite iconographies. See Doménech García, 'La imagen de San Francisco de Borja' and Wilfredo Rincón García, 'Iconografía de San Francisco de Borja en el arte español', in *Francisco der Borja y su tiempo*, pp. 415–37 (pp. 417–23).

19

See Doménech García's 'La imagen de San Francisco de Borja' as well as the many images available in *PESSCA, Project on the Engraved Sources of Spanish Colonial Art* under 'Francis Borgia' at: <https://colonialart.org/archives/subjects/saints/individual-saints/francis-borgia#c478a-1695b> (last accessed 3 November 2021).

20

Notizie, p. 7.

21

Notizie, p. 7.

22

Notizie, pp. 9–14. On the Ferrarese earthquake, see Craig Martin, *Renaissance Meteorology: Pomponazzi to Descartes* (Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011), pp. 60–79; Vermij, *Thinking on Earthquakes*, pp. 115–19.

23

Notizie, pp. 23–25 (on Naples); pp. 26–33 (on Valencia); pp. 33–36 (on Aragona); pp. 36–9 (on Madrid); pp. 39–45 (on Seville); pp. 45–8 (on Lisbon).

24

Pedro Suau, S.J., *Historia de S. Francisco de Borja, Tercer General de la Compañia de Jesus (1510–1572)* (Zaragoza: Hechos y Dichos, 1963), p. 445. On these early phases of the process, see also Orts, ‘La actitud institucional ante el proceso’, p. 65.

25

Simon Ditchfield, ‘Coping with the *Beati moderni*: Canonisation Procedure in the Aftermath of the Council of Trent’, in *Ite infiammae omnia: Selected historical papers from conferences held at Loyola and Rome in 2006*, ed. by Thomas McCoog (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 2006), pp. 413–40; Miguel Gotor, *I beati del papa. Santità, Inquisizione e obbedienza in età moderna* (Florence: Olschki, 2002), pp. 57–65, Bradford A. Bouley, *Pious Postmortems. Anatomy, Sanctity, and the Catholic Church in Early Modern Europe* (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2017), p. 23.

26

Ditchfield, ‘Coping with the *Beati moderni*’, pp. 415–23.

27

Bouley, *Pious Postmortems*, pp. 26–7. See also Carmen Sanz Ayán, ‘La canonización de Francisco de Borja: una lectura política’, in *Francisco de Borja en su tiempo*, pp. 73–92.

28

Suau, *Historia de S. Francisco de Borja*, p. 445.

29

Biblioteca Casanatense, Rome, Vol. Misc. 739, *Divotione a S. Francesco Borgia contro gli Terremoti*, n.p.

30

Pedro de Mercado (1620–1701) was enviably placed to recount the history of the Order in the New Kingdom of Granada. He was born in Riobamba, Ecuador, and died in Bogotá. He entered the Order in 1636 and was rector and teacher at the Jesuit College of Tunja, among other places. For a short biography, see Hernán Rodríguez Castelo, 'Mercado, Pedro', at <https://dbe.rah.es/biografias/20672/pedro-mercado> (last accessed 21 November 2021); for a richer account of Mercado's life and his *Historia*, see José del Rey Fajardo, *Los Jesuitas en Venezuela*, 2 vols (Caracas; Bogotá: Universidad Católica Andrés Bello; Pontificia Universidad Javeriana, 2006), vol. 1, pp. 247–69.

31

Pedro de Mercado, S.J., *Historia de la Provincia del Nuevo Reino y Quito de la Compañía de Jesús*, 4 vols (Bogotá: Empress Nacional de Publicaciones, 1957), vol. 1, p. 86: "En este con un acuerdo y con afectuosa devoción se eligió a San Francisco de Borja por patrón y abogado contra los temblores que hacían estremecer esta tierra y la ponían en peligro de asolar las casas y matar a sus moradores. Tomó este santo grande a su cargo el patrocinio como lo ha experimentado esta ciudad de Santa Fé en la cesación de sus terremotos."

32

Don Juan de Borja y Matheu was born in Gandia, Spain, his father was Fernando de Borja y Castro and his lover, Violante Matheu de Armendia. On the Borjas in the Americas, including Juan Bonaventura, see Manuel Garcia Rivas, 'Los Borjas americanos: su contribución al mundo de la cultura', *Revista Borja. Revista de l'Institut Internacional d'Estudis Borgians*, 5 (2016), 1–15.

33

Mercado, S.J., *Historia de la Provincia del Nuevo Reino y Quito*, vol. 1, p. 86: "Acerca de las fiestas con que la ciudad de Santa Fé celebró la beatificación de nuestro padre San Francisco de Borja en el año de seiscientos y veinte y cinco, no me han dado las *Annuae* más que unas noticias en común diciendo que se hicieron unas reales y suntuosas fiestas. Y para entender en particular cuán suntuosas y reales fueron, no es necesario más que saber que las hizo el señor don Joan de Borja nieto del Santo Padre y presidente de todo este Nuevo Reino de Granada."

34

Ferdinando Arias de Uguarte was moved to Caracas and died in 1628.

35

Biblioteca Nacional de Colombia (BNC), Ms RM 183, fols. 50–83: “Nos el doctor don Jullian de Cortazar electo arcobipo de el Nuevo Reyno de Granada de el Consejo de su Magestas [*sic* Majestas] etc habemos saver a el Vicario de la cividad de Tinja como por nos seproveyo un auto de el thenor siguiente [...]” (fol. 50r). I wish to express my deepest gratitude to the staff of the BNC, in particular Drs. Camilo P. Jaramillo and Paola Londoño for locating, scanning, and sending me the document free of charge after my initial inquiry. See also Juan Manuel Pachecho, S.J., *Los Jesuitas en Colombia, Tomo 1 (1567–1654)* (Bogotá: San Juan Eudes, 1959), pp. 174–75.

36

BNC, RM 183, fol. 50r: “En questa una ymagen de San Francisco de Borja por la qual asido Nuestro Señor servido de obrar algunas maravillas y milagros.”

37

BNC, RM 183, fol. 50r: “[...] y para que se averigue y sepa la verdad [...] mando se despache commision a el vicario de la cividad de Tunja para que personalmente con el cuyda doy diligencia que el caso pide haga ynformacion de todo lo contenido.”

38

BNC, RM 183, fol. 50r: “La relacion de [fusso?] y haga los demas autos que coniungan para que conto da claridad seben siguen los dechos milagros y la zerticumbre de ellos y hecha la dicha ynformacion cerrada y sellada con cuenta y rrazon y numeracion de hojas orginalmente con persona de confianza.” The signatures and dates are on fol. 50v.

39

BNC, RM 183, fols. 52v–53v.

40

BNC, RM 183, fols. 52v–54v.

41

BNC, RM 183, fol. 58v. Sebastian's testimony is one of the longest and can be found at fols. 58v–62v.

42

Cienfuegos, *Vida*, p. 590.

43

Cienfuegos, *Vida*, p. 591.

44

Gamboa's witness account is in BNC, RM 183, fols. 54v–56r.

45

Cienfuegos, *Vida*, p. 592.

46

Cienfuegos, *Vida*, pp. 591–92.

47

Cienfuegos, *Vida*, 592.

48

Cienfuegos, *Vida*, p. 592.

49

Cienfuegos, *Vida*, p. 593.

50

Cienfuegos, *Vida*, pp. 592–93.

51

Ida Mauro, 'La diffusione del culto di San Francesco Borgia a Napoli tra feste pubbliche e orgoglio nobiliare', *Revista Borja. Revista de l'Institut Internacional d'Estudis Borgians*, 4 (2012), 449–560 (549–51).

52

Mauro, 'La diffusione del culto', pp. 557–58. See also ARSI, Post. Gen. 69, "Flagellata da spessi terremoti la nobilissima Città di Napoli s'atterri sopra modo nelli 8 di Settembre del 1694" (on the 1694 earthquake), which mentions also the 1688 earthquake.

53

Saverio Santagata, *Istoria della Compagnia del Gesù appartenuta al Regno di Napoli*, 4 vols (Naples: Vincenzo Mazzola, 1755–1757), vol. 4, p. 319, cited in Mauro, 'La diffusione del culto', p. 554.

54

Mauro, 'La diffusione del culto', pp. 554–55.

55

Mauro, 'La diffusione del culto', p. 555.

56

Cienfuegos, *Vida*, p. 593.

57

Possibly from the *Relación de los Milagros que Dios nuestro señor ha obrado por una imagen del glorioso Padre San Francisco de Borja, en el Nuevo Reino de Granada, sacada de los procesos originales de la información y aprobación que dello hizo el ilustrísimo señor don Julián de Cortázar, arzobispo de Santafé*, 1629.

58

Cienfuegos, *Vida*, pp. 556–57. On the rich array of patron saints of the city, see the classic study of Jean-Michel Sallman, *Naples et ses saints à l'âge baroque (1540–1750)* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1994).

59

Abundant documentation about the cult and seventeenth-century celebrations in Lecce, Messina, Paola, Cremona, Mantova, Ascoli, but also Regensburg exist in ARSI, Postulazione Generale, 69. On its presence in Sicily, see now Valeria Enea, 'Seeking the Protector Saint: Cults and Devotions in Palermo after the 1693 Earthquake' 1693', in *Heroes in Dark Times. Saints and Officials Tackling Disaster (16th-17th Centuries)*, ed. by Milena Viceconte, Gennaro Schiano and Domenico Cecere (Rome: Viella 2023), 287-303 (on Borja, see 297-301).. I wish to thank Valeria Enea for kindly sharing her article with me before publication.

60

See Jean Delumeau, *Sin and Fear: The Emergence of a Western Guilt Culture, 13th–18th centuries* (New York: St Martin's Press, 1990). Fear is, of course, a thoroughly human emotion shared by different cultures and civilizations. Its social and political dimensions, therefore, are not unique to Catholicism. Similarly, the link between religious deities and punishment is a theme that runs through various cultures and civilizations from antiquity onwards.

61

See Delumeau's influential, *Le péché et la peur: La culpabilisation en Occident. 13–18. Siècles* (Paris: Fayard, 1983).

62

Early modern Catholics were terrified of dying suddenly, as this threatened their salvation by hindering repentance and the chance of receiving the last rites. For an

exploration of this theme, see Maria Pia Donato, *Sudden Death: Medicine and Religion in Eighteenth-Century Rome* (Burlington, Vt.: Ashgate, 2014).

63

See Rogelio Altez, 'Historias de Milagros y temblores: fe y eficacia simbólica en Hispanoamérica, siglos XVI–XVIII', *Revista de Historia Moderna. Anales de la Universidad de Alicante*, 35 (2017), 178–213 (179–80). On natural disasters and the history of emotions, see *Fear in Early Modern Society*, ed. by William G. Naphy and Penny Roberts (Manchester; New York: Manchester University Press, 1997); and especially, *Disaster, Death and the Emotions in the Shadow of the Apocalypse, 1400–1700*, ed. by Jennifer Spinks and Charles Zika (London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016). On pre-modern responses to disasters, see 'Calamità/paure/risposte', special issue of *Quaderni Storici*, nuova serie, vol. 19, n. 55 (1984), ed. by Giulia Calvi and Alberto Caracciolo.

64

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