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# Spain's misfired canon: The case of Luis De Granada's Libro de la oración y meditación

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# SPAIN'S MISFIRED CANON: THE CASE OF LUIS DE GRANADA'S *LIBRO DE LA ORACIÓN Y MEDITACIÓN*

*Elizabeth Rhodes*

Pero, ¿y Granada? El prejuicio que envuelve a Granada no ha sido todavía disipado. La historia literaria está tejida de prejuicios hostiles—prejuicios, no de la gente innovadora y ultramoderna, sino oficiales, académicos, universitarios.

Azorín, "Los dos Luises"

THE FACT that the most printed book of Spain's Golden Age has been excluded from its modern literary canon presents the contemporary student of literature with a volatile, problematic, and generally unknown [ignored?] circumstance.<sup>1</sup> Volatile, because of what this particular omission reveals about literary scholars' interests as reflected in their practices, and about the understanding of what constitutes "literature" as it has been formed by them since the 1600's. Problematic, because of the complex relationships this case brings to light, relationships that function on two levels: that of the text itself in its own day, and that of modern evaluation of the same text's significance, or lack thereof.

The issues raised by a hard look at modern assessment of the book at hand, a text recognized in its day as primary and yet virtually eliminated from the corpus of materials chosen to represent the same period to us, reveals the bias of the delicate weaves binding the written past to the present. These issues center around the criteria employed to determine which texts will bear that past into the present. Inherent in such a selection are

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<sup>1</sup> The possibility that the situation has been ignored is raised by the fact that Keith Whinnom's eloquent attention to the problem elicited little response, if any ("Best-seller").

certain guiding interests, whose presence raises serious questions: to what extent are the results of that selection representative, and further, representative of whom? The case considered here proffers yet another spectrum of conflicts with which the modern critic must grapple, such as the question of what constitutes the rightful domain of "literary studies" in this context, the relationship between books printed and books read in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spain, as well as that between books printed and literature received or "consumed" by the public by other means of communication (pamphlets, oral readings, sermons, etc.). What follows, then, proposes to bring to light a long silenced text, along with its plethora of difficulties, and in so doing, suggest that the authenticity of the present Golden Age literary canon could be substantially increased by some careful attention to Fray Luis de Granada's *Libro de la oración y meditación*.<sup>2</sup>

The *Libro de la oración*, like the other most printed literature of the period, harkens back to medieval ways of assessing reality via such themes as humanity's subservient relationship to God and the relative worthlessness of life on earth in the face of divine eternity. A somewhat fundamentalist if reformist text, bent on teaching at all costs and entertaining only to attain that goal, its subject as well as its style clash with modern secular culture, and are also at odds with the long-dominant reconstruction of Golden Age Spain as a period saturated by one variant of humanism or another. Given the book's ideological distance from the present, two modi-

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<sup>2</sup> The number of readers of this article who have actually read the *Libro de la oración y meditación* would probably suffice to prove the extent to which literary scholars are familiar with Granada's book. However, further proof may be gleaned from other sources: the appropriate volume of Francisco Rico's *Historia y crítica de la literatura española*, which is a 748-page tome devoted to the "Renaissance," two and one-half pages are dedicated to Fray Luis. They are extracted from an article by Emilio Orozco about nature in Granada's *Introducción del símbolo de la fe* (incorrectly referred to therein as the *Introducción al símbolo de la fe*, 506-08). The *Introducción* is an encyclopedia-type treatise first published in 1583; although interesting in the same way as is Torquemada's *Jardín de flores curiosas*, its importance pales when compared with that of the *Libro de la oración*. The R. O. Jones book dedicated to Golden Age prose and poetry is an earlier version of the same problem: two and one-half pages on Luis de Granada, and no mention whatsoever of the *Libro de la oración* (129-32).

The negligent treatment of Granada inevitably plagues the would-be reader of his book. The text has not been edited since 1907. At a particular institution of higher education affiliated with a certain Spanish saint, for years the Ph.D. reading list in Spanish included the "*Guía de pescadores* by Fray Luis de Granada." (The same volume may be found in the library of the Universidad Autónoma de Barcelona.) It seems that Fray Luis was talented in music as well as in fishing techniques: a respectable Spanish library contains the following catalogue entry: "*Canciones*, Fray Luis de Granada." The first instance was a misprint for the *Guía de pecadores*, the *Canciones* are actually *Conciones*, "sermons" in Latin.



fications in the traditional direction of critical analysis are necessary for its appreciation, and to illuminate the dramatic impact it might have as background reading for other sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Spanish literature.

One of those modifications is the continued movement away from the ideological skewing grafted onto Golden Age studies by much scholarship to date. Margaret Ferguson and her co-editors of *Rewriting the Renaissance* have dealt convincingly with this matter, and their most dramatic observation merits review: critics' overwhelming attention to the humanists and their texts, texts which are attractive in large part for their modernity and are characterized by the modern reader's relatively effortless appreciation of them, has beguiled us into accepting as representative of a cultural whole the ideological vision of a very small elite. This distortion, as Ferguson and her colleagues call it, is what has excluded Fray Luis de Granada from the modern literary canon of Golden Age Spain.<sup>3</sup>

The second directional modification in critical approaches to literary texts proposed here moves in a similar direction. It involves the practice of reading in acceptance of difference, with a willingness to consider the old book as a subject, not an object, as a self-determining entity of semiotic independence whose original boundaries should be respected and whose original significance can and should be at least partially recovered, and appreciated instead of altered or ignored.<sup>4</sup> Along this path, which deviates from the one leading to the present state of affairs, Granada's text can recover some of the meaning with which it originally overflowed. The ideological context within which it was heartily appreciated can be brought to bear not only upon our understanding of the Golden Age, but upon the question of the utility of reading old books for educational purposes. To read this book successfully in the modern age is to come to grips with a difference, not a sameness; it is growth, not expansion.

If the revival of Granada's book via the enactment of such modifications is controversial, it is because of the gaping abyss between what the *Libro de la oración y meditación* once was and what has been made of it. The message of the present study, somewhat sermonistic and intentionally so, is that an accurate reckoning of the Spanish literary canon must account

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<sup>3</sup> See the "Introduction" to *Rewriting the Renaissance* (xv-ci). Amparo Moreno's two interesting books study the cultural predominance in Spain of the Aristotelian *vir*, with his concomitant *virtus*.

<sup>4</sup> Cf. Julio Caro Baroja: "Personalmente pienso que así como Pasteur dejaba sus creencias en la antesala del laboratorio, el investigador de un asunto como éste [la religión en la sociedad] también debe procurar dejarlas, y experimentar un poco la posibilidad de construir la experiencia de otros hombres y mujeres, a través de su propio cuerpo y sensibilidad (si es que la tiene, porque si no, es mejor que se dedique a otra cosa)" (16). Robert Scholes's *Protocols of Reading* defends much the same proposal.

somehow for its quiet elimination of the most printed book of the Golden Age, and more importantly, the ideology represented by that book. That is to say, the book's own history is as important as the book itself, and certainly at this point, at which a sort of intellectual by-pass circumvents the junction between the past and the present where there should be an intersection.<sup>5</sup>

Three other matters condition what follows. First, Granada's book is immense and complex, and only its salient features can be touched on here; Cuervo's edition, quoted herein, is 487 pages long, and that is its "short" version, the original 1554 edition plus the *Parte tercera* added in 1555. Second, the ideas set forth in it, although perhaps the most representative of their own period in quantitative terms, are quite alien to modern experience and require ample explanation, particularly since the book itself is new to most readers. Third, since Granada's ideology, including that of his sources and his disciples, is generally unknown, it must be studied in itself or the book will continue to be considered an embarrassing accident at the printing presses. For these three reasons, attention here is devoted primarily to the circumferential dilemmas Granada's book presents to scholars today, reserving in-depth discussion of its contents for another occasion.

The title of Granada's book is somewhat misleading. Although primarily a do-it-yourself manual for mysticism, its contents touch on issues of public versus private behavior, contemporary customs, popular themes of piety, and troublesome problems of morality. Likewise, it offers a full measure of anecdotes about life in Granada's time and reveals a penetrating comprehension of human nature, the fruits of not only its author's evident fascination with life, but also of his many experiences as a confessor. For example, he laments the human tendency to waste God's given time in vanities, which produces anguish in the hour of true need saying, "Y así nos acaesce como a los pajecillos o mozos de palacio, que les dan una vela para acostarse, y ellos gástanla en jugar toda la noche, y después vienen a acostarse a oscuras" (153).<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Granada's latest biographer, Álvaro Huerga, suggests that "la historia de la vida y de los libros de fray Luis de Granada es también, en cierto sentido, la historia del siglo XVI" (xiv). The extent to which this is true makes the absence of the Dominican from the literary canon all the more lamentable. It is worth recalling that there is indeed religious literature well ensconced in the Spanish canon; carefully selected, it accurately reflects the interests of mainstream scholarship. Luis de Granada's works do not.

<sup>6</sup> On various occasions in his book, Granada talks about mechanical clocks, familiar items whose workings he understood (i.e., "Así como los que rigen un reloj suelen comúnmente dos veces al día subir las pesas a lo alto, porque ellas mismas su poco a poco van siempre caminando para abajo, así los que quieren traer sus ánimas bien

Such supporting material, however is always set forth in service of Granada's primary motive, teaching how to pray. Prayer, in turn, is initially described as "cualquier levantamiento del corazón a Dios" (5), and its definition is refined throughout the text. In his development of its meaning, Fray Luis presents a striking testimony of how vital the concept of spiritual merit over physical compliance with meritorious ritual had become by the mid-sixteenth century.<sup>7</sup> Addressing the superior value of meditational interchange with the divine over all other virtuous acts, he says: "Vemos cada día muchos religiosos encerrados en sus monasterios y ocupados en todas las observancias y asperezas de la vida monástica...y...sobre todo viven en un estado perfectísimo, el cual los hace libres de todas las ocasiones de cuidados y negocios del mundo. Y con todo esto (si por ventura les falta el uso de la oración interior) veréis a muchos dellos tan secos, tan sin espíritu, tan fríos en el amor de Dios...como unos puros seglares. Y por otra parte hallaréis una mujer casada (que es un estado sin comparación menor que aquél) cargada de hijos y familia y casa que gobernar, y que ninguna cosa hace de todas aquellas (porque el estado no lo sufre) y si con todo esto procura recogerse cada día sus tiempos ciertos, y ejercitarse en esta manera de oración, y continuar el uso de los Sacramentos, veréis en su ánima una simplicidad y pureza tan grande, una castidad tan pura, una devoción tan entrañable, ...que por un cabo os ponen admiración, y por otro vergüenza y confusión de veros tan lejos de aquel estado (455-56)."<sup>8</sup>

Through approaches to prayer such as this, Granada presents direct and private [i.e., unmediated] contact with the divine as a necessity, not merely

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regidas y concertadas han menester a lo menos estas dos veces al día subir las pesas a lo alto..." [308]). It would seem, then, that these relatively new inventions were common before the mid-seventeenth century, the period suggested by Bouza Álvarez ("Tiempo").

<sup>7</sup> This concept is typically ascribed to Erasmism, especially in Spain where Bataillon's brilliant study of the Dutch scholar's influence still overshadows the study of native Spanish piety, particularly in literary studies. The reformist concept mentioned here, with its inherent contrast between the monastic and the secular communities (which led to the famous Erasmist motto *monachus non est pietas*), was in circulation in Spain well before Erasmus's ideas had entered the Peninsula via the routes opened for it by reformist Spanish Catholicism. Unlike Erasmus, Granada wholeheartedly endorses the monastic life, although admitting that it is no guarantee of closeness to God. On the debate about Erasmus' importance in Spain versus native Spanish piety, see on one hand, Grout, Bataillon ("Une source," "Sur le diffusion"), and on the other, Alonso ("Sobre Erasmo"), Asensio ("El erasmismo"), Castro ("Lo hispánico"), Andrés, and Whinnom ("Supposed Sources").

<sup>8</sup> This passage is a development of what Granada had written to Fray Luis de la Cruz in 1539 from Escalaceli: "¡Oh, cuántos teólogos andan a caza de sutilezas, volando por el aire, y pierden—si viene a mano—la bendición, la cual gana una vejezuela hilando en su casa!" (letter reprinted in Huerga, "Escalaceli" 335). His repeated references to women as the unlikely but true practitioners of virtuous prayer are striking.

a possibility. It is ingenuously prescribed for virtually everyone: "Venid a esta fuente a beber de todos los estados, los casados, los religiosos, los sacerdotes, los del mundo y los de fuera del mundo" (15).<sup>9</sup> For Granada, good meditational habits are the essential function of life; as is one's prayer, so is one's existence. Thus his book attests to the exaltation of the spirit and the power of the individual to negotiate her or his own salvation that accompanied the religious reform of his age, a phenomenon that reaches well beyond the periphery of humanism.

The structural simplicity of Granada's book is a reflection of its overall straightforward nature. The *Parte primera* of the *Libro de la oración y meditación* includes an introduction to and a definition of prayer, followed by Granada's five-part act of prayer itself: preparation, reading, meditation, thanksgiving, petition (19).<sup>10</sup> Declaring that "la principal causa de todos los males que hay en el mundo, es falta de consideración" (5), he devotes most of the first part of his treatise to fourteen sections of material for meditation, all related to events of the Passion. This material, "para rumiar" says Granada, is the mainstay of the entire book. It contains two sets, one of meditations for the morning and one for the evening, with each exercise providing first a paraphrase in Spanish of the Biblical text and then a dramatic narrative development of the reading's events.<sup>11</sup> The first part ends returning to the five parts of prayer more extensively, as well as to six motives for meditating on the Passion exclusively; it is the most literary section of the text.

The *Parte segunda* treats the theme of devotion as a complement to prayer, including its definition, a thorough treatment of those practices which aid in its attainment as well as those which impede it, a review of the most common temptations that beset the beginner, and finally, some advice against the wiles of the Enemy. Not until these chapters are the practical details of the prayer act itself treated, although Granada distin-

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<sup>9</sup> This was scandalous to the "falange conservadora" then ruling the Church; in his censorship of Carranza's *Catechismo*, the powerful Dominican Melchor Cano maintains that Granada erred in his books "en que pretendió hacer contemplativos y perfectos a todos, y enseñar al pueblo en castellano lo que a pocos conviene," for one thing, and for another, "en haber prometido camino de perfección común y general a todos los estados, sin votos de castidad, pobreza y obediencia." Cano's references to Granada are in Huerga, *Granada*, 146-68. The phrase "falange conservadora" is from Dias (31).

<sup>10</sup> This particular five-part configuration was recommended to Granada by Juan de Ávila in a letter dated 1544 by Sala Balust (266-67).

<sup>11</sup> In describing the religious literature of the Middle Ages, Vårvaro points to the medieval quality of this kind of Biblical presentation, saying "Para los laicos el texto comentado no solía presentarse en la forma escolar de la glosa marginal propiamente dicha, que resultaba muy incómoda para el lector, sino que estaba constituido por una paráfrasis seguida donde el comentario y el texto estaban fundidos en un único continuum, en el que a menudo era bastante difícil separar la palabra divina de su exposición" (89).

guishes himself from other authors of books about meditation, such as Osuna (*Tercer abecedario espiritual*) or Loyola (*Ejercicios espirituales*), by addressing them at all. His inclusion of such details as where to pray, when, in what position, and for how long reveals the extent to which he offered spiritual independence to his readers.<sup>12</sup> It is in the second part that the author's psychological astuteness and experience with cases of conscience are most apparent.

The original 1554 edition was published without the third part promised by its author in its Prologue, the text having acquired an unwieldy and unexpected length by the end of the *Parte segunda*. The next edition, published in 1555, and all others until 1559, contain an *ad hoc* third part, with three sermons elaborating on the theme of prayer and treating its usefulness, necessity, and the need for perseverance in the same. In the prologue to this edition, Granada states that what follows is his book as he wanted it to be, thereby indicating that its thematic unity, although distinct from what he had intended when he set out to write, satisfied him.<sup>13</sup> In the three sermons at the end of the *Libro de la oración* are to be found the most forceful of Granada's few overt criticisms of the organized church and his strongest defense of mental over vocal prayer. At their conclusion of this third part, Luis de Granada has dedicated almost five hundred pages to a purely spiritual theme. Among his multitude of writings, this is his most ideologically severe text. It exudes relatively little of the joy in the created world that is found in other books, particularly the *Introducción del símbolo de la fe*.

Simply stated, this unlikely book, long, repetitious, and humble, was by far the most printed book of its day. In his splendid 1980 article "The Problem of the Best-seller in Golden Age Spanish Literature," Keith Whinnom provides the necessary data to prove this. Commenting upon the most printed books of the Golden Age, which he determines were thus its "best sellers," he observes "One amazing book stands quite alone, with almost twice as many editions as its nearest rivals, that is *Celestina*, Guevara's *Marco Aurelio*, and Aesop. This is Fray Luis de Granada's *Libro de la oración*, which ran through well over one hundred editions between 1554

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<sup>12</sup> Granada recommends a dark and solitary place to pray, at dawn and at midnight if possible and if not, before retiring (after a light dinner, he adds, and before sleeping on a hard bed) and first thing in the morning. During prayer, one's heart should kneel but the body should be in whatever position is most conducive to good results (*Libro* 312-17).

<sup>13</sup> What he had originally meant to be the Parte Tercera of the *Libro de la oración* was published in 1556 as the *Guía de pecadores*. This pre-Index edition, edited by Martián Martínez Burgos, was published as number 97 of the Clásicos Castellanos series; it is more accessible than the Cuervo edition of 1906, which is Volume I of his *Obras de Fray Luis de Granada*. The 1566 edition was the one used for the *Biblioteca de Autores Españoles* edition (Vol. 8).

and 1679" (194). Some details reveal the remarkable nature of the text's history. It was printed at least eight times in 1555 alone, after having been printed once in 1554. By 1559, that is within five years, Fray Luis's treatise on prayer had exhausted twenty-three editions.<sup>14</sup>

The *Libro de la oración y meditación* was well on its way to becoming the most published book of its century when the severe changes in Spain's religious climate became manifest in the 1559 *Catalogus librorum qui prohibentur mandato Ill. et Rev. D. D. Ferdinandi de Valdés* (Valladolid). In it were Granada's two major treatises at that time, the *Libro de la oración y meditación* and the *Guía de pecadores*, and publication of both books came to an abrupt halt. After "refining it," as Dominican biographers are wont to say, Granada published an expanded version of his prayer manual in 1566, which by 1599 had galloped through another forty-eight editions in Spanish alone.<sup>15</sup> Although the focus of the 1566 version is significantly more oriented toward formal religious practice than the earlier one (the final three sermons were all redone, to treat alms and charitable works), and although the names of all the problematic spiritual leaders Granada had quoted freely in 1555 are removed (such as Herp, Fermo, Savonarola), the ideological foundation of the text remained intact. Indeed, close examination of the two versions reveals the careful relocation, not removal, of quotations from those leaders; these were not objected to because by 1566 Granada had the overt support of men more powerful than Valdés (who died in 1568).<sup>16</sup> The continued presence of this

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<sup>14</sup> What might seem at first glance to be a trite observation is not: "cuando un libro se reimprime es porque se ha agotado" (Riquer 285). There may be assumed, then, a supply-and-demand relationship between books printed and books sold that burgeoned with the printing press. Riquer goes on to say that an extremely conservative estimate of books printed per *tirada* for this period is 1,000 (285). Although referring to books of chivalry, his figures are probably accurate if not inadequate for printings of Granada's text, which enjoyed the ecclesiastical powers' favor due to their interest in off-setting the growing market for secular fiction. (Vigil's book and Russell's article study these interests). Llana's *Bibliografía* is the most complete listing of Granada's first editions (IV: 283-88), although it does not include those in American libraries, which are substantial, nor, as Llana himself points out, does it list all multiple printings of the same edition.

<sup>15</sup> Granada was a very popular author with English readers, and his influence on British religious literature merits research. Martz approaches the matter in his book; I have been unable to consult J. R. Fernández's *Fray Luis de Granada en Inglaterra: Repercusión en los sermones de John Donne* (Valladolid, 1974). In the sixteenth century, Granada's books were translated into Japanese, Greek, and Polish, aside from the more standard languages; Switzer has a table of these (151).

<sup>16</sup> Granada was not easily intimidated, it seems. Although Erasmus's works were rigorously prohibited by Valdés in 1559, there is a boldfaced transcription of a passage from the Arcediano del Alcor's translation of Erasmus's *Enquiridión* in the 1567 version of the *Guía de pecadores* that was *not* in the pre-*Index* version (Alonso 221-

powerful text on the Golden Age book market, and its dominance of the same, should allow scholars to identify what the Inquisition and state authorities encouraged, in contrast to the tendency to focus on what they prohibited. Judicious examination of exactly what types of private piety actually flourished during the period will reveal the ideological foundation of the age, not its peripheral and precarious appendages.

Curiously, the digest version of the *Libro de la oración*, compiled by San Pedro de Alcántara with the title *Tratado de la oración* and first published in 1557, was not recalled by the Inquisition in 1559 and continued to be published during the "dry years" of the original.<sup>17</sup> Also, the entire *Libro de la oración y meditación* was published in Italian during the same period, in editions with the more daring *Parte Tercera* in Spanish (see Llana, volume I).

Whinnom rightly points out the difficulties involved in deciding what to make of these outstanding publishing statistics. The fact that the *Libro de la oración y meditación* was by far the most printed book of its age does not have any bearing on its literary merit, as he says. But—and this is something he does not say—literary merit is a critical construct, not a manifest truth. Montrose's astute observation that "criticism is a cultural practice that ineluctably constructs the meanings it purports to transcribe" (415) shifts the responsibility for our ignorance of Granada's ideas from his books to ours. It also indicates to what an extent scholarship's persistent exclusion of Luis de Granada's book from the canon implies that sixteenth- and seventeenth-century readers were wrong, or tasteless, or both. This is a function of deeper professional questions which Whinnom addresses nicely. He convincingly displays the distance between what Golden Age scholars have long held up as the representative texts of the period and what the presses were actually producing during the same years. In the realm of secular fiction, for example, the most printed books were, in this order, *Celestina*, *Guzmán de Alfarache*, and *La Diana*.

Whinnom also calls attention to the discrepancy between sixteenth- and seventeenth-century reading habits, which focused on moral literature, and modern reading tastes, which literary scholars like to believe center on secular fiction. According to *The New York Times*, nonetheless, among the most printed books of all time is Dale Carnegie's *How to Win Friends and Influence People*, a text of amazing likeness to Granada's (McDowell). Isaías Rodríguez's bibliography of Spanish authors of religious literature

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<sup>17</sup> The *Tratado*, long attributed to Alcántara, has a colorful history; see Huerga, "Génesis." Martínez Burgos observes, "Pasma contar en el bibliografía granadina del Padre Llana hasta 476 ediciones varilingües de sólo el *Tratado de la oración y meditación* en un espacio de tres siglos y medio o sea desde 1584 a 1904; con que viene a salir un conjunto a más de impresión por año" (viii). It is not clear whether he refers to Granada's book or Alcántara's condensed version of it.



from 1500 to 1572 includes 314 names and many more titles, almost none of which figure into mainstream studies of Spanish literature. Sara Nalle's excellent article on literacy in early modern Castile provides fascinating statistical data that uphold Whinnom's ideas about the dominance of religious literature in the sixteenth-century book trade: for example, in three bookshop inventories from 1554 (Cuenca), 1556 (Toledo) and 1581 (Toledo), over one third of the first two collections consisted of devotional literature in Castilian, almost half of the third consisted of the same (82-84). Caro Baroja's work with Nicolás Antonio's *Bibliotheca Hispana Nova* corroborates Whinnom's contention as well: Antonio lists 5,835 religious texts, compared to 5,450 listings of *all other materials*. There are 507 books about the Virgin, 576 lives of saints or pious individuals. The lives of kings, princes, and the histories of nations, plus the biographies of politically illustrious women and men in all of history to that point, total only 308 (31). Although quantity itself is not the issue here, these numbers suggest that the attention devoted to this type of text in literary studies is disproportionate to its presence during the period under consideration. In the face of such evidence, it seems prudent to conclude that Spain's religious literature, first and foremost its *Libro de la oración y meditación*, deserves, if you will, another shot at the canon.

Sceptics will wonder exactly who was reading this book (so implying that there are significant readers and meaningless ones); modern opinion tends to credit nuns and monks, or the elite with nothing more pressing to do, with successes like this.<sup>18</sup> The Dominican's broad impact is witnessed by many records however. For example, the Inquisitorial testimony of an illiterate youth who, against all odds, recalled that Granada was the author of a book he had heard read; although even literate individuals tended to forget names and titles of works they had read or owned, Granada's was among the few they did recall (Nalle 85). According to a Dominican anecdote, "traían los manuales [Granada's *Libro*] las niñas de cántaro debajo del brazo; las fruterías y verdulerías los leían cuando vendían y pesaban la

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<sup>18</sup> Traditionally, literacy statistics for this period have been derived from signatures on legal documents and reflect urban populations almost exclusively. However, urban dwellers constituted only 10% of the entire Spanish population (this in 1600; earlier it would have been less [Gutiérrez Nieto 43]). The fact that prosperous farmers of Golden Age Spain tended to buy devotional texts when they could afford a luxury item (Gutiérrez Nieto 66), would seem to indicate some level of rural literacy. Nalle's article indicates how skewed toward the elite most literacy statistics are in her examination of Cuenca's sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Inquisitorial records; she finds ample evidence of rural literacy and of a population that could read but not write, and so left no record of itself. Non-elite but literate members of book-owning households typically had access to the family library (Chevalier), and a wide range of readers took books out of lending libraries, about which Bouza Álvarez has found interesting documentation ("Coleccionistas," 243).



mercancía" (Arriaga II: 48). Although obviously apocryphal (could those women read, and further, read and weigh produce at once?), this is probably a faithful testimony of the spirited enthusiasm with which the *Libro de la oración y meditación* was received by a wide sector of the Spanish population for more than a century. Lest it be proposed that Granada's readers were "merely popular," it is worth recalling that the book under consideration was among the four that Fray Luis de León requested while in prison.<sup>19</sup> In a letter to Arias Montano, the illustrious Augustinian declared that he had learned more from Granada's books than in all his readings in scholastic theology combined (Barbado Viejo xxiii).<sup>20</sup>

In assessing the impact of Granada's ideology in the Spanish Golden Age, another important factor must be taken into account. Luis de Granada was a Dominican, and thus preaching was the most fundamental of his professional obligations. Obligations aside, he was an extremely powerful orator and a committed voice of reformist Catholicism, who repeatedly refused private posts in both noble and royal households of Spain and Portugal in order to stay in the pulpit and in contact with the people.<sup>21</sup> His down-to-earth and practical piety, intentionally directed at an all-inclusive audience and characterized by careful down-play of his magnificent erudition, combined with the renown of his personal integrity, won him popularity with the common people and the nobility alike. Before being sent to Portugal in 1551, he was the most sought-after religious speaker of the Andalusian aristocracy (Huerga, "Escalaceli" 479). In 1582, six years before his death, he moved toward the close of a long and prosperous preaching career by delivering a sermon to Felipe II.<sup>22</sup>

Contemporary records attest to Granada's efficacy as a preacher, and this popularity cannot be divorced from the phenomenal success of his book. In the *Avisos para los predicadores del santo evangelio*, Fray Au-

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<sup>19</sup> On March 31, 1572, Luis de León requested his copies of Augustine's *Quinquagena*, *De Doctrina Christiana*, works of St. Bernard, and Granada's *Libro de la oración* (Coster 297).

<sup>20</sup> Azorín, whose estimation of the book opened this article, is a fine example of a more modern reader who had to force himself to approach Granada's imposing texts with their insipid titles. Once initiated, however, he was overcome by their power and beauty: "¿Quién será en España mayor prosista que fray Luis de Granada?" he asks, later saying of the *Libro de la oración*, "La lengua castellana no ha llegado nunca a más terribilidad y a más sutileza angélica" (160; 165). Azorín's essays on Granada are sensitive renderings of what strikes most readers about Granada's personality as reflected in his life and works. Bataillon, for his part, in reference to the *Libro de la oración* refers to "su avasallador eloquencia" (Erasmio 596).

<sup>21</sup> Huerga describes "lo que fray Luis es: anto todo y sobre todo, un *predicador*" (Granada 187).

<sup>22</sup> Of that sermon, Felipe wrote to his daughters, "Por ser tarde, no tengo tiempo de deciros más sino que ayer pedricó [sic] aquí en la capilla fray Luis de Granada, y muy bien, aunqu'es muy viejo y sin dientes" (quoted in Huerga, *Granada*, 257).

gustín Salucio declares: "Aquel llamo yo buen oficial que, en poniendo su tienda en el pueblo donde entra, se le conoce al auditorio en la ropa la impresión de la doctrina evangélica. Esto se vio en nuestra memoria en el padre maestro Juan de Ávila y en el padre fray Luis de Granada y en el padre Lobo y Madrid lo poco que usaron su oficio, que no sólo llevaban tras sí, doquiera que entraban, en pocos sermones los auditorios todos, pero a ojos vistas se conocía el provecho en las conversiones de muchos, en las penitencias y enmiendas de la vida, restituciones de haciendas mal habidas, ...frecuentaciones de sacramentos, desprecio verdadero del mundo y de sus cosas, pues vemos muchos que las dejaron con alma y con cuerpo" (130).<sup>23</sup>

Public contact with Granada's ideas, dispersed not only by Granada himself but by his ideological brothers of the Catholic Reform, was surely greater than that achieved by any others. They had the support of ecclesiastical authorities both before and after the *Index*, and were sent forth constantly from the pulpit and the printing press alike, with one feeding into the other. Kamen's likening of twentieth-century television to sixteenth- and seventeenth-century sermons as "the most direct form of control over opinion" (205) is not to be taken lightly.<sup>24</sup>

There is a direct correspondence between both the style and the content of Granada's sermons and his *Libro de la oración y meditación*. Their inseparability probably constitutes the greatest obstacle to Fray Luis's readers today. Whereas Golden Age readers were quite accustomed to and fond of sermonic discourse, modern readers, particularly literary scholars, are not. Thus, the very devices Granada successfully employed to draw his original readers into his text are now the ones that turn many away: frequent paraphrasing of the Bible, a light but cutting touch on a multitude of topics, repeated rhetorical questions, innumerable exclamations and imperatives, parallel constructions repeated up to fourteen times in a row (favoring the expansive device of anaphora and the reducing device of asyndeton).<sup>25</sup> Like the medieval tradition in which many of its qualities originat-

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<sup>23</sup> In his edition of Salucio's manuscript, Huerga suggests that it was written toward the end of the sixteenth century. Fray Luis's commitment to his evangelical mission is manifest in his several works designed to instruct and assist preachers throughout the Christian realm, including the written versions of his own sermons that he published in Latin. Although the most well known among these is his *Ecclesiasticae Rhetoricae* (1576), the most remarkable is his anthology of sources suitable for quoting in sermons, the three-volume *Collectanea moralis philosophiae* (1571). The sources discussed in the third volume extend from Aristotle to Erasmus.

<sup>24</sup> Huerga indicates that the diffusion of Granada's works was also aided by his publication of pamphlets, of which only a few remain (*Granada* 107-08).

<sup>25</sup> There is no doubt that Granada, like most educated individuals of his day, was as

ed, the *Libro de la oración* is replete with dramatic fictional elaborations on Biblical material, designed to integrate the Christian into the scene described by contemporizing it. The reader, for example, is instructed to run to the Virgin's "palace" to call her to the crucifixion, finding her in oratory, engaged in her customary prayer activities.<sup>26</sup>

Most important, and perhaps most alienating to the intellectualized reader, is Granada's insistent use of personal address, and his constant recourse to imaginative and affective discourse. Like the chivalric and pastoral characters of his day, Luis de Granada's narrative voice is unapologetically sentimental. For example, in the first evening meditation, on Jesus's washing of his disciples's feet: "Contempla pues, oh ánima mía, en esta cena a tu dulce y benigno Jesús.... Oh buen Jesús, ¿qué es eso que haces? Oh dulce Jesús, ¿por qué tanto se humilla tu majestad? ¿Qué sintieras, ánima mía, si vieras allí a Dios arrodillado ante los pies de los hombres y ante los pies de Judas? Oh cruel, ¿cómo no te ablanda el corazón esa tan grande humildad? ¿Cómo no te rompe las entrañas esa tan grande mansedumbre? ¿Es posible que tú hayas ordenado de vender este mansísimo cordero? ¿Es posible que no te hayas agora compungido con este ejemplo?" (21-22).

Granada's insistence on the indispensability of emotional and imaginative meditation is an integral feature of the piety he practiced, which was decidedly anti-intellectual. The exaltation of sentimental piety over cerebral faith was one of the outstanding qualities of the Franciscan reform, but by

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familiar with Ciceronian rhetoric as Switzer's book proposes. Neither is there any doubt that his abilities as a preacher and a writer developed as much from experience as from books. He is said to have been fascinated with the sermons of Juan de Ávila (mentioned above by Salucio), who preached "from the heart," not from notes, and certainly not from Cicero. A careful look at any successful contemporary fundamentalist preacher—such as Jimmy Swaggart—reveals the use of *exactly* the same rhetorical devices as Switzer attributes to Cicero in Granada. Is Jimmy Swaggart a Ciceronian? Switzer confronts the same dilemma when forced to recognize what looks like "classical" rhetoric in the works of Antonio de Guevara (29). Since Granada's rhetorical style is quite similar to Guevara's, it is plausible that his rhetoric, like the Franciscan's, was inspired by the revolution in plastic arts taking place in Valladolid around 1528, a style dominated by a manneristic accumulative structure, versus the earlier, more classical generative structure (see López Grigera's article). Lida attributed the same rhetorical style in the works of Guevara to the continued vitality of the medieval rhetorical tradition in the sixteenth century; Morreale holds that the same is true for Alfonso de Valdés's *Lactancio*. The point here is that the term "Renaissance humanism" is too often used as a catch-all in scholarship.

<sup>26</sup> "Entretanto, ánima mía, ...camina para el palacio de la Virgen" (62); Jesus tells her to return home when he sees her: "Allí vacarás á la oración y contemplación acostumbrada" (63). Although its introduction seems exaggerated to the modern reader, the passage describing the encounter between mother and dying son is still quite moving.

the sixteenth century the contrast between learned versus experienced piety was a universal theme of religious reformism. Among the practices recommended in the *Libro de la oración* one finds, "que trabaje el hombre por excusar en este ejercicio la demasiada especulación del entendimiento, y procure de tratar este negocio más con afectos y sentimientos de la voluntad que con discursos y especulaciones del entendimiento" (244).<sup>27</sup>

What Granada recommends is not secular sentimentality; it is not indulgence in emotional extremism. It is a disposition to accept with wonder the unfathomable nature of religious mystery, to marvel at divine omnipotence and glory, and to come to know both intimately by the only possible route, feeling. The fact that Granada's central ideas operate beyond the reach of logic and reason is extremely disconcerting to the twentieth-century reader. However, this emphasis on infused grace and wisdom surely delighted his original readers, uneducated in theology but eager to participate in the spiritual energy then shaking society: "¿qué hay que dubdar sino que el varón devoto que día y noche no entiende sino en llorar y sentir las cosas de Dios, que tendrá sentimiento dellas mayor y más profundo y más a la mano que aquel que por mucho que sepa, nunca supo qué cosa es derramar una lágrima por amor de Dios?" (397-98). His advice rings as clear to the erudite as his comfort does to the unlettered: "Demás deso debes también acordarte que el día del juicio (como dice un santo) no nos preguntarán qué leímos, sino qué hicimos" (394).

Fray Luis explains this cautious attitude toward intellectualism, calling attention to the devastating effects that over-indulgence in letters has on devotion. The Christian should avoid too many studies in general, and especially letters, "aunque sean de teología, porque no hay ocupación más contraria a la devoción, que es la especulación del entendimiento, la cual se bebe toda la virtud del ánima y deja como yerma y seca la voluntad para que no sienta ni guste de Dios" (337). Excessive curiosity is presented as blasphemous; it is the attempt to explain with the human mind what is inherently incomprehensible to it: the divine supernatural ("esta palabra 'por qué' es palabra de serpiente, y ésta fué el primer comienzo de nuestra perdición" [378]).<sup>28</sup> In a lively passage, Granada declares that if the human brain can neither explain nor imitate the workings of a worm (*gusano*), it certainly has no business inquiring into the divinity, "porque la grandeza de las obras divinas es tan admirable, que no sólo excede todo lo que el hombre puede hacer, sino todo lo que puede entender" (376-77).

Far removed from the avid intellectualism of Christian humanism,

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<sup>27</sup> Granada's own curiosity and erudition apparently never hindered the attainment of his meditation goals.

<sup>28</sup> Likewise Juan de Valdés, who abandoned his devotion to the *studia humanitatis* in the face of his own mystical experiences, recommended: "non v'occupiate in leggere né in voler sapere cose curiose, anchora che siano sante, di maniera che il vostro intelletto curiosamente si occupi in quelle" (102).

although no less erudite and certainly no less effective, this spirituality seeks to touch the soul, not the mind. It is not a school of theology, not a selective academic enterprise, but a self-consciously popular piety. Thus, the Dominican's eighteenth-century biographer said of him, "Dexaba a las Escuelas las quistiones theológicas que tienen más de ostentación de ingenio, que de edificación y de que es incapaz casi todo el auditorio."<sup>29</sup>

Granada's ideas resound in earthy metaphors, meaningful to all, rich and simple. They are of animals, food, agriculture, music, child rearing, water, cooking, and human senses. Although moving about the realm of non-empirical reality and dealing constantly with theological abstractions, he never fails to solder the issues of the spirit to the experience of daily life. Therefore, his message is both ethereal and remarkably immediate. On the natural tendency toward bad habits which, once acquired, are nearly impossible to eradicate, he says, "Por experiencia vemos que cuando en una casa o despensa han estado por espacio de tiempo algunas cosas de mal olor, todavía permanescen allí las reliquias dél, aunque saquen fuera todas aquellas cosas que lo causaban. Ni es maravilla que el hombre regüelde a lo que siempre ha comido, ni que hable en aquel lenguaje que siempre ha usado" (375).

Granada's spirituality is not illuminist, not Erasmist, not Protestant. It is reformist Spanish Catholicism, a current of piety unique to the Peninsula, sadly understudied by literary scholars, and distinguishable from not only those mentioned above but others, such as the *devotio moderna*.<sup>30</sup> Andrés has labelled it *recogimiento*, the form of devotion characterized by the regular withdrawal from the world for contemplation described in Granada's *Libro de la oración*.<sup>31</sup> The complications arising from its definition stem from the fact that the *recogidos* were active in Spain before and during the appearances of other trends in European reformist piety, and they have much in common with the general spiritual environment of discovery that characterized the early sixteenth century. Importantly, how-

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<sup>29</sup> From Luis de Muñoz, *Vida y virtudes del V. P. M. Fr. Luis de Granada*, Madrid, 1751 (quoted in Switzer, 6).

<sup>30</sup> Granada has long been an important figure in studies of religious history and theology, and there is ample bibliography on his works in that context. Huerga's book provides some; Rodríguez provides a multitude of others, published before 1970 (493-98). Moore's book provides a fine introduction for students to the religious environment of the age.

<sup>31</sup> Huerga unconvincingly and repeatedly resists the alliance between Granada and the *recogidos*, perhaps for political interests related to religious orders (*Granada* 135, n. 106; "Génesis" 175, n. 135). However, Fray Luis's piety corresponds well to the definition of *recogimiento* presented by Andrés in his introduction to Osuna's *Tercer abecedario* (6), and the same scholar considers him to be an exceptional *recogido* for being a Dominican (*Recogidos*). Although the differences between Osuna's piety, or Ávila's, and Granada's are substantial, they are largely of focus and not of belief.

ever, whereas all other forms of Catholicism were theoretically eradicated from the Peninsula across the same century, the *recogidos* remained. This survival was possible because of these men's willingness to change at least the presentation of what they said and printed, their commitment to the institutional Church, and their fidelity to their vows of obedience. For unlike their brothers in reform the Christian humanists, and unlike the illuminists, the *recogidos* were active members of religious orders, not of universities or other secular communities. Their monastic life colors every facet of their piety. The matter of qualifying their spirituality is complicated further by the fact that it was significantly altered during the middle of the sixteenth century, following the orthodox, conservative turn dictated by the Church. The relatively open, educational Catholicism fostered by Cardinal Cisneros was totally unacceptable to men like Fernando de Valdés and Melchor Cano (and Felipe II).

There are, nonetheless, features of *recogimiento* that remain constant throughout the political vicissitudes of the age. These are observable in the qualities that endured through all editions of the *Libro de la oración y meditación*. The fundamentally monastic nature of Granada's piety, for example, serves to distinguish him from the illuminists, Erasmists and Protestants alike; it also attests to the medieval origins of *recogimiento* itself. Logically, then, the four virtues "en que consiste la suma de toda la perfección" are "obediencia perfecta, mortificación de la propria voluntad, fortaleza para vencer toda dificultad y trabajo, y aborrescimiento y desprecio de sí mismo" (238). For its recommendation of monastic virtues to all Christians, the *Libro de la oración y meditación* does not propose to secularize the religious world, rather make monastic the secular one, and Granada unflinchingly insists on such practices as chastity and four hours of prayer daily for all, without distinction of status. His piety is based on renunciation of the world and the flesh through suffering service of God: "Y así nunca se dará al hombre el pan de los ángeles en este desierto, hasta que haya renunciado por Dios todos los deleites y pasatiempos del mundo" (333). This is recognized as a painful process, which is commended: "En la casa de Dios no hay otra mayor honra que padecer por su amor" (85).<sup>32</sup>

Imitating Christ, as important to Granada as it was to Erasmus, nonetheless is a radically distinct process for the two. For the former, it means suffering as Christ did, innocently, hopelessly, and unquestioningly: "Si padescas por tus pecados, padescas en la cruz del buen ladrón: mas si padescas sin pecados y sin culpa, por eso te debías más de consolar, porque eso es padecer en la cruz del Salvador" (87). There are chapters in the *Libro de la oración* recommending physical as well as psychological

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<sup>32</sup> This quotation, as the others included here, were chosen because of their representative, not exceptional, nature, and other examples abound in the text.

mortification, and those who endure such pain are the role models readers are expected to emulate: "Será bien," he advises, "que en la oración así de la mañana como de la noche pienses cuántos siervos y siervas de Dios así en monesterios como fuera dellos estarán en aquella misma hora velando y perseverando ante el acatamiento divino, derramando muchas lágrimas y por ventura mucha sangre por Él" (232-33).<sup>33</sup> There is a direct relationship affirmed between how much one suffers and what one is worth in the eyes of God: "De manera que no se tiene aquí respecto a la mayor privanza para mayor regalo, sino para mayor trabajo" (86).

This particular interpretation of the *imitatio Christi* philosophy explains the predominance of the Passion in Granada's devotional practices. As mentioned above, it is at the core of the *Libro de la oración y meditación*; it enjoys the same predominance in all *recogido* treatises.<sup>34</sup> Unlike the Christian humanists, who focused on the more positive moments of Christ's life, and unlike the illuminists, who turned their backs on Christ's sufferings on the cross, the *recogidos* attended preferentially to the innocent death of the Savior, and the theme resounds throughout their literature. Granada values meditation on the Passion above all other activities a Christian can undertake: "Se ha primero de presuponer que entre todas las devociones del mundo no hay otra más segura, ni más provechosa, ni más universal para todo género de personas que la memoria de la sagrada pasión" (257).

It is largely through encounters with violence and pain that the worshipper attains God, in this context. To that end, Granada draws his reader into participation in the scenes he describes through rhetorical devices designed to erase the barrier between subjective and objective experience. Commanding, he directs the imagination to enter within itself and reconstruct the events that transpired, to actually be there mentally, witnessing each moment. He constructs the scene, and instructs how to feel and why: "Entra pues agora con el espíritu en el pretorio de Pilato y lleva contigo las lágrimas aparejadas, que serán bien menester para lo que allí verás." Unrelenting, he pounds away with anaphora, dragging the reader through one series of details after another, determined to make the events come to life: "Mira como luego atan aquel sancto cuerpo.... Mira cuán solo estaba allí el Señor.... Mira como luego comienzan con grandísima crueldad a descargar sus látigos y disciplinas sobre aquellas delicadísimas carnes" (51-52). Christ's torments are described as extending well beyond the merely physical, and the Christian should be willing to identify completely with his emotional anguish as well: "Míralo [Cristo] todo dentro y fuera, el corazón atravesado con dolores, el cuerpo lleno de llagas, desamparado de

<sup>33</sup> "De las asperezas corporales," 317-18, and throughout the *Parte segunda*.

<sup>34</sup> Andrés includes a chart comparing the contents of various *recogido* treatises, including which stations of the cross they emphasize (*Recogidos* 95).



sus discípulos, perseguido de los judíos.... Y no pienses esto como cosa ya pasado sino como presente, no como dolor ajeno sino como tuyo propio" (57).

Regular focus on grotesque realities, such as the violence of Christ's suffering and the carnivorous nature of the sacrament (the symbolic consumption of human blood and flesh), offends modern sensitivities, yet harkens the reader back to the age when blood was as much a sign of life as of death, when life emerged from death and not in contrast to it.<sup>35</sup> Passages such as this one are commonplace both in patristic and medieval religious literature, and they are the essence of Spanish mysticism of the sixteenth century as well: "Pídote, Señor, ...que así hieras mi corazón con tus heridas, y así embriagues mi ánima con tu sangre que a doquiera que me volviere, siempre te vea crucificado y doquiera que pusiere los ojos, todo me parezca resplandescer con tu sangre" (222). It is unlikely, then, that narrative moments such as this one were as sensational in Granada's day as they appear to be now: of the removal of Christ's tunic before he was nailed to the cross, he says, "Y como la túnica estaba pegada a la llagas de los azotes, y la sangre estaba ya helada y abrazada con la misma vestidura, al tiempo que se la desnudaron...despegáronse de golpe y con tanta fuerza que la desollaron y renovaron todas las llagas de los azotes" (67).

Such a rigid, disciplinarian approach to heaven is the consequence of how these men evaluated the human condition: irrevocably flawed and hopelessly distant from the divine. Granada is at stark odds with the humanists who exalt human dignity and the divine spark within the human soul. Never would he exclaim, in the spirit that moved Leone Hebreo, "que l'huomo e immagine di tutto l'universo" (17'). According to Granada in the *Libro de la oración*, humanity is basically the dirt from which it was created, and so he asks, "¿De qué te ensorbeces, polvo y ceniza? ¿Por qué te magnificas y engrandesces, hombrecillo de tierra?" (137). He reminds his readers that Christ gave his life not for angels or archangels, but for "los hombres, esto es, por unas criaturas las más viles y abominables que se pueden pensar, y peores aún en sus obras que los mismos demonios" (268). Although acknowledging that humanity is the most perfect of the creatures (211), this relative praise is reduced to insignificance when he denigrates the entire created world, "porque en hecho de verdad no es otra cosa este mundo sino un piélagos de infinitos trabajos" (219).<sup>36</sup>

<sup>35</sup> Carol Bynum writes: "Medieval piety (at least in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries) speaks far more urgently of life coming from death, of significance located in the body, of pain and suffering as the opportunity—even the cause—of salvation.... late medieval theology stressed crucifixion more than resurrection" ("Reply" 439). Her *Holy Feast, Holy Famine* also treats this theme.

<sup>36</sup> As mentioned above, the human race is here presented in the most negative light of all of Granada's works. However, Bell observes that even in the *Introducción del*



Since the Dominican's universe is bipolar, with men and women at one end of the spectrum and God at the far distant, opposite extreme, his book contains an abundance of contrasts between one and the other; he refers regularly to "la distancia [infinita] que hay del ser divino al de todas las criaturas" (376). The divine is the only repository of constancy and goodness, an idea that that serves to confound humanistic optimism even further: "Porque quando el ánima por una parte considera la inmensidad de la grandeza de Dios, y por otra el abismo de su vileza, cuanto más se espanta de la distancia destos extremos, tanto se maravilla más de tan incomprehensible bondad que así se inclina y condesciende a querer tener sus deleites con tan pobre criatura" (101). Granada does not celebrate the face of God in humanity, and his belief in its being created in the image of the divine is strictly limited to the soul. Even that is polluted by sin: "hasta lo más íntimo y secreto del ánima...aquella que es así como es espíritu, así naturalmente es amiga de cosas espirituales y enemiga de carnales. Pues ésta también quedó toda por el pecado contaminada y estragada y hecha de carne" (463).

Resulting from such an evaluation of the human relationship to God is the notion that the inferior is completely dependent on the superior. The famous "dignity of man" is nowhere to be found in the *Libro de la oración y meditación*. In its place is the humble exaltation of a power beyond everything imaginable by the human mind. Granada criticizes those who present prayer as an art which, if practiced enough, produces results, saying: "porque pues todo este negocio es gracia y misericordia de Dios, hase de tratar como negocio, no de arte, sino de gracia.... El principal medio con que para esto se ha de disponer, es una profunda humildad y conocimiento de su propria miseria, con grandísima confianza de la divina misericordia" (428).

This is not necessarily pessimism, but rather a frank evaluation of human nature directed toward a very positive and specific purpose, salvation. Recognition of one's nothingness is the key to humility: "Piensa que no eres más que una cañavera que se muda a todos vientos, sin peso, sin virtud, sin firmeza, sin estabilidad y sin nunguna manera de ser.... Da voces a Dios y dile: Señor, nada tengo, nada valgo, y nada soy, y nada puedo hacer sin Ti, sino pecados" (100-01). Humility, in turn, is the key to the imitation of Christ, which leads to the divinity itself. Granada's relentless drumming on the insignificance of human ability is not meant to deprecate women and men as much as to exalt God. Therefore, he constantly evokes the unstable nature of creation—in ideological opposition to the so-called harmony of the spheres—to direct the soul away from the physical and temporal, into the realm of the spiritual and eternal. The

serene cosmos of the humanists, ruled by a benevolent, accessible, and humane divinity, is not Fray Luis's. The Dominican represents instead a categorical difference between creator and created, describing a universe in which God, although eternal, is the remote source and end of all. But it is precisely because of his perception of this bipolar universe that Granada could delve into the nature of mystical union, the healing and magical touch of a descending divinity, unfathomable by reason, whereas the Christian humanists could not. That is to say, the view of the world set forth in the most printed book of Spain's Golden Age implies as much potential as limitations.

Whether we decide to make room for Granada's book in the Golden Age canon depends largely upon whose experience we choose to represent in the literature we study. Will it be our own, or the Golden Age's? Historical accuracy clamors for the latter. So does the need, in the educational process, for contact with ways of thinking that differ from our own. And how does the book itself fare if incorporated into classes and welcomed into the intellectual arena? Only time will tell the latter. As for the former, benefits and problems sprout like plants where a long stationary rock has been overturned, when room is made in an already full semester for a lengthy and difficult text like this one. Still, the pedagogically intrepid will have little difficulty tapping Granada's sparkling charisma; his book is warm, human, and exuberant. Its recognition of human vulnerability provides a good and important contrast to the ideological pomp and idealistic moralizing that characterizes other Golden Age readings.<sup>37</sup> Since imagination is an essential part of Fray Luis's text, imagination is also what best ushers it into the classroom. About the incorporation of the *Libro de la oración* into the curriculum and into the canon, I would suggest, with Granada, "Y por esto de ninguna cosa que aquí dijéremos, quiero que se haga ley perpetua ni regla general, porque mi intento no fue hacer ley, sino introducción, para imponer a los nuevos en este camino.... El uso...les enseñará lo demás" (228).

The text, even when only a section of it is taught, is not as alien to university students now as it might be to their professors. Experience

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<sup>37</sup> If prepared carefully (slides of Berruguete's polychrome statues, for example, are an effective possibility), students do quite well trying the meditations in Part One for seven days. They remember having done it, and they remember Luis de Granada. The discussion that ensues from this activity is inevitably interesting, and questions that appear trivial are often important. For example, the typical university student living on campus runs into immediate difficulty finding a place to spend twenty minutes in quiet isolation twice a day. There are parallels here to the sixteenth century, when physical space for private activities was still difficult to come by, especially for the nobility and royalty. This difficulty encourages students to consider the relationships between ways of living, which are typically assumed to be controlled by individual choice, and physical circumstances, which are often determined by institutions.

proves that Granada's *Libro de la oración y meditación* presents its young readers today with an ideological challenge, representative of the plurality that ever-extending media resources have made evident in their own world. It offers them a provoking collection of ideas, contact with which facilitates definition of their own, via comparison and contrast. Perhaps more tolerant of religious culture than their recent predecessors, they do not balk at the book's title or at Granada's proposition. This initial hurdle dissipated, they accept Fray Luis as a teacher, not necessarily of religion but of another way of interpreting life. They are refreshingly able to approach the Dominican's fundamentalism directly, unthreatened and stimulated by its differences from what is familiar.

To the less young among us, Granada's book offers the opportunity to reconsider some of the most accepted ideas about one of the most studied periods of Spanish letters; the more familiar one is with those established claims, the more menacing the Dominican's innocent text appears to be. To exclude it, Golden Age Spain's real "best seller," from study of the same is to perpetuate the mirror image of modernity that has been anachronistically superimposed upon the past by the present. What is to be gained by seeing as in a mirror, over seeing face to face, merits investigation. Until the determination can be made, "Sobre nuestra mesa de trabajo pongamos hoy una lozana rosa en honor de quien tan íntima y ardientemente sintió el arte literario, en honor de fray Luis de Granada" (Azorín 161).

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