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THE INCONVENIENCE OF CHOCOLATE: DISCIPLINING THE SOCIETY OF JESUS IN SEVENTEENTH-CENTURY MEXICO

On May 6, 1626, the head of the Society of Jesus, Superior General Muzio Vitelleschi, wrote back to his overseas representatives in the administrative unit known as the Provincia Mexicana, or Mexican province.[1] Exhausted with the same issue that had haunted most of his tenure as leader of the distinguished order, Father General Vitelleschi wrote, "They tell me that there is great excess in the use of the chocolate drink. They write [to tell me] that it is the *worst enemy* that our institute has in those parts, because there is no poverty [that prevents its use], nor firm quantity, nor ministry without interest. . . . If [Your Reverence] does not effectively remedy this, I will be forced to prohibit its use all together. Write to me explicitly about what is being done about this."[2] The Superior General did not cite the blasphemy of heretics, rejection

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[1] The official title of the leader of the Society of Jesus is "Superior General," but he may also be addressed as "Father General" and the less common appellation of "General Superior."

[2] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 6 de mayo," 1626, 335VTA, Provincia Mexicana, Antica Campagnia, Archivum Romanum Societatis Iesu, Mexico (hereafter ARSI) (emphasis mine).

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in indigenous communities, nor privation as challenges to proselytization. Instead, he appeared to concur that chocolate was indeed a serious threat to the Jesuits' endeavors in colonial Mexico.

Founded in 1534 by Ignatius of Loyola, the Society of Jesus received its papal commendation in 1537 and its official charter in 1540 from Pope Paul III. Within one hundred years, the Jesuits had established a global presence.[3] The order's founding documents call members "to strive especially for the defense and propagation of the faith and for the progress of souls in Christian life and doctrine," directing special efforts in "the education of children and unlettered persons in Christianity."[4]And with the capacious mandate to journey near and far in order to establish and manage Jesuit communities, it is curious that by the early 1600s, Superiors General had turned their attention to chocolate use among its members in one of their largest non-European provinces—the Provincia Mexicana.[5]

For centuries throughout Mesoamerica, chocolate was an exclusive beverage of the indigenous elite but transitioned into a widely available and broadly enjoyed treat in the seventeenth century.[6] However, chocolate's taste, accessibility, and cultural ties to indigeneity made it a product of fascination for many, including the religious community. The Jesuits professed four vows as they joined the order: poverty, chastity, general obedience, and obedience to the pope. Chocolate, feared the Jesuit leadership, had the potential to lure members of the Society into breaking these vows. Indulging in a prohibited product broke the vow of obedience, but chocolate was also associated with the dangers of indigenous customs, marginalized women, and superfluous

[3] During Ignatius of Loyola's lifetime (1491–1556), the Jesuits established a presence in India (1542), the Low Countries (1542), Brazil (1549), Japan (1549), and Ethiopia (1555). By Ignatius's death in July 1556, the Jesuits had more than one thousand members and twelve provinces. John W. O'Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate: Studies in Jesuit History* (Leiden: Brill, 2013), 54–55. A decade later, the Society counted over 3,500 members. John W. O'Malley, *The First Jesuits* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1993), 2. After Ignatius's passing, the Society expanded into France (1550s), China (1552, failed but reinitiated in 1582), Spanish Florida (1566), Peru (1568), Mexico (1572), Sweden (legally in 1576), and even Protestant England in 1580. In 1581, Jesuits from the province of Mexico arrived in the Philippines. By 1611, Jesuit missionaries were in New France.

[4] "Formulas of the Institute of the Society of Jesus: Approved and Confirmed by Julius III," in *The Constitutions of the Society of Jesus and Their Complementary Norms,* ed. John W. Padberg, SJ (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 1996), 4, https://archive.org/details/constitutionsof00jesu/page/n3/mode/2up?q=visitor.

[5] John W. O'Malley, *The Jesuits: A History from Ignatius to the Present* (New York: Rowman & Littlefield, 2017), 28.

[6] Nathan Nunn and Nancy Qian, "The Columbian Exchange: A History of Disease, Food, and Ideas," *Journal of Economic Perspectives* 24, no. 2 (Spring 2010): 172–73; Blake Edgar, "The Power of Chocolate," *Archaeology* 63, no. 6 (November/December 2010): 23; Daniela Bleichmar, *Visual Voyages: Images of Latin American Nature from Columbus to Darwin* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2017), 63.

spending. The potential infiltration of chocolate drinking into quotidian Jesuit practice so concerned the leadership that no less than six Superiors General mandated its prohibition over the course of the seventeenth century. While the secular world asserted that chocolate was curative and fortifying, there might have been far too many alternative associations to reconcile chocolate's use among Jesuits in the Mexican province.

The Society of Jesus, regarded as "the first teaching order in the Catholic church,"[7] upheld the responsibility of inculcating its students with religious doctrine and introducing them to civic life through a lay curriculum. This fluid boundary between the sacred world and secular life meant that negotiating such lines would not always be easy. Chocolate prohibitions offer a glimpse into such socioreligious dialogues and disrupt the literature's overemphasis on more spectacular events, such as the dramatic and perhaps most violent articulation of religious circumscription of the Holy Office of the Inquisition. Religious scrutiny extended beyond inquisitorial judgments to everyday endeavors, including addressing slack discipline and impropriety among the church's own representatives and their charges. But was chocolate a true menace to the Society? The following article examines Jesuit prohibitions against chocolate consumption in the seventeenth century to explore the imagined corruptibility and fragility of proselytization among one of the Catholic Church's most dynamic orders. Finally, this article argues that chocolate provides a lens to understand early modern religion, not because it led to the downfall of the Society of Jesus in Mexico but because it illuminates greater aims and challenges of the Jesuits during a time of tremendous change and growth for this global Catholic order.

Much of the literature on chocolate has focused on the cultural and culinary exchanges it incited, including paving the way for hot drinks, such as tea and coffee. The historiography has also examined fears that chocolate could fundamentally alter culture beyond food preferences.[8] Other scholars have focused on its use as medicine.[9] A few works have emphasized the impact

[7] O'Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, 56.

[8] Marcy Norton, "Tasting Empire: Chocolate and the European Internalization of Mesoamerican Aesthetics," *American Historical Review* 111, no. 3 (June 2006): 660–91; Rebecca Earle, " 'If You Eat Their Food . . .': Diets and Bodies in Early Colonial Spanish America," *American Historical Review* 115, no. 3 (June 2010): 688–713.

[9] Guadalupe M. Santamaría, "Curative Cacao," in "Chocolate: Cultivo Y Cultura Del México Antiguo," special issue, *Artes de México*, no. 103 (September 2011): 80; Miguel León-Portilla, "Ancient Fertility, Atlaquetzalli: Precious Water," in "Chocolate II: Mística y Mestizaje," special issue, *Artes de México*, no. 105 (March 2012): 85; Louis Evan Grivetti, "Medicinal Chocolate in New Spain, Western Europe, and North America," in *Chocolate: History, Culture, and Heritage*, ed. Louis E. Grivetti and Howard-Yana Shapiro (Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, 2009), 67–88; Deanna Pucciarelli, "Chocolate as Medicine: Imparting Dietary Advice and Moral Values through 19th Century North American Cookbooks," in Grivetti and Shapiro, *Chocolate*, 115–28; Donatella Lippi, "Chocolate in History: Food, Medicine, Medi-Food," *Nutrients* 5 (2013): 1573–84.

of chocolate and nonindigenous people in the colonies.[10] One of the most significant works in the field is Marcy Norton's inspired monograph on both chocolate and tobacco, *Sacred Gifts, Profane Pleasures*, which offers a deeply theoretical and carefully researched history of the products' transition from the indigenous domain to European households of all kinds. Norton argues against theories that chocolate had to be "Europeanized" to attract a greater audience, asserting that indigeneity was not "cooked out" of chocolate but remained an essential part of its appeal.[11] Norton tracks chocolate's influence and circulation, though she only briefly and judiciously notes the connections to the Society of Jesus, and rightfully so.[12]

For Jesuits and chocolate, a few scholars have offered measured conclusions given their limited sources.[13] However, much of the literature has conflated

[10] Most notably, the literature has focused on enslaved Africans, African-descended people, conversos, and others accused of being Jewish. For works on African and African-descended people and chocolate, see Timothy Walker, "Establishing Cacao Plantation Culture in the Atlantic World: Portuguese Cacao Cultivation in Brazil and West Africa, Circa 1580–1912," in Grivetti and Shapiro, *Chocolate*, 543–58; Catherine Higgs, *Chocolate Islands: Cocoa, Slavery, and Colonial Africa* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 2012); Silke Hackenesch, *Chocolate and Blackness: A Cultural History* (Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2018). The term converso referred to Jewish people who continued to practice their faith clandestinely in the Iberian world after Spain and Portugal mandated forced conversions to Christianity. For works that focus on Jewish history and chocolate, see Marcy Norton, *Sacred Gifts, Profane Pleasures: A History of Tobacco and Chocolate in the Atlantic World* (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2008), 259–60; Beatriz Cabezon, Patricia Barriga, and Louis Evan Grivetti, "Chocolate and Sinful Behaviors: Inquisition Testimonies," in Grivetti and Shapiro, *Chocolate*, 37–48; Celia D. Shapiro, "Nation of Nowhere: Jewish Role in Colonial American Chocolate History," in Grivetti and Shapiro, *Chocolate*, 49–66; Deborah R. Prinz, *On the Chocolate Trail: A Delicious Adventure Connecting Jews, Religions, History, Travel, Rituals and Recipes to the Magic of Cacao* (Woodstock, VT: Jewish Lights, 2013).

[11] Elsewhere Norton also asserts this point, writing, "Europeans who had grown up with the drink in the New World—or who had been immersed in an Indian milieu for a sufficient time—not only acquired a taste for the thick chocolate, but consumed it in the manner that it had been long consumed in Mesoamerica. Likewise, Spaniards assimilated the cacao complex in its entirety, and tried to maintain the sensory sensations that went with traditional chocolate even across the ocean divide." Norton, "Tasting Empire," 682.

[12] Norton cites two undated instances of Jesuits purchasing chocolate seemingly marked as "diplomatic gifts," a 1634 lawsuit against a ship's captain for the loss of chocolate entrusted to him, and the Jesuit's involvement in a 1632 discussion of whether chocolate broke the Lenten fast. Norton, "Tasting Empire," 146, 169, 234.

[13] Louis Evan Grivetti and Beatriz Cabezon offer examples of Jesuits purchasing chocolate for Easter celebrations, but they use two late seventeenth-century examples from Mexico to extrapolate for the entire Society in Spanish America. Louis Evan Grivetti and Beatriz Cabezon, "Ancient Gods and Christian Celebrations: Chocolate and Religion," in Grivetti and Shapiro, *Chocolate*, 32. Beatriz Cabezon provides brief archival descriptions and preliminary notes on four documents related to Jesuits in Mexico and cacao production: one from 1693, another potentially from 1707, an account book registering items from 1704 to 1751, and an inventory from 1751. From this small sample, Cabezon speculates that "the Jesuits used income from cacao plantations to pay their annual religious 'obligations/rent' to the Mother Church and to sustain themselves" but clarifies that they were not always successful in the industry and were

infrequent references to chocolate in order to make broad generalizations that have mischaracterized this trajectory.[14] Some works have positioned the Jesuits as widespread supporters of chocolate consumption because of sporadic seventeenth- and eighteenth-century involvement in the cacao trade.[15]

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sometimes "hard-pressed to meet the financial obligations of their Order." Beatriz Cabezon, "Cacao, Haciendas, and the Jesuits," in Grivetti and Shapiro, *Chocolate*, 607–9. Timothy Walker also discusses cacao cultivation by Jesuits in South America, principally Brazil, but never mentions the prohibitions by the Society. Timothy Walker, "Establishing Cacao Plantation Culture in the Atlantic World," in Grivetti and Shapiro, *Chocolate*, 544–47.

[14] A cluster of works has directed the course of this narrative. For example, Sophie Coe and Michael D. Coe assert that Jesuits encouraged Louis XIV to drink chocolate while fasting (when it was still being debated whether chocolate was a food or just a drink) as a way to substantiate the claim that the Jesuits wholly backed chocolate use. Sophie Coe and Michael D. Coe, *The True History of Chocolate*, 3rd ed. (London: Thames & Hudson, 2013), 148. In the book, Coe and Coe also declare, "As usual, the Jesuits in Spain were great imbibers (and importers) of chocolate" (206), and to support this assertion, they provide one example of a 1721 visit by the duc de Saint-Simon to a Jesuit establishment where he enjoyed some of "the best chocolate" (206–7). However, the Society never attempted to stop the general public from enjoying the drink; the Jesuits could have reserved the drink for guests only. In another publication, Coe and Coe assert that Jesuits supported chocolate use, writing, "One native custom was nevertheless gladly adopted by them: chocolate drinking." Sophie Coe and Michael D. Coe, "Postcards: Chocolate in Europe," in "Chocolate II: Mística y Mestizaje," special issue, *Artes de México*, no. 105 (March 2012): 91. More recent historiographical works repeat such generalizations without a more critical eye to such claims. Eline Poelmans and Johan Swinnen argue, "The Society of Jesus (the Jesuits) played an important role [in the spread of chocolate]. . . . The Jesuits were known as avid chocolate drinkers and would become important cocoa traders" and only cite Coe and Coe's 1996 work as evidence. Eline Poelmans and Johan Swinnen, "A Brief Economic History of Chocolate," in *The Economics of Chocolate*, ed. Mara P. Squicciarini and Johan Swinnen (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 15. Ambiguous periodization has also obscured this history. For example, Coe and Coe argue, "one native custom was gladly adopted by [the Jesuits]: chocolate drinking. And they found it extremely lucrative to become cacao traders themselves ('to the great glory of God')." Coe and Coe, *True History of Chocolate*, 146. However, they do not temporalize this supposed mass adoption of chocolate. Narrowing in on the history of commercial trading, Jacques Mercier writes, "[The Jesuits] adopted local customs, including drinking chocolate. For a *certain period*, they even held the monopoly of the trading and distribution of cocoa beans. For the Jesuits, this was a way of enhancing their appeal to the natives." Jacques Mercier, *The Temptation of Chocolate* (Tielt: Lannoo, 2008), 107 (emphasis mine). Mercier cites no documentation for these broad claims about Jesuit history. Andrew Dalby offers a slightly more specific periodization when asserting, "In Ecuador and in parts of the Amazon basin in the seventeenth century Spanish and Portuguese prospectors found, growing wild, a distinct variety of the cacao tree . . . and the Jesuits of Brazil took to growing it." Andrew Dalby, *Dangerous Tastes: The Story of Spices* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2000), 147. Greater specificity by Dalby and Mercier could have revealed the economic exigencies that fostered local Jesuit engagement with cacao, especially if cultivation and trade took place during prohibition.

[15] Some Jesuits in South America did cultivate cacao trees. In 1641, a Jesuit priest in Brazil noted, "There are in this grand Rio de las Amazonas, four [commodities], that will be without doubt sufficient to enrich, not just one, but many kingdoms." He cites the first as wood, the second as cacao, the third as tobacco, and the fourth as sugar. Cristóbal de Acuña, *Nuevo descubrimiento del gran rio de las Amazonas* (Madrid: Imprenta del Reyno, 1641), 15–16. During the 1760s, Jesuits in Peru confronted an uninterested marketplace for their cacao because Spaniards preferred maté to hot chocolate. William G. Clarence-Smith, "Chocolate Consumption from

In an oft-cited 1701 caper, Jesuits were accused of trafficking eight crates of gold blocks into Spain by coating them with a layer of chocolate and labeling them "Chocolate for the Very Reverend Father General of the Society of Jesus." The dockworkers discovered the ruse when they realized the disproportionate weight of the cargo and found that each block was merely chocolate covered and not quite so edible. The smuggling case against Jesuits is certainly amusing, but it is offered as proof of the order's support of chocolate and not evidence of a rogue group of traffickers betraying the dictates of the Fathers General.[16] When there is an occasional acknowledgment of a ban on chocolate use in the secondary literature, it is advanced as an outlier or indicative of the Society's vacillation on the subject, which the other seventeenth-century sources do not communicate.[17] Some characterizations of the Jesuits' associations with chocolate are indecipherable.[18] Importantly, many of these scarce examples are from a later colonial period when the Superiors General

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the Sixteenth Century to the Great Chocolate Boom," in Squicciarini and Swinnen, *Economics of Chocolate*, 50. If individual local Jesuits in the South American provinces invested in cacao, leadership in Rome did not encourage it.

[16] Coe and Coe, *True History of Chocolate*, 190.

[17] Two books mention a chocolate ban, but one seems to have been drawn from the other. Coe and Coe note one year of the Jesuit prohibitions to make lofty assertions, writing, "In Colonial Mesoamerica as in the Catholic countries of Europe, there were ecclesiastical prohibitions to observe or flout, in particular the use of chocolate during fasts. The religious orders seem to have been unable to make up their minds whether or not chocolate should be altogether forbidden to those wearing the habit. The Society of Jesus in New Spain, for instance, published an act in June 1650 prohibiting Jesuits from drinking the beverage, but this was soon rescinded when it proved impossible to enforce, and when many of their students were leaving their school because of it." Coe and Coe, *True History of Chocolate*, 182. Christine McFadden and Christine France, in *Chocolate: Cooking with the World's Best Ingredient* (London: Hermes House, 2003), echo Coe and Coe's work, writing, "In 1650 the Society of Jesus (the Jesuit school) issued an act outlawing the drink to Jesuits, but this was impossible to enforce, especially when students started to abandon the school because of it" (25). McFadden and France do not cite Coe and Coe, but it appears that their work offers unattributed assertions from Coe and Coe's book. Additionally, Coe and Coe do not offer any citation for the claim that students were leaving the Jesuit colleges because of the prohibition. The corresponding endnote refers the reader to Thomas Gage's chronicle, *The English-American, his travel by sea and land; or, A new Survey of the West-India's* (1648), where he writes at length about chocolate but never discusses students leaving school because of chocolate prohibitions. If it were the case that such prohibitions were affecting student enrollment, the Society would have likely recorded them in annual reports since sustaining the student presence was a high priority for Jesuits. Thomas Gage, *The English-American, his travel by sea and land; or, A new Survey of the West-India's* (London: R. Cotes, 1648), https://www.gutenberg.org/files/54425/54425-h/54425-h.htm.

[18] For example, José Luis Trueba Lara writes, "since when Anne of Austria married Louis XIII, chocolate lost its Jesuit and Cistercian sobriety and took on the excesses of rococo." José Luis Trueba Lara, "The Defeat of Cacao, the Fall of God," in "Chocolate III: Ritual, Arte y Memoria," special issue, *Artes de México*, no. 110 (June 2013): 91. Trueba Lara does not define "Jesuit sobriety," which is a confusing characterization given the reference to Anne of Austria. Jesuits had already instituted bans when the Spanish princess and Austrian archduchess married the French monarch in 1615.

made fewer documented rejections to its use, which distorts the vocal position of the Society throughout the seventeenth century.

When grounded in the administrative archives, the official Jesuit prohibition against chocolate is indisputable and ubiquitous. That such claims of pervasive Jesuit acceptance of chocolate have been left uninterrogated for so long is symptomatic of the lack of attention to the history of indigenous products and religious organizations outside of the inquisitorial archival path. The first half of the seventeenth century witnessed a greater volume of reiterated bans against chocolate use, but the Jesuit central leadership's position remained unchanged in the latter half of the century. Importantly, the protracted campaign by the Fathers General illuminates challenges in establishing discipline in the Society of Jesus and excavates anxieties about the stability of religious governance.

THE GUARDIAN

Superior General Claudio Acquaviva guided the efforts of the Society of Jesus for thirty-four years from February 1581 until his death in January 1615.[19] As the fifth Superior General, his legacy includes ushering in the so-called golden era of the Society. Less discussed was his involvement in banning chocolate use in the Provincia Mexicana. While not a significant branch of his ministry, Acquaviva might have also been the first in his post to consider the potential negative attributes of drinkable chocolate. In the late sixteenth century, Father General Claudio Acquaviva initiated a wave of prohibitions against chocolate drinking among the Jesuits. At the time of his cluster of reports, Acquaviva was more than two decades into his tenure. As the longest serving Father General in the first two hundred years of the Society's existence, Acquaviva exercised wide-ranging influence on the direction of the order.[20] Under his auspices, worldwide representation of the Society of Jesus "almost tripled to 13,000, and the number of schools rose from 144 to 372."[21] Given his role in guiding administrative business and theological training, perhaps it is not surprising that the Superior General sought to execute superior oversight of a provincial practice.

[19] Some texts spell his name Aquaviva, including in P. José Gutiérrez Casillas, SJ, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico de la Compañía en México* (Mexico City: Editorial Tradición, 1975).

[20] John Patrick Donnelly emphasizes his legacy, asserting, "Acquaviva's directives organized Jesuit practice for more than a century." Donnelly adds, "The most important of Acquaviva's directives was the *Ratio Studiorum* (Plan of studies) of 1599 [that offered] rules for Jesuit colleges that largely remained in effect for some three hundred years." John Patrick Donnelly, SJ, ed. and trans., *Jesuit Writings of the Early Modern Period, 1540–1640* (Indianapolis: Hackett, 2006), 193.

[21] O'Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, 68.

On June 20, 1598, Father General Acquaviva wrote a letter to Mexican Provincial Esteban Páez that included twenty-six points to address.[22] For the eleventh matter, the Superior General ordered the Society to rid itself of chocolate drinking. Seemingly dissatisfied with the response to the 1598 directive, on April 20, 1601, Acquaviva reiterated his mandate to abolish the consumption of chocolate among the Jesuits in Mexico.[23] Three years later, in April 1604, Acquaviva notified the provincial leadership that the use of chocolate had increased, writing, "Various times they have written us from that Province [of Mexico] that chocolate was frequently offered as a gift."[24] However, to whom or by whom is unclear. Marcy Norton establishes that chocolate was a common present, especially because it allowed for a broad spectrum of signification.[25] Perhaps it was a statement about a general sociocultural practice in Mexico—the gifting of chocolate (as it was used then and is often used now) and not about a specific instance of gift giving.[26] Importantly, Acquaviva knew that chocolate was circulating in the Society and had the potential to become ubiquitous if it became the gift du jour.

In the same report, Acquaviva informed the new Mexican provincial Father Ildefonso de Castro that he had banned chocolate use among Jesuits. The Superior General did not consider chocolate an innocuous present. In fact, Acquaviva insisted, "it seems more like a *medicine*." The Father General closed the note by urging the head of the Mexican province to see that it remained impermissible given the "inconvenientes" that would result if their members drank chocolate.[27] While "inconveniente" is literally translated into "inconvenience," its early modern Spanish meaning more accurately implied "danger," which signaled a far more robust semi-illegal breaking of boundaries that skirted close to outright insubordination.[28] In nearly half of all of

[22] The provincial leader of the Society of Jesus can be referred to as "Provincial," "Father Provincial," or "Provincial Superior." As reprinted in Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 339–40.

[23] As reprinted in Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 346.

[24] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 5 de abril," 1604, 36VTA, Epistolae Generalium (Epp. Gen.), ARSI.

[25] Norton argues, "Chocolate figured as an exemplary gift, which could communicate and solidify the nature of the giver and receiver's social bonds (friendship, alliance, patronage, fealty, romance)." Norton, *Sacred Gifts*, 181. It was also used as a welcome drink among secular and religious figures alike. Thomas Gage relays a story in which, upon his arrival in Veracruz, the Dominican novitiates were welcomed with a feast that included "a Cup of the Indian drink called chocolate." Gage, *English-American*, 23. Norton corroborates this custom, writing, "[Hernán Cortés] ordered that the Indians welcome missionaries with chocolate, knowing well that that was how they formerly showed reverence to their priests under Aztec rule." Norton, *Sacred Gifts*, 78.

[26] Norton offers examples of chocolate in the elite gift economy. Norton, *Sacred Gifts*, 147, 180, 181.

[27] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 5 de abril," 1604, 36VTA, Epp. Gen., ARSI (emphasis mine).

[28] Ann Twinam, *Purchasing Whiteness: Pardos, Mulattos, and the Quest for Social Mobility in the Spanish Indies* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2015), 59.

the extant annual reports on chocolate, Superiors General strongly encouraged applicants who sought a sanctioned exemption to consume chocolate to find an alternative "without the inconvenience that there is in the said [chocolate]."[29] Chocolate may have been a medicine, but was it an acceptable one for the Society? During the seventeenth century, Jesuits mostly disagreed with secular declarations of chocolate as a cure-all. According to Acquaviva, chocolate was an inconvenience because it was a dangerous medicine; very few people needed it and far too many others merely wanted it.

MEDICINE

Father General Acquaviva would have likely known that, even in European circles, chocolate had been used as a medicine for decades. Perhaps he was even aware that Mesoamericans had prescribed it for centuries to attend to a broad array of medical needs.[30] As Europeans experimented with and theorized about medicinal chocolate, the panacea of applications expanded.[31] Spanish medical knowledge often developed from encounters with indigenous communities, especially when European treatments were unavailable. Sixteenth-century conquistador and royal chronicler Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés publicized the curative efficacy of chocolate after he severely injured his foot while traveling in Central America.[32] Fearing infection and death, Oviedo recalled, "Being in this situation, I remembered that my servant, two of my *negros*, and a few of my Indians carried with them a [bit] of salty bacon." He fried up the bacon, extracted lard, and applied it to his wound, which helped but did not stop the bleeding. Oviedo added, "Then my *negra* said that the Indians said that cacao oil was good for injuries." He allowed the woman to apply the oil to his cut because he "did not have anything else to cure [himself] with." After his foot healed, Oviedo credited God, cacao oil, and "aquella negra mía" (that Black woman of mine) for his restored health. When he returned to Spain, he took some of this oil and affirmed in his chronicle, "when his Majesty asked me if it was good for wounds, I said what I have said [in the chronicle] and knew because of experience."[33] While Oviedo

[29] Although, the Superiors General never offer a list of approved alternatives.

[30] Lippi asserts that Mesoamericans had enjoyed drinkable chocolate since around 600 BCE. Lippi, "Chocolate in History," 1574. Bleichmar establishes the existence of medicinal chocolate in the Florentine Codex (1577) and the Codex de la Cruz-Badiano (1552). Aztec uses of chocolate included "treatment against spitting blood, coughing, stomach pain, painful or difficult urination, and diarrhea." While Nahua physicians used chocolate for weight gain and to treat blood loss, "chocolate was also mixed with many other medicinal plants to treat a wide array of medical problems." Bleichmar, *Visual Voyages*, 35, 59.

[31] For an overview of some trends, see Lippi, "Chocolate in History," 1575–81.

[32] Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés, *Historia general y natural de las Indias* (1535 [date completed]: Madrid: Imprenta de la Real Academia de la Historia, 1851), 319–20.

[33] Oviedo y Valdés, *Historia general*, 320.

found the local practice helpful, he assured the reader that he first applied a more common European solution (lard) and only turned to indigenous medical applications of cacao oil because he was desperate.

In the earliest years of the bans, Jesuit leaders accepted that chocolate could have salutary properties, even if it was not their preferred prescription. In the secular realm, many heralded chocolate as a wondrous remedy, and its "proven" medical applications grew to include ailments and afflictions of all kinds.[34] By the late seventeenth century, as Yasmin Haskell notes, "chocolate was marketed in Europe as a medicine," and there is evidence that people proclaimed chocolate as not only beneficial for the body but also for the mind.[35] Long before such widespread advertising, in 1591, physician and scientist Juan de Cardenas went so far as to argue that Spaniards in the colonies not only wanted chocolate, they needed it, writing, "and I say again there is no other land in the world where chocolate is more necessary than in *las Indias* [the Spanish American dominion], because it is humid and lazy bodies and stomachs go around filled with phlegm and superfluous humidity, which with the heat of the chocolate is cooked and becomes blood, which wine does not do."[36] In his discussion on chocolate in *The Indian Nectar* (1662), Henry

[34] A 1579 Spanish royal survey found that drinking cacao pulp alleviated hemorrhages—uniting indigenous and European medical expertise. As cited in Norton, *Sacred Gifts*, 89. Spanish physician Santiago de Valverde Turices wrote in a 1624 treatise that chocolate was most "helpful for those who suffered from a cold illness or cold humor." Santiago de Valverde Turices, *Un Discurso del Chocolate* (Sevilla, 1624), D2-vta. According to Antonio Colmenero de Ledesma's 1652 account, chocolate helped quench his thirst after traveling, writing that it "warm[ed] and comfort[ed]" his stomach while fasting. Antonio Colmenero de Ledesma, *Chocolate: or, An Indian Drinke* [. . .], trans. James Wadsworth (London: J. G. for Iohn Dakins, 1652), 24. In his 1662 treatise on chocolate, Henry Stubbe appears to agrees with Colmenero's assessment, stating, "[chocolate] seemed to corroborate the stomach, and promote digestion." Henry Stubbe, *The Indian Nectar, Or, a Discourse Concerning Chocolata* (London: Printed by I. C. for Andrew Crook, 1662), 22. In William Hughes's 1672 work *The American Physitian* he wrote, "[Chocolate] is an exceeding nourishing to all such as require a speedy refreshment after travel, hard labour, or violent exercise, exhilarating and corroborating all parts and faculties of the body." William Hughes, *The American Physitian* (London: J. C. for William Crook, 1672), 145.

[35] Yasmin Haskell, "Poetry or Pathology? Jesuit Hypochondria in Early Modern Naples," *Early Science and Medicine* 12, no. 2 (2007): 201. Hughes describes how chocolate alleviated what we might now call depression: "It revives drooping spirits and cheers those that are ready to faint; expelling sorrow, trouble, care and all perturbations of the minde [*sic*], it is an Ambrosia: And finally, in a word, it cannot be too much praised." Hughes, *American Physitian*, 148. In 1689, Jesuit Tommaso Strozzi, and one-time provincial of Naples, opined whether "chocolate might be a cure for 'hypochondria,' which has recently been sent up from the bowels of the earth as a punishment for human sinfulness." Haskell, "Poetry or Pathology?," 190. Hypochondria was a condition with a panorama of symptoms, as mild as indigestion, as severe as cardiac and respiratory difficulties, paranoia, psychosis, and as disorienting as graphic hallucinations (190, 197–98).

[36] Juan de Cardenas, *Primera Parte de los Problemas y Secretos Maravillosos de Las Indias*, Segunda Edición (Mexico: Imprenta del Museo Nacional de Arqueología, Historia y Etnología, 1913), 107, https://www.archive.org. William Hughes agreed with Cardenas about the need for Europeans to drink chocolate to acclimate to the formerly Spanish (until 1655) but by then

Stubbe refers to the research of a "certain Spanish Physician of Sevil [*sic*]" who appealed to his European audience's knowledge of wine to understand the importance of drinkable chocolate. The doctor explained that those who partook in the beverage felt "manifestly refreshed, and strengthened, as well as delighted by it." He also claimed that one could survive for months by only consuming chocolate, "whereas none hath been known to live above seven days by drinking Wine alone."[37] If wine had its limitations, chocolate appeared to be boundlessly life-giving.[38]

Even with these laudatory published narratives, early modern contemporaries did not all agree on the benefits of chocolate. Cardenas, who dedicated three chapters to it, hesitated to proclaim chocolate as a universal elixir, writing, "some abhor chocolate, saying that it creates so many illnesses, others say there is nothing like it in the world."[39] Even Stubbe appeared undecided as to how unique it was, writing, "I have heard and read of Discourses of *Panaceas*, and *Universal* Medicines: and truly I think *Chocolata* may as justly at least pretend to that Title, as any."[40] And perhaps chocolate was just that—good as any other miracle cure at the time. However, such claims gave way to deep suspicion by the Superiors General, and they turned to administrative directives to intervene.

VIRTUOUS LIVING

Anecdotal evidence indicates that some Jesuit communities knew about and complied with Father General Acquaviva's early rejection of chocolate—even by less conventional members of the Society. Brother Juan Jurado of

English-controlled Jamaica, writing, "I think certainly, that good Chocolate is the only drink in the Indies, and I am fully perswaded [it] is instrumental to the preservation and prolonging of many an Europeans life that travels there, who will be soon acquainted with it; for there is no Ship that comes into those Harbours where it may be had, but the men quickly get it aboard them; and many of those remain in health, partly by the use thereof, do become fat and plump. For my own part, I think I was never fatter in all my life; then when I was in that praise-worthy Island of Jamaica, partly by the frequent use thereof; neither had I one sick day during the time I was there, which was more then [*sic*] half a year." Hughes, *American Physitian*, 147–48.

[37] Stubbe, *Indian Nectar*, 97–98. Stubbe adds that the doctor experimented on himself by only surviving on chocolate for four months "mixing now and then some crumbs of bread therewith" (98).

[38] Linda A. Newson cites the practice of slave owners adding wine to sick slaves' diet to cure them but also notes its use in "plasters and purgatives." Linda A. Newson, "Medical Practice in Early Colonial Spanish America: A Prospectus," *Bulletin of Latin American Research* 25, no. 3 (July 2006): 383. Kristy Wilson Bowers describes a medieval prescription of wine, writing, "Teodorico and his followers . . . advocated what became known as the dry approach, or healing by primary intention, which involved washing wounds in warm wine (a desiccant) and keeping them loosely covered, prescribing patients a healthy (substantial) diet and wine drink." Kristy Wilson Bowers, "Tradition and Innovation in Spanish Medicine: Bartolomé Hidalgo de Agüero and the 'Vía Particular,'" *Sixteenth Century Journal* 41, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 36.

[39] Cardenas, *Primera Parte de los Problemas*, 106.

[40] Stubbe, *Indian Nectar*, 125.

the Colegio de México passed away in 1610 at age eighty-four but was an official Jesuit for but a few short hours.[41] Jurado spent most of his life in the secular world as a husband and father. After becoming a widow and "having put his children in a state" (married or placed in a convent or seminary), Jurado attempted to follow one of his sons into the Society of Jesus. However, because of his age, he was not allowed to take vows and instead dedicated the rest of his life in service to the Jesuits. Laboring on two haciendas owned by a Jesuit college in Mexico, Jurado became known for his patience, humility, and indefatigable work ethic.[42] Jurado's biography also recognized him for his repudiation of drinkable chocolate. It reads, "He was so observant of the rules and ordinances of the Society, as if he were one of them, and knowing that it had been ordered at that time that no one in the house drink chocolate, he got rid of it with such rigor, and having hardly any other sustenance, declaring that he had not been obligated to do so."[43] For eighteen years Jurado served the Jesuits, and because of the admiration that he garnered among the community, Provincial Rodrigo de Cabredo granted Juan Jurado admittance into the order on his deathbed.[44]

In addition to tales of the "many dark and stormy nights, he would leave the house to procure things that were needed at the *hacienda*"[45] and a vignette about his ability to spend "most of the day praying on his knees,"[46] the biographical entry features Brother Jurado's abstention from chocolate as a key marker of his upstanding character. To clarify the scope of his sacrifice, the biographer added, "like depriving oneself in Europe of drinking wine as an old man of 70 years."[47] By not partaking in chocolate, something the entry notes was widespread in Mexico, Juan Jurado held himself accountable to Jesuit mandates and served as a pillar of strict adherence.[48] Jurado's story also implies that by the early 1600s, some Jesuits who consumed chocolate knew they were violating religious boundaries.

AUTHORITY

Beyond Juan Jurado's community, others may have also respected the ban on chocolate. In June 1607, Father General Acquaviva insisted on an update to a February 1607 inquest addressed to Mexican Provincial Ildefonso de Castro.

[41] Also noted as Juan Turrado. Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 289.
[42] For example, Juan was said to have been capable of doing the labor of "two well-salaried Spaniards." Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 290.
[43] Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 291.
[44] Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 293.
[45] Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 290.
[46] Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 291.
[47] Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 291.
[48] Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 291.

In a letter that indicates that Provincial Castro had succeeded in suppressing the Jesuits' use of chocolate, Acquaviva queried "what had been done to get rid of chocolate use so that [such measures] are kept inviolably?" If Provincial Castro had solved the problem, Superior General Acquaviva wanted to know the solution. The letter noted that the Father General had confirmed the prohibition in Rome, and he wanted to ensure that the representative of the Mexican province was aware that no one could offer special dispensation, "not by a *Provincial* or a *Visitador* [a visiting inspector] . . . without our [the Superior General's office's] particular and expressed license." Acquaviva closed the letter with, "in [the event] of a special case I remain the way . . ."[49] Unfortunately, the ending of the declaration is lost to the ravages of time and bookbinding as a crease in the page obscures the letters. However, given what would transpire over the next few years, perhaps a closing affirmation of the Father General's absolutism was more than fitting.

An April 1609 annual report from Rome boldly proclaimed the triumph of the Mexican province via a subheading of the report: "They confirmed that they had gotten rid of chocolate use." However, after consultation and agreement with physicians, Acquaviva extended the ban on chocolate since it was already "a thing confirmed here [in Rome]" in some unspecified book, likely a code of conduct. The report concluded with a reminder to the new Mexican provincial Rodrigo de Cabreda, then just one month into the position, that Father General Acquaviva continued to enjoy sole authority in granting exceptions.[50]

THE BULWARK

More than a decade of silence follows the 1609 proclamation of victory. While Jesuits in Mexico continued to report on their challenges and successes, chocolate only resurfaced in the annual reports in 1621. This time, the conversation about chocolate returned with a feverish pitch, resulting in a robust exchange of petitions and declarations. In the first half of the seventeenth century, Rome appeared locked in battle with a confection that sought to sow unrest. Jesuits soon had another great warrior poised to battle chocolate as Acquaviva's successor took up this discreet topic as if it were a fundamental mantle of the Society of Jesus. Muzio Vitelleschi ascended to the head of the Society in November 1615 and served until his death in February 1645. Over thirty years, Superior General Vitelleschi dynamically expanded the order's presence in Europe, Africa, Asia, and the Americas.[51] Yet, chocolate was ever

[49] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 26 de junio," 1607, 87VTA, Epp. Gen., ARSI.

[50] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 1 de abril," 1609, 110VTA, Epp. Gen., ARSI.

[51] This included a presence in an English province with 213 members in 1623, a mission in western Tibet in 1624, and a more permanent place in English-speaking North America (Maryland) in 1634. O'Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, 64; Hugues Didier, trans., *Les portugais au Tibet: Les premières relations jésuites (1624–1635)* (Paris: Éditions Chandeigne, 1996).

on his mind. As he helmed the Society of Jesus in Rome, Vitelleschi might have caught wind of the increase in cases pursued by the Holy Office of the Inquisition in Spanish America and feared for the Jesuits that which had already wreaked havoc on the secular world—the sacrilegious use of chocolate.

HERESY

In 1590, Friar Joseph de Acosta wrote, "While the plantain is more useful, cacao is more esteemed in Mexico and coca in Peru; and both of the two trees are not without little superstition."[52] The aura that Friar Acosta refers to never fully dissipated even as chocolate became more commonplace. While theologians believed that chocolate could be successfully controlled,[53] Fathers General thought that they could effectively eradicate all use. However hopeful dreams of regulations were, strict circumscription failed (among the Jesuits and the greater church), and chocolate became a popular vehicle for perceived heretical practices, often posited as *brujería*, or witchcraft.

The church's concerns about chocolate's mobilization in ensorcelled food and drink were not unfounded.[54] The deployment of chocolate to subvert religious orthodoxy tied the Mesoamerican beverage with notions of "the immanent divine and demonic."[55] As historian Martha Few found for sixteenth-century Guatemala, "Drinks made of chocolate proved among the most popular means for delivering spells in sexual witchcraft."[56] Inquisition cases attest to people's use of chocolate as a masking agent for other, unsavory elements believed to contain powerful magic, such as blood (most commonly menstrual blood), urine, excrement, powdered animal bones, dirt, and hair.[57] In 1668, the

[52] Friar Joseph de Acosta, *Historia Natural y Moral de Las Indias, Publicada en Sevilla en 1590*, Primero Tomo (Madrid, 1894), 378.

[53] Norton, *Sacred Gifts*, 230.

[54] Norton writes, "For Church authorities, tobacco and chocolate could be signs or accessories of heresy and apostasy, or of less damning but still pernicious superstitions." Norton, *Sacred Gifts*, 65.

[55] Norton, *Sacred Gifts*, 241.

[56] Martha Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives: Gender, Religion, and the Politics of Power in Colonial Guatemala* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2002), 54. Formally established in Mexico City in 1571, the Mexican tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition held jurisdiction over Guatemala (10).

[57] The following scholars present vignettes of perceived heretical uses of chocolate. Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives*, 49, 53–55, 63, 103, 112; Laura Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors: Power, Witchcraft, and Caste in Colonial Mexico* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003), 110, 119–20, 158; Joan Cameron Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007), 166, 169, 175; Nicole Von Germeten, *Profit and Passion: Transactional Sex in Colonial Mexico* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2018), 40; María Agueda Méndez, "Una relación conflictiva: La Inquisición novohispana y el chocolate," in "Senteurs et Saveurs D´Amérique Latine," special issue, *Caravelle*, no. 71 (December 1998): 12, 17; Martha Few and María Palomar Verea, "El chocolate, el sexo y las mujeres de vida desordenada," in "Chocolate III: Ritual, Arte y Memoria," special issue, *Artes de México*, no. 110 (June 2013): 24–33.

Holy Office interrogated a married Spanish woman who admitted she had sought out powders to mix with her lover's chocolate in order to break the bond that he had with his male best friend.[58] To procure the mixture, she had a fellow Spaniard contact indigenous acquaintances "who normally carry powders for that."[59] In a 1678 Mexican Inquisition case, an African-descended woman was said to have put "powders and animal hairs in chocolate, presumably to feed to men."[60] Concerns about chocolate often centered on its stimulating properties and connection to permissiveness,[61] but Inquisition cases also document instances of women who ensorcelled chocolate to protect themselves from physically abusive men. In a 1682 case, a woman washed her genitals with water and used the liquid to prepare her lover's hot chocolate so that he "would lose his anger."[62] However, women made similar preparations of chocolate for the men they wanted to attract as lovers.[63] Chocolate was also used to "ward off evil," which the Church spurned given its stance as the supreme religious authority and protector of souls.[64]

The Jesuits' anxiety around chocolate may not have been based solely in the potential for witchcraft. More insidious manipulators of chocolate had weaponized the strong taste of the product to conceal deadly poisons.[65] In colonial Guatemala, a woman nicknamed "La Panesito"/"The Little Bread Roll" had gained the moniker "because she was rumored to have killed a woman using a bewitched chocolate roll."[66] In colonial Cartagena de Indias, an African-descended woman poisoned the chocolate of a Spanish cobbler who had left her for a Spanish woman. When the man pleaded for the cure, she told him to "Go with God."[67] While the Fathers General may have heard about Inquisition cases, the Society was directly embroiled in an international scandal when in 1710 Jesuits in Macao allegedly murdered Cardinal Charles

[58] Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors*, 118–19.
[59] Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors*, 119.
[60] Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors*, 158.
[61] Manuel Aguilar-Moreno argues, "the reputation of cacao as an aphrodisiac and inductor of drunkenness, probably led the Catholic friars to view the cacao tree as one of the sinful trees of paradise, associated with animals symbolizing the baser human passions." Manuel Aguilar-Moreno, "The Good and Evil of Chocolate in Colonial Mexico," in *Chocolate in Mesoamerica: A Cultural History of Cacao*, ed. Cameron L. McNeil (Gainesville: University Press of Florida), 281. See also Lippi, "Chocolate in History," 1575.
[62] Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives*, 55.
[63] Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives*, 53.
[64] Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives*, 85.
[65] Coe and Coe, *True History of Chocolate*, 137; Few and Palomar Verea, "El chocolate," 33; Nicole Von Germeten, *Violent Delights, Violent Ends: Sex, Race & Honor in Colonial Cartagena de Indias* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2013), 119.
[66] Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives*, 117, 147.
[67] Germeten, *Violent Delights*, 119.

Thomas Maillard de Tournon. The cardinal had planned to report that "he discovered that the Jesuitical Chinese Christianity was nothing else than heathenism adorned with some slight admixture of Roman Catholic Christianity."[68] The Macanese community responded by poisoning his chocolate. Whether used in potions or poisons, chocolate's potential to instigate turmoil among Jesuits in colonial Mexico caused alarm in Rome for generations starting at the turn of the seventeenth century.

NEW METHODS OF DISORDER

In 1609, the Mexican provincial touted his triumph in halting the burgeoning threat of chocolate use, when in reality, it might have simply become more clandestine. Ever wary, Vitelleschi returned to investigating the use of chocolate in Mexico and discovered disturbing news about novel presentations of chocolate in two entries of the April 19, 1621, annual report. The first, titled "Chocolate should not be taken in powders nor in any other manner," states, "The chocolate that we have prohibited, they tell me, has been reduced somehow to powders and people chew it with other things and like that they take it. It is not permitted in any form." Superior General Vitelleschi added that it was "shameful" for Jesuits to procure such a substance, perhaps dreading similar cases of ensorcelled powders discovered by Mexican inquisitors.[69] That chocolate had become portable as a powder and perhaps more easily hidden (both in storage and in food) alarmed Vitelleschi. The battleground had shifted, and the Father General demanded heightened vigilance if the Society hoped to subdue this adaptable foe.

In 1621, Nicolás de Arnaya was in his fifth year as head of the Provincia Mexicana and was likely aware that some in the Society had begun to incorporate powdered chocolate into their habits of illicit consumption, but he might not have cared. Nor should have the Father General, one could argue, considering the more pressing challenges that the Society was facing at the time, including their expulsion from Japan in 1620.[70] Perhaps the Superior General could have also directed more energies toward the canonization of the Society's founders (both Ignatius of Loyola and Francis Xavier were canonized in 1622).[71] Was chocolate such a concern to rival the importance of such

[68] Karl Theodor Griesinger, *The Jesuits: A Complete History of Their Open and Secret Proceedings from the Foundation of the Order to the Present Time, Told to the German People* (London: W. H. Allen, 1883), 2:10–11.

[69] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 19 de abril," 1621, 243FTE, Epp. Gen., ARSI.

[70] For an examination of the history of Jesuits in East Asia (including significant work on Japan), see Andrew C. Ross, *A Vision Betrayed: The Jesuits in Japan and China, 1542–1742* (Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1994).

[71] O'Malley, *First Jesuits*, 1.

monumental changes and momentous events? Perhaps expulsion and canonization triggered a greater interest in the discipline and order of the Society.

In the same April 1621 report, Superior General Vitelleschi responded to specific priests who requested to use chocolate. Not a callous man, Vitelleschi stated that he was willing to be flexible, writing, "To Fathers Joseph de Vides [and] Pedro Gutierez, I give permission so that they can use chocolate, judged [to be appropriate] by the doctors, for their *achaques* [aches and pains]." Additionally, the Father General excused Father Vides from having to perform mass because of his "age and so little health."[72] While Vitelleschi continued to offer rare allowances for the very sick and the elderly, he reiterated the ban on chocolate use in future entries and announced that medical need alone would not sway his decision to keep a tight leash on the Society's access to illicit commodities. The founding documents of the order, the *Constitutions of the Society of Jesus* and the *Spiritual Exercises*, offer important context as to how the Society could have promoted health but might have also been cautious about medicine.

HEALTH

The 1558 *Constitutions,* penned by Ignatius in collaboration primarily with his secretary, Juan Alfonso de Polanco, outlined the Jesuit curriculum that included instruction in "humane letters [that] is understood, in addition to grammar, what pertains to rhetoric, poetry, and history."[73] The program also offered a foundation in the sciences and noted that "logic, physics, metaphysics, and moral philosophy should be treated and also mathematics, with the moderation appropriate to secure the end which is being sought."[74] However, the *Constitutions* explicitly excluded two areas of education, arguing, "The study of medicine and laws, being more remote from our Institute, will not be treated in the universities of the Society, or at least the Society will not undertake this teaching through its own members."[75] This reticence on the matter of medical training seems curious given the Society's focus on global evangelization and sustained interaction with the public. Would it not have been prudent to have a few doctors in the Society?

While the Society rejected the study of medicine, it did discuss the importance of health in the founding documents, emphasizing in one of the concluding notes, "It will also be helpful that attention should be devoted to the preservation of the health of the individual members."[76] And, in the *Spiritual*

[72] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 19 de abril," 1621, 243VTA, Epp. Gen., ARSI.
[73] *Constitutions*, 179.
[74] *Constitutions*, 180.
[75] *Constitutions*, 180.
[76] *Constitutions*, 406.

Exercises, Ignatius alludes to the centrality of good health in the first week of Jesuit instruction.[77] Members of the Society might have interpreted Ignatius's elaborations as allowing medicinal chocolate because it assisted with the greater mission of the order. The question was, who decided which prescriptions were "most conducive" to the Jesuits' missions?

"CONFORM . . ."

Perhaps Superior General Vitelleschi perceived the potential for this ambiguity and issued a clearer directive in August 1622 to Mexican Provincial Arnaya, likely due to the volume of requests he received over the previous year. In addition to encouraging the use of alternative remedies to avoid chocolate, Vitelleschi advised Arnaya to serve as a better role model and commanded him to "conform to what we have commissioned . . . about gift [giving] or the comfort of a chamber. Some want to introduce the need for many candles, we are not to go [toward] relaxation." He closed the report "strongly recommending" that the provincial and his successors "be very [much] warned on these points."[78] It appears as though not everyone in Mexico heeded the Father General's call for greater observation of Jesuit vows and deference to his authority. Future leaders, Vitelleschi appeared to assert, would be critically assessed by their success or failure in regulating chocolate use and steering the Society away from "comfort."

In Vitelleschi's estimation, chocolate served as a gateway to greater laxity. He might have pondered, "If today the Jesuits enjoy chocolate, lounges, and candles, would tomorrow bring more foreign luxury, such as silk sheets, pearl rosaries, and silver-embroidered robes?" Perhaps after allowing two fathers in 1621 to consume chocolate because of medical necessity, others in 1622 formed the impression that the ban had eased enough to make their own cases for special dispensation. In response, Vitelleschi showed no little disdain for those who had dared to ask him for the allowance, criticizing the "great excess" in chocolate drinks and powders in Mexico, and declaring, "And even though now many have asked me for permission to use these things, alleging to me that they need them to remedy their ailments, to all I have denied them permission." Superior General Vitelleschi then demanded that the Mexican

[77] One section reads, "Human beings are created to praise, reverence, and serve God Our Lord, and by means of doing this to save their souls. . . . To attain this it is necessary to make ourselves indifferent to all created things, in regard to everything which is left to our free will and is not forbidden. Consequently, on our own part we ought not to seek health rather than sickness, wealth rather than poverty, honor rather than dishonor, a long life rather than a short one, and so on in all other matters. Rather, we ought to desire and choose only that which is *more conducive to the end for which we are created."* Ignatius, *The Spiritual Exercises of Saint Ignatius*, trans. George E. Ganss, SJ (Chicago: Loyola Press, 1992), 32 (emphasis mine).

[78] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 8 de agosto," 1622, 276FTE, Epp. Gen., ARSI.

provincial "investigate well the necessity" of the eight petitioners of 1622 and urged the use of remedies that "do not have the inconvenience." He concluded with, "And [the provincial] should proceed very much warned during the inspection about the reforms of all kinds about *gifts* and the *excessive comfort* that some have started to introduce."[79] the Father General viewed chocolate use as a turn toward easy living and associated luxury with other "inconveniences" lurking around temptation's corner.

WORLDLINESS

Chocolate use was formal disobedience since the mandate had been inscribed in written form—both in the annual reports and perhaps in a compiled book of regulations. Obtaining it signified gratuitous spending and therefore a lack of poverty (even gifts of chocolate that incurred no expense to the receiver were frowned on).[80] And, procuring chocolate might break the vow of chastity as Jesuits interacted with marginalized women. The aforementioned Friar Joseph de Acosta wrote that chocolate "is a precious drink, which the indigenous people offer to the gentleman who come to or pass through their land: and the Spanish men, [but] more so the Spanish women, die [*se mueren*] for the black chocolate."[81] As chocolate's popularity grew, so too did its association with women.[82] While Spanish women also indulged in the beverage, indigenous and African-descended women were the principal chocolatiers in colonial Mexico,[83] and their contemporaries often associated chocolate with racialized and gendered beliefs about sorcery. "Love magic," in particular, was seen as not only communing with demonic forces, already a sin, but also a way for women to threaten male agency, neutralizing their bodily and psychic autonomy.[84] Because of African-descended and indigenous women's

[79] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 8 de agosto," 1622, 282FTE, Epp. Gen., ARSI (emphasis mine).

[80] According to the *Constitutions*, members in sufficiently financed colleges were instructed that "neither alms nor other gifts should be begged or accepted, for the greater edification of the people." *Constitutions*, 139. It further states, "The rector should also take care not to permit any of the teachers or other members of the Society to accept money or gifts, either for themselves or for the college, from any person for anything he has done to help them." *Constitutions*, 186. While there were no mandates that prohibited all gifts, Fathers General explicitly rejected chocolate gifts in the Society.

[81] Acosta, *Historia Natural y Moral de Las Indias*, 379.

[82] Daniela Bleichmar asserts, "Chocolate remained for the most part an American drink in the sixteenth century, consumed by nobles and commoners alike. In the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, it became a popular drink for Europeans on both sides of the Atlantic, praised as healthful and considered a domestic pleasure involving well-to-do women in particular." Bleichmar, *Visual Voyages*, 62.

[83] Few and Palomar Verea, "El chocolate," 26, 28.

[84] Few and Palomar Verea, "El chocolate," 29; Agueda Méndez, "Una relación conflictiva," 13; Few, *Women Who Live Evil Lives*.

mobility across both urban and rural landscapes, and their participation in open markets, a specter of illegitimacy hovered over them as it was believed they were too exposed to be considered honorable.[85] Chocolate selling reified perceptions of such women as socially dangerous.[86] Seventeenth-century records stress the belief that chocolate could drive people to deviance, but it also opened the door to anxieties of powerful women who could control men's bodies and minds. Vitelleschi may have been responding to some of these concerns as he continued to forbid chocolate use in the Society.

VITELLESCHI RAGES ON

The following two reports on chocolate from Rome were nearly identical. In April 1623, three Jesuits petitioned to use chocolate and in March 1624 there were four. Superior General Vitelleschi appeared to have drafted a standard reply for these very requests.[87] The format of his official response was as follows: names of the petitioners, a statement that they requested a license to drink chocolate (powders were not specifically cited in either 1623 or 1624), a note that the provincial would assess cases with the assistance of medical professionals, and an insistence on alternative medications to avoid the notorious "inconvenience." Vitelleschi's move to standardization was perhaps his attempt at combating the supposed sabotage of his overseas proxies.

Between 1622 and 1626, the Provincia Mexicana was under the leadership of Juan Laurencio. In an annual report, Father General Vitelleschi lambasted Provincial Laurencio's failure in purging the illicit abuse of chocolate among members and his wanton approval of petitions. In a response to the provincial's report in 1625, the Superior General could barely contain his vitriol, writing, "Many people realize that the chocolate drink has been introduced too much among us, which has caused not a few inconveniences that we fear will become worse if something is not done about it." Vitelleschi accused the Mexican provincial of granting "permission to use it to many *mozos estudiantes* [young male students], or to some [others] who have asked me for

[85] There has been significant work on preoccupations with female sexuality, the politics of an honorable woman, and social consequences of breaching the codes of respectability. See María Emma Mannarelli, *Private Passions and Public Sins: Men and Women in Seventeenth-Century Lima*, trans. Sidney Evans and Meredith D. Dodge (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007), 97–126; Ann Twinam, *Public Lives, Private Secrets: Gender, Honor, Sexuality, and Illegitimacy in Colonial Spanish America* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 59–88; Patricia Seed, *To Love, Honor, and Obey in Colonial Mexico: Conflicts over Marriage Choice, 1574–1821* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1988), 102–8; Germeten, *Profit and Passion*.

[86] Few and Palomar Verea, "El chocolate," 24–33.

[87] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 22 de abril," 1623, 292FTE, Epp. Gen., ARSI; Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 11 de marzo," 1624, 307VTA, Epp. Gen., ARSI.

permission to use it, which I absolutely negate." Not only were general members of the Society breaking protocol, so too was the head of the regional leadership. Superior General Vitelleschi lamented the lack of discipline at the highest ranks, writing, "If this [practice] had been observed with the exactitude, which the thing calls for, and [the provincial] had not given out so many [licenses] to others and if care was taken, this is the reason that no one should drink it but for the urgent necessity, the [issue of] permission would not have arrived at this state." He further bemoaned that he had received letters "from many people, vicious and jealous of the wellbeing of the Province" who apparently relished witnessing this disorder. He concluded with, "If [the provincial] does not remedy this with efficacy, I will be obligated to expel all usage of the drink."[88]

According to Vitelleschi, chocolate was on the verge of causing total collapse in discipline in the Mexican province. Not only were the old and infirm seeking its use, hundreds of young people in the dozens of Jesuit colleges in colonial Mexico had the potential of being entangled in a web of enticement.[89] That *mozos estudiantes* might drink chocolate or take it in powder form had tremendous implications—generations of men could be affected. With the dread that chocolate allowed the enemies of the Society to delight in reporting back to Rome that the order was in disarray, Vitelleschi likely felt betrayed. As subsequent reports detail, the tensions between Jesuit authority in Rome and regional representatives in Mexico did not dissipate.

In May 1626, Father General Vitelleschi's response to the office of the Mexican province articulated a mistrust of the new administrative leader, Visitador Diego de Sosa. In two separate entries in the report, chocolate takes center stage. Vitelleschi seemed to agree that chocolate was "the worse enemy of our institution."[90] Some of this angst might have been tied to chocolate's association with women and witchcraft, but Jesuits continued to view chocolate as a medicine, albeit one that required extreme adherence to a protocol guided by the approval of medical professionals. Twelve pages later in the second entry of the 1626 report, Vitelleschi took aim at the Mexican Visitador, writing, "After having entrusted [the Visitador] so many times with tightly remedying the excess that there is in the use of the chocolate drink in that Provincia, they now tell me that it is growing." Vitelleschi demanded that the inspector take responsibility in his duty to curb the abuse of chocolate in the Society, reminding

[88] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 16 de marzo," 1625, 321FTE–321VTA, Epp. Gen., Provincia Mexicana, Antica Campagnia, ARSI.

[89] For specific missions, see Pete Masten Dunne, *Pioneer Jesuits in Northern Mexico* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1944); John J. Martinez, SJ, *Not Counting the Cost: Jesuit Missionaries in Colonial Mexico* (Chicago: Loyola Press, 2001).

[90] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 6 de mayo," 1626, 335VTA, Epp. Gen., Provincia Mexicana, Antica Campagnia, ARSI.

him that he had the authority to proclaim a "holy mandate of obedience" to abstain from chocolate. Before he decided on such a drastic measure, Superior General Vitelleschi pleaded with Visitador Sosa to take action, writing, "*For the love of God* will [the Visitador] show that there is value in this and interest himself and agree." Vitelleschi added that those who faltered in this discipline should make penitence and urged Society leadership to serve as a "good example to their subordinates," the younger and more impressionable members of the community.[91]

SCHOOLING

For more than two centuries before their expulsion from the Spanish realm by King Charles III in 1767, the Jesuits transformed Spanish colonies with architecture, educational centers, and religious zeal.[92] The Society arrived on the shores of Mexico in 1572, and the Jesuits' emphasis on education shaped the colony's sociocultural structure.[93] The Society did not, nor does it now, adhere to cloistered life; rather, members served as energized religious troops willing to minister in unknown terrain to swell the ranks of the faithful. To their goal of converting Mexico's large and diverse indigenous population, Jesuit brothers and fathers also learned indigenous languages.[94] To reach people not housed in the Jesuit residences, they trekked to towns and cities to preach to people on streets and at forts. Some even boarded docked ships to offer services.[95] In attracting those interested in becoming Jesuits but also

[91] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 16 de noviembre," 1626, 344FTE–344VTA, Epp. Gen., Provincia Mexicana, Antica Campagnia, ARSI (emphasis mine).

[92] Jesuits arrived in the Americas in 1566 and by 1568 had established the first Jesuit school in Spanish America (Lima, Peru). O'Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, 66–67.

[93] One year after their arrival, Jesuits had founded the Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo in 1573. In addition to Jesuit residencies and seminaries, four more colleges were founded by 1578. Francisco Zambrano, *La Compañía de Jesús en México: Compendio Histórico* (Mexico: Buena Prensa, 1939), 69. By the 1580s, the Society had more than a dozen sites, including seminaries, residences, churches, and colleges. Peggy K. Liss, "Jesuit Contributions to the Ideology of Spanish Empire in Mexico," *The Americas* 29, no. 3 (January 1973): 331–32; Zambrano, *La Compañía de Jésus en México*, 69. At the Colegio de San Pedro y San Pablo alone, the school counted nearly 700 students by 1599. Jeffrey L. Klaiber, SJ, *The Jesuits in Latin America, 1549–2000: 450 Years of Inculturation, Defense of Human Rights, and Prophetic Witness* (St. Louis: Institute of Jesuit Sources, 2009), 12. A 1626 survey counted 365 members of the Society of Jesus in the Provincia Mexicana. By 1640, Mexico had thirteen colleges. O'Malley, *Jesuits*, 29.

[94] Felix Zubillaga, SI, *Monumenta Mexicana: Tomo 5 (1592–1596)* (Rome: Institutum Historicum Societatis IESU, 1973), 431; Liss, "Jesuit Contributions," 328–29; O'Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, 66.

[95] Francisco Javier Alegre, SJ, *Historia de la Compania de Jesus en Nueva Espana, 1566–1766*, tome 1, chap. 3 (1591–92), new edition by Ernest J. Burrus, SJ, and Felix Zubillaga, SJ (Rome: Archivum Historicum Societatis Iesu, 1960), 371.

those who sought a quality education, the Jesuit schools in Mexico established greater societal influence than orders focused on seminaries.[96]

The behavior of the students of the Jesuit colleges and their leaders drew the interest of the Superiors General, which is centrally staged in the drama of the consumption of chocolate that percolated in the early 1600s just as the number of colleges was increasing in Mexico.[97] The intimacy of the colleges likely fomented greater awareness for the need for order and discipline among Jesuits, amplifying the perceived dangers of chocolate. Jesuits were called to transform their young charges through education, but students (and their illicit activities) could also affect members of the order.[98] The interaction of Jesuits and the secular world had always been about negotiation.[99] In the Provincia Mexicana, chocolate as a product of the "Other" pushed the Society of Jesus to the limits of its measured elasticity.

ABUSE

Father General Vitelleschi closed his damning 1626 letter to Mexican Visitador Diego de Sosa by thanking him for "the things" that he had sent the previous year, perhaps softening the blow of the harsh criticism. Vitelleschi's scribe (it was unlikely that the Superior General personally penned the reports) appeared to temper the severity of the language dictated to him and wrote in a noticeably larger script size when closing the report: "I am very much grateful to Your Reverence." Perhaps Vitelleschi included the postscript as he realized that he could no longer afford to alienate his representatives in Mexico. However, that did not mean he would ease his stance. In November 17, 1628, Vitelleschi again reiterated his distress that "some members were liberally interpreting" the

[96] Klaiber, *Jesuits in Latin America*, 9–13. O'Malley asserts, "The schools gave the Jesuits an entry into local culture and civic life that churches alone could not provide." O'Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, 35. See also Aliocha Maldavsky, "Jesuits in Ibero-America: Missions and Colonial Subjects," in *Jesuits and Globalization: Historical Legacies and Contemporary Challenges*, ed. Thomas Banchoff and José Casanova (Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2016), 100–101.

[97] On the Society's emphasis on providing education, O'Malley writes, "The decision to found, staff, and operate schools meant that the Jesuits, while retaining their identity as missionaries, now also had an identity as resident schoolmasters." O'Malley, *Jesuits*, 12.

[98] O'Malley argues, "Failure to take account of how this ministry [of a teaching order] effected changes in the Society that undertook it is broadly symptomatic of the substantialism, to use R. G. Collingwood's term, that has marked most Jesuit historiography, that, the tendency to see the Society or 'Jesuitism' as an unchanging substance unaffected by the 'Other' it encountered." O'Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, 5–6.

[99] O'Malley argues, "But, as is clear especially from the studies dealing with Asia and the Americas, the reality of reciprocity between Jesuits and those with and for whom they ministered was even more profound." O'Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, 31. While I am uncertain whether Jesuits had more complicated relationships with Asians and Americans than with, say, Austrians and the English, O'Malley's emphasis on interrogating the reciprocal relationships that the Jesuits had with various communities is key.

ban on not drinking chocolate and instead were "taking it like candy and not for actual necessity."[100]

The Jesuits did not stand alone in their unease that chocolate had an addictive quality and could be abused by the public.[101] In 1652, physician Antonio Colmenero de Ledesma noted that while chocolate was "good and wholesome," it could be harmful when drunk "beyond measure."[102] In his 1662 treatise on chocolate, physician Henry Stubbe wrote, "That the Cacao-nut is nourishing, there is no doubt of it; that the *simple paste* may innocently be eaten . . . [however], I believe no *Physician* will *promiscuously*, and without distinction of Persons, allow it."[103] In 1672, physician William I. Hughes was particularly exacting in his statements against Spanish imbibers of chocolate since he considered the drink concocted by indigenous people "to preserve the healths" and implied that the Spanish "made several mixtures and compounds" merely to "gratifie [*sic*] and please their palats [*sic*]."[104] While indigenous people had nutritive goals, the Spanish merely wanted a delicacy, reproached Hughes.[105]

Stubbe too worried about dangerous additives, specifically substitutions, warning readers, "instead of the true American ingredients, other sucedaneous ones are employed, viz, the Spicery of the East-Indies; betwixt which and those of the West-Indies there is no resemblance, the one being milde [*sic*], the other violent."[106] Citing the risk of the effects of unknown compounds in medicinal chocolate, Stubbe urged people to consider that, "*Chocolata* is not to be promiscuously used by men in health, of all tempers nor by men sick of different diseases."[107] All three writers would have found an ally in the Society of Jesus. To the question of whether chocolate as medication was dangerous, the answer seemed to be "Yes, but . . ."[108] In a 1624 treatise on chocolate in a section titled, "First Question, if chocolate is good for the healthy," doctor and philosopher Santiago de Valverde Turices declared, "Do not ask if chocolate does any harm because in this there is no doubt [since] it has something of medication."[109] The

[100] Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 73.

[101] As Martha Makra Graziano asserts, "Despite the overwhelming number of laudatory comments on chocolate, it was never considered good for all people at all times." Martha Makra Graziano, "Food of the Gods as Mortals' Medicine: The Uses of Chocolate and Cacao Products, *Pharmacy in History* 40, no. 4 (1998): 134–35.

[102] Colmenero de Ledesma, *Chocolate: or, An Indian Drinke*, 36 (pagination from https://www.gutenberg.org/files/21271/21271-h/21271-h.htm).

[103] Stubbe, *Indian Nectar*, 118–19.

[104] Hughes, *American Physitian*, 119.

[105] Hughes accused Spaniards of corrupting the original indigenous recipe with additives that "made it much worse." Hughes, *American Physitian*, 119.

[106] Stubbe, *Indian Nectar*, 90.

[107] Stubbe, *Indian Nectar*, 90.

[108] For an overview, see Norton, *Sacred Gifts*, 132–39.

[109] Valverde Turices, *Un Discurso del Chocolate*, C1-vta.

Society's objection to chocolate might have been aligned with these concerns and not only about heresy and women. The Fathers General might have legitimately feared that members would abuse approved chocolate and that healthy members would be tempted to use medicinal chocolate because of its sheer proximity. This issue of regulation through prescription, since its curative properties could also be harmful, might have reasonably instigated the Jesuit prohibition. By and large, however, the Superiors General appeared less convinced of chocolate's usefulness, especially as it weighed the risk vis-à-vis reward.

END OF AN ERA

For a man reportedly known for his "prudence and gentleness of character,"[110] Father General Vitelleschi's letter to Mexican Provincial Jerónimo Díez was thick with disdain as chocolate use remained rampant. The August 1629 report reads, "The excesses and gluttony that there have been in that Province around the use of the chocolate drink, it is one of the things that *needs the most* remedy. [Provincial], consult well and try . . . so that it does not return to the past chaos. Let me know what is being done."[111] Even after decades of orders, reprimands, and clarifications, Vitelleschi had to contend with yet another unresponsive provincial and the damage caused by the indulgence and subversion that chocolate fostered. Vitelleschi must have also considered whether Díez was disregarding his letters in order to attend to local conditions in ways that undermined the Superior General's office. Mexican Provincial Díez might have also received such letters with bewilderment: How could the Father General consider chocolate drinking "one of the things that *needs the most* remedy?"

Superior General Vitelleschi's final letter addressing chocolate in April 1631 reads as if he were fully exasperated by Provincial Díez, writing, "From everywhere there are complaints that the excess in chocolate use has not been sufficiently remedied. I entrust [the provincial], with all possible means, to remedy this and to not permit it in any form and to ask *los de fuera* [those from outside]."[112] These unspecified "outsiders" might have been doctors who could have provided guidance or other religious leaders who could have assisted the provincial in eliminating the abuse of chocolate. However, Father General Vitelleschi might have also been putting the provinical on notice that outsiders could be called on to limit his decision-making powers.

[110] P. Antonio Astrain, *Historia de la Compañía de Jesús en la Asistencia de España*, Tomo V (Madrid: Razón y Fe, 1912–25), 2.

[111] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 15 de agosto," 1629, 371FTE, Epp. Gen., Provincia Mexicana, Antica Campagnia, ARSI.

[112] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 15 de abril," 1631, 381VTA, Epp. Gen., Provincia Mexicana, Antica Campagnia, ARSI.

From 1615 to 1645, Father General Vitelleschi led the worldwide efforts of the Society of Jesus. Importantly, a Superior General is appointed for life, while provincials are appointed for limited terms, usually a few years. In Vitelleschi's three decades in power, he witnessed ten different Mexican provincials transition in and out of office. The lack of continuity and discipline in Mexico frustrated his many attempts at governing from afar, but Vitelleschi was not without hope. In 1639, he penned a reflection as the Society of Jesus approached the one hundredth anniversary of its founding. With his passion for order and aspirations for the future on full display, Superior General Vitelleschi wrote, "Oh, what a disgrace it would be, if at a time when the Society is in her flower and strength, there should be found any amongst us so weak and void of spirit, as to be unable out of sheer exhaustion, I will not say, to undertake great works, but even to stand unmoved! What a strange thing it would be to see children old and wasted, while their mother was young and active! It would be a monstrosity and the scorn of all the world!"[113] In addition to warning members to not fall into degeneracy, Vitelleschi urged Jesuits to be more Christ-like "by the careful and perfect observance of our rules."[114]

As the head of the order during this milestone, the Father General was likely painfully aware of the possibility that, under his charge, the Society could collapse. Just two years prior, Jesuit Nicolás Caussin had been expelled from France after having served as Louis XIII's confessor, a prized position that was lost in less than a year.[115] If Caussin could be so summarily dismissed after holding such a coveted place in the French political realm, how stable was the Jesuit foothold in society? These anxieties are reflected in other areas of Vitelleschi's address when he asked: "Have we allowed the fire of love to grow dim in any way? Does the spirit with which we once burned, still glow within us, in brightness not unlike that with which the Society shone in the beginning?" He then encouraged members to engage in spiritual reflection to make any "fire [that] languishes . . . glow with its former brightness."[116] Speaking directly to the provincials, Vitelleschi's directive appeared to contradict all of his mandates regarding chocolate, writing, "The last thing that seems to hinder those who are in authority from the proper discharge of their duty, is an

[113] Father General Muzio Vitelleschi, "On the Centenary of the Society (1639)," in *Select Letters of Our Very Reverend Fathers General to the Fathers and Brothers of the Society of Jesus* (Woodstock, MD: Woodstock College, 1900), 89, https://archive.org/details/selectletters00unknuoft/page/n92/mode/1up?view=theater.

[114] Vitelleschi, "On the Centenary of the Society (1639)," 88.

[115] Caussin served from March to December 1637. Nicole Reinhardt, *Voices of Conscience: Royal Confessors and Political Counsel in Seventeenth-Century Spain and France* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2016), 235–44.

[116] Vitelleschi, "On the Centenary of the Society (1639)," 94.

over-great anxiety and solicitude about daily needs and temporal concerns."[117] Father General Vitelleschi might have been mournfully reflecting on the time and energy lost by attempting to eliminate chocolate use. In the same passage, Vitelleschi clarified that while provincials should not focus on "daily needs," strict discipline should not be compromised.[118] The 1639 letter to the Society sought a "renewal of spirit," and while he expressed disquiet about the path forward, the Superior General had faith in the tools of the Society bestowed by Saint Ignatius through the *Spiritual Exercises* and in the Jesuits' special place in the church's mission to offer salvation.[119] Chocolate represented the tangible manifestation of disorder, and Vitelleschi's crusade demonstrated his attempt to ensure that the worldwide community of Jesuits followed the rules set to "provide for the future" of the Society.[120]

MODERATION

Father General Muzio Vitelleschi's death in 1645 did not end the Society's battle against chocolate. Superior General Vincenzo Carafa, who served for a relatively short time from January 1646 to June 1649, took up the chocolate cause. In November 1647, Mexican Provincial Pedro de Velasco noted that both chocolate and tobacco were prohibited.[121] A year later in November 1648, Father General Carafa wrote to Provincial Velasco but only targeted chocolate for prohibition. Perhaps sensing that members looked to the Jesuit's historical openness to local customs, Carafa made his declaration unequivocal. The Father General began with a statement thanking Provincial Velasco for the "modesty" with which he requested "that the ban on chocolate not be so general." However, Superior General Carafa reiterated that his order against chocolate consumption "should be observed at face value, as it sounds, without epikeia, nor interpretation."[122] And with that definitive response, Father General Carafa precluded the possibility of employing a foundational Jesuit principal in order to access chocolate.

[117] Vitelleschi, "On the Centenary of the Society (1639)," 104.

[118] Vitelleschi, "On the Centenary of the Society (1639)," 104. He further asserted, "These cares are frequently a source of distraction, bringing weariness of mind and body, and oftentimes they keep us away from our community, and thus we neglect our real business, which is the guidance of our brethren in the way of virtue and perfection. And all the while superiors little reflect that they are neglecting the only real means of relief in all their wants; for there is no surer way to secure help and provide for the future, than by showing a watchful care for our Rules and Institute, and demanding of all the faithful observances of Rules, holy examples, and zeal for our neighbor's salvation" (104–5).

[119] Vitelleschi, "On the Centenary of the Society (1639)," 119.

[120] Vitelleschi, "On the Centenary of the Society (1639)," 105.

[121] Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 613.

[122] As partially quoted in Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo XIV, 627.

In Provincial Velasco's "modest" choice of words, he invoked St. Thomas Aquinas's understanding of epikeia—the moral position that one can refuse to abide by a law for the common good. In his thirteenth-century work *Summa Theologica*, Aquinas argued that epikeia (or equity) was a virtue, and he asserted, "To follow the letter of the law when it ought not to be followed is sinful," adding, "It belongs to 'epikeia' to moderate something, namely, the observance of the letter of the law. But modesty, which is reckoned a part of temperance, moderates man's outward life—for instance, in his deportment, dress or the like."[123] However, Carafa invoked an authoritarianism that rejected the ethics outlined by the famed thirteenth-century Dominican friar and philosopher that were encouraged by the Society's own curriculum.

The collection of practical regulations for the Society known as the *Ratio Studiorum* (1599) specifically instructed the Society of Jesus to study Thomas Aquinas's *Summa Theologica*.[124] In a statement about monitoring students' access to books, the *Ratio Studiorum* names the *Summa Theologica* as one of the few permissible works that students could own for private study.[125] Propagated by Aquinas and supported by Jesuit training materials, members of the Society knew that appealing to epikeia was a delicate matter, especially when directed at the Superior General. However, moderation could not be the way forward, according to Carafa, especially as he considered the potential impact of chocolate drinking if it spread to the Society's other provinces.

MIDCENTURY CAMPAIGNS

Even as he neared death in June 1649, Father General Carafa did not relent in his mission to steel the Society against the vice linked to chocolate. In his final statement on the matter in 1649, Carafa no longer feared the impact on the Provincia Mexicana alone, writing, "I have also written to almost all of the provinces and now I communicate to all that I revoke whatever licenses that have been given to drink chocolate." Superior General Carafa also mandated

[123] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica* (written between 1265 and 1273), trans. Fathers of English Dominican Province (London: Burns, Oats & Washbourne, 1922), 169, 171, https://archive.org/details/summatheologic12thom/mode/2up.

[124] In instruction no. 5 of theological study, it reads, "They should then study the principal treatises of the whole of theology, such as those on the vision of God, the divine knowledge, predestination, the Trinity, from the first part of St. Thomas's *Summa*. They should cover other parts of the *Summa* in the same way. In this study they should carefully weigh what others have written and should make their own digest of the chief divisions and fundamental theses of theology which have a bearing on many important disputed questions. They must keep firmly in mind, however, what the Society has decreed in regard to following the doctrine of St. Thomas Aquinas." *The Jesuit Ratio Studiorum of 1599*, trans. Allan P. Farrell, SJ (Washington, DC: Conference of Major Superiors of Jesuits, 1970), 97, https://academics.lmu.edu/media/lmuacademics/centerforteachingexcellence/documents/ratio1599.pdf.

[125] *Jesuit Ratio Studiorum of 1599*, 24.

what might have been the first wide-scale attempt at the confiscation of all chocolate and chocolate paraphernalia, ordering the Mexican provincial to "Get rid of all of the chocolate that you might find and the instruments with which it is made and do these visits frequently to see if there is something new to get rid of it, and correct it with the penance that it deserves." Carafa further noted that while old and infirm priests had requested a dispensation, he established a total ban because of "the abuse and disorder that [chocolate] has had[,] and all rigor is needed to remedy this issue with all efficiency."[126] In his final days, Father General Vincenzo Carafa so loathed chocolate that he was prepared to divert manpower to search residences and colleges to free the Society from chocolate, removing even the material accessories of its lure.

Profligate spending may have also informed the Jesuit leader's posture as the subsequent report on chocolate implied. In November of 1659, Superior General Goswin Nickel,[127] who served from March 1652 to July 1664, informed the Mexican provincial of his shock that the rector of the Colegio del Espíritu Santo, Father Ximénez, had spent an exorbitant amount of money on special resins and animal fats in order to flavor his chocolate. If expensive additives were not decadent enough, the report further noted that Ximénez owned a silver-encrusted drinking gourd with an accompanying silver spoon for his chocolate, and "in place of regular bread like others who drink chocolate, he eats sponge cake."[128] Father General Nickel's concern about chocolate seemed to be more specifically about extravagance and perhaps not (only) about abusing chocolate, which harkens back to earlier apprehensions about chocolate and luxury in the 1622 annual report.

While the reputation of the Jesuits as wealthy does have its place in certain histories of specific institutions, it was not true for all sites nor always true for the length of a given institution's existence. Historian James D. Riley's found that "the Mexican colleges had encountered an extended depression of major proportions" around the mid-seventeenth century.[129] The colleges were in such dire straits that in 1646 the Eighth General Congregation, the governing collective of the order, mandated that fewer novices be admitted in order to restore financial solvency.[130] However, the Society continued to suffer systemic fiscal challenges, and, in 1657, Father General Nickel criticized the leadership of the Provincia Mexicana for their fiduciary misconduct.[131]

[126] "Sylloge, Ordinationum et Episolarum Communium Praepositorum Generalium Societatis Jesu, Vol. Secundum, AB Anno 1652 usque ad Annum 1763," no date specified, 331, ARSI.

[127] Also spelled Goschwin and Gozwin.

[128] Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo VIII, 227.

[129] James D. Riley, "The Wealth of the Jesuits in Mexico, 1670–1767," *The Americas* 33, no. 2 (October 1976): 228.

[130] Riley, "Wealth of the Jesuits," 228.

[131] Riley, "Wealth of the Jesuits," 228–29.

More troubling, the situation did not greatly improve for the Society in the latter half of the century.[132] If indeed the Superiors General were aware of the depths of the financial crises plaguing the colleges, the thought of Jesuits in Mexico indulging in chocolate and stirring the frothy drink with silver spoons might have incensed the Society's leadership in Rome.

Chocolate drinking continued to trouble Nickel, and three years after his condemnation of the beverage, he expressed his "great astonishment" that chocolate use had increased and that young people and students had taken up the practice even when it was a clear "detriment to the religion of poverty." As previous Superiors General had also done, he revoked the ability of anyone to offer exemptions and nullified all previously approved licenses. Father General Nickel proclaimed that he alone would have the authority to grant licenses but stated, "I will not grant them easily except where age combined with necessity persuades me to condescend to a few."[133]

LATE-CENTURY CASES

After the 1662 ban against chocolate, another does not reappear until a November 1685 annual report. By then, Charles de Noyelle was nearly within a year in his position as the leader of the Society of Jesus, serving from July 1682 to December 1686. Superior General Noyelle expressed his distress about chocolate but also tobacco.[134] It was not the first time that the Society targeted tobacco use. In August 1658, Superior General Nickel encouraged the Mexican provincial Alonso Bonifacio to warn members about using tobacco in public.[135] A year later in November 1659, a letter from Nickel acknowledged that Jesuits were still abusing tobacco in Mexico.[136] While both chocolate drinking and tobacco smoking had been a problem for decades, Father General Noyelle was not inclined to overlook such activity. In the November 1685 annual report, Noyelle blamed the "capriciousness or extravagance" of provincials for the rise in chocolate drinking among fathers, brothers, and students.[137] He added that members who smoked tobacco "with indecency and offense to the community" demonstrated that they cared little

[132] In 1662, three Jesuit institutions faced closure because of insufficient funds, and in 1679, Father General Giovanni Paolo Oliva ordered the Provincia Mexicana to refrain from opening new ones and fundraise for existing properties. Riley, "Wealth of the Jesuits," 228–29.

[133] "Sylloge, Ordinationum et Episolarum Communium Praepositorum Generalium Societatis Jesu, Vol. Secundum, AB Anno 1652 usque ad Annum 1763," August 12, 1662, 35, ARSI. Italian translation provided by Daniel Schultz.

[134] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 3 de noviembre," 1685, 279FTE, Epp. Gen., Provincia Mexicana, Antica Campagnia, ARSI.

[135] Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo IV, 208.

[136] Gutiérrez Casillas, *Diccionario Bio-Bibliográfico*, Tomo IV, 210.

[137] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 3 de noviembre," 1685, 279FTE, Epp. Gen., Provincia Mexicana, Antica Campagnia, ARSI.

for exhibiting "a good upbringing to the youth."[138] While chocolate abuse was coupled with the impertinent use of tobacco, most disturbing was that the provincial leadership lacked restraint, potentially influencing future Jesuits.

However, in the same annual report, the Society's balancing act of rigidity and flexibility was again on display. Father General Noyelle received a request for special dispensation to use chocolate from someone in Mexico who appeared in great need. Father Sebastian de Estrada's health was failing, and his pain had caused him to stop drinking wine. He had even begun to skip his evening meal. Estrada piously requested a license "to take a bit of chocolate." Noyelle acknowledged that Father Estrada had taken measures to attend to his health but still suffered. As such, the Father General instructed Mexican Provincial Luis del Canto to see if chocolate was indeed the appropriate medical treatment, and if it were ascertained that it was, to grant the license to Father Estrada.[139] Superior General Noyelle's limited leniency harkens back to that of Superior General Acquaviva's in the early days of the century-long drama. Importantly, as late as 1685, Father Estrada and others in provincial leadership were well aware that one needed to petition the Father General in order to take medicinal chocolate—even if it was just a small piece for a sickly old man.

CONCLUSION

Tirso González de Santalla was the thirteenth Superior General of the Society of Jesus, serving from July 1687 to October 1705, and he too joined his predecessors in the fight against chocolate.[140] The front had shifted from the Mexican province to the heart of one of the oldest Jesuit strongholds in Europe—the Austrian province. On March 19, 1701, Father General González wrote to Austrian Provincial Ladislas Sennyei, stating with grave consternation, "I find much to blame and I grieve greatly that the use of those foreign drinks, chocolate, tea, and coffee, grows more frequent in that province, as I hear, with the result that our young men now purchase and consume [it] for themselves." Superior General González reiterated to Provincial Sennyei that such drinks could not be "tolerated . . . since it is well known how many and how great the troubles it introduces." While he acknowledged that the drinking of tea, coffee, and chocolate had been relatively recently introduced to the provinces, González feared its proliferation. The leader of the Society of Jesus then boldly proclaimed that it was his duty to correct the course before

[138] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 3 de noviembre," 1685, 279VTE, Epp. Gen., Provinica Mexicana, Antica Campagnia, ARSI.

[139] Annual report, "Con el Ordinario de 3 de noviembre," 1685, 279VTA, Epp. Gen., Provinica Mexicana, Antica Campagnia, ARSI.

[140] Also spelled Thyrsus González de Santalla.

such drinks caused "great misfortune."[141] However, Father General González was already too late. He and his predecessors had not held back the tide of chocolate use in Mexico or prevented it from spreading to the other Jesuit provinces.

No fewer than six Superiors General of the Society of Jesus waged war against chocolate use among its members to little avail. New ways to consume it had developed. The young and the old found it irresistible. Even with the threat of disciplinary action, chocolate use increased. The claims that it soothed indigestion, calmed one's nerves, assisted with respiratory problems, and did just about everything else did not persuade the leaders of the Society to indiscriminately support the use of medicinal chocolate.[142] Reflecting on Ignatius's guidance, historian John Bossy writes, "Few religious superiors can have told members of their order so firmly to forget the rules and do what they thought best."[143] Importantly, as O'Malley argues, "Flexibility and adjustment to circumstances were thus inculcated from the very beginning."[144] In India and China, the Jesuits often adapted to local customs.[145] Both sites, however, also established that there was a limit to flexibility in the Jesuit structure; the consequences of blurring such boundaries could be disastrous. Bossy, however, describes Ignatius's prescribed ethics as "an ideal" and argues that the founder of the Society of Jesus understood that religious activism "was as open to spurious as to genuine inspiration."[146] Aware of the dangers of human capriciousness, Ignatius trusted the judgment of members but perhaps especially that of the Fathers General. Even with the Society's "flexible-clauses" that allowed Jesuits to do what was necessary in the service of their mission, the Superiors General insisted that chocolate was far too dangerous.[147]

Chocolate use in Mexico underscores the challenges of elastic proselytization. Some local customs could be overlooked. Others would remain a thorn

[141] "Sylloge, Ordinationum et Episolarum Communium Praepositorum Generalium Societatis Jesu, Vol. Secundum, AB Anno 1652 usque ad Annum 1763," March 19, 1701, 169, ARSI. Latin translation by Christopher Trinacty.

[142] Norton notes the rejection of chocolate by some, writing, "Yet neither the technical theological debates nor humoral medicine nor venerable theories about desire were sufficient to quell powerful associations of the demonic and the divine in discussions about these goods." Norton, *Sacred Gifts*, 230.

[143] John Bossy, "Editor's Postscript," in H. Outram Evennett, *The Spirit of the Counter-Reformation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1968), 130.

[144] O'Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, 41.

[145] O'Malley, *Jesuits*, 49, 52, 68; Teotonio R. De Souza, *Jesuits in India: In Historical Perspective* (Macau: Instituto Cultural de Macau, 1992); Francis X. Clooney, *Fr. Bouchet's India: An 18th-Century Jesuit's Encounter with Hinduism* (Chennai: Satya Nilayam, 2005); R. Pochia Hsia, *A Jesuit in the Forbidden City: Matteo Ricci, 1552–1610* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010); Mary Laven, *Mission to China: Matteo Ricci and the Jesuit Encounter with the East* (London: Faber & Faber, 2012).

[146] Bossy, "Editor's Postscript," 130.

[147] O'Malley, *Saints or Devils Incarnate*, 41.

in the side of the Superiors General. All the leadership could do was reiterate their power to establish the boundaries of acceptable behavior—their authority to define what was necessary and what was excessive. What was at stake was the very epistemic power that the Fathers General insisted on in letter after letter, year after year. The privilege to decide that chocolate was a threat to the mission of the Jesuits was in itself an instantiation of their authority even if their decrees were ignored. Had chocolate actually caused chaos and disorder in the Provincia Mexicana? It did if it facilitated disobedience, and for the most vocal leaders in this fight, Superiors General Acquaviva and Vitelleschi, that was enough for them to rail against chocolate for as long as it took to rid the Society of its use.

Perhaps chocolate seems harmless enough now, calories and caffeine notwithstanding, an "inconvenience," really. However, the Jesuit leadership's concern regarding the proliferation of chocolate use among its adherents was tied to their belief that the Society of Jesus had been called to serve on the forefront of the Catholic Church's global missions. The Superiors General charged their seventeenth-century members with modeling a standard of religious orthodoxy for people in the furthest reaches of Christendom. If discipline could not be maintained among the pope's most elite cadre of religious soldiers, then what hope did the Catholic Church have in disciplining the greater flock?

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