The Theologian and the Empire

Jesuit Studies

MODERNITY THROUGH THE PRISM OF JESUIT HISTORY

Editor

Robert A. Maryks (Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań)

Editorial Board

James Bernauer s.J. (Boston College, Chestnut Hill, MA, USA) Louis Caruana s.J. (Pontificia Università Gregoriana, Rome, Italy) Paul Grendler (University of Toronto, emeritus, Toronto, ON, Canada) Yasmin Haskell (Monash University, Melbourne, Australia) Ronnie Po-chia Hsia (Penn State University, University Park, PA, USA) Mia Mochizuki (Independent Scholar, USA) Sabina Pavone (Università di Napoli L'Orientale, Italy) Juan Antonio Senent de Frutos (Universidad Loyola Andalucía, Spain) Moshe Sluhovsky (The Hebrew University of Jerusalem, Israel) Jeffrey Chipps Smith (The University of Texas at Austin, USA)

VOLUME 42

The titles published in this series are listed at *brill.com/js*

The Theologian and the Empire

A Biography of José de Acosta (1540–1600)

By

Andrés I. Prieto



BRILL

LEIDEN | BOSTON

Cover illustration: Royal Danish Library, GKS 2232 quarto: Guaman Poma, Nueva corónica y buen gobierno (c. 1615), page 623.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Prieto, Andrés I., author. Title: The theologian and the empire : a biography of José de Acosta (1540-1600) / by Andrés I. Prieto. Description: Leiden ; Boston : Brill, [2024] | Series: Jesuit studies, 2214-3289 ; volume 42 | Includes bibliographical references and index. Identifiers: LCCN 2023053944 (print) | LCCN 2023053945 (ebook) | ISBN 9789004462045 (hardback) | ISBN 9789004680869 (ebook) Subjects: LCSH: Acosta, José de, 1540-1600. | Jesuits—Biography. Classification: LCC BX4705.A238 P75 2024 (print) | LCC BX4705.A238 (ebook) | DDC 271/.5302 [B]—dc23/eng/20231128 LC record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2023053944 LC ebook record available at https://lccn.loc.gov/2023053945

Typeface for the Latin, Greek, and Cyrillic scripts: "Brill". See and download: brill.com/brill-typeface.

ISSN 2214-3289 ISBN 978-90-04-46204-5 (hardback) ISBN 978-90-04-68086-9 (e-book) DOI 10.1163/9789004680869

Copyright 2024 by Koninklijke Brill NV, Leiden, The Netherlands.

Koninklijke Brill NV incorporates the imprints Brill, Brill Nijhoff, Brill Schöningh, Brill Fink, Brill mentis, Brill Wageningen Academic, Vandenhoeck & Ruprecht, Böhlau and V&R unipress. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, translated, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without prior written permission from the publisher. Requests for re-use and/or translations must be addressed to Koninklijke Brill NV via brill.com or copyright.com.

This book is printed on acid-free paper and produced in a sustainable manner.

Contents

Acknowledgments VII

Introduction 1

PART 1 The Formative Years

1 The Making of a Jesuit (1540–57) 17

- 1 The Acosta Family 20
- 2 An Early Vocation 25
- 3 The Formation of a Jesuit 33
- 4 A Writer in the Making 39

2 The Young Scholar (1557–71) 42

- 1 Valladolid and the 1558 Lutheran Repression 45
- 2 Acosta the Theologian 51
- 3 The College Years 58
- 4 The Overseas Vocation 63

PART 2

Peru

3 A Theologian for the New World (1572–74) 75

- 1 A Troubled Province 79
- 2 Acosta's First Tour of the Andes 85
- 4 The Trial of Francisco de la Cruz (1574–76) 100
 - 1 Angels, Demons, and a New American Church 108
 - 2 The Politics of the Inquisition 116
 - 3 De la Cruz and the Evangelization of Native Andeans 119
 - 4 Rethinking Accommodation 130

5 The Visitor and the Viceroy (1575–78) 133

- 1 The Problem of the *Doctrinas* 135
- 2 An Inquiry into the Spanish Rights to Peru 139
- 3 Between Idealism and Pragmatism 148

- 4 De procuranda indorum salute and the Colonial Project 154
- 5 Juli 162
- 6 Labors and Tribulations (1577–81) 168
 - 1 The Provincial at Work 170
 - 2 Plotting the Expansion of the Jesuit Province 174
 - 3 Acosta's Last Trip through the Andes 179
 - 4 The Battle for San Pablo 185
 - 5 Stamping out Lascasismo 189
- 7 The Third Lima Council (1582–85) 207
 - 1 The Banning of Mestizos 211
 - 2 Valera, Acosta, and Accommodation 219
 - 3 Acosta and the Third Council of Lima 227
 - 4 Evangelization and the Creation of a Colonial Self 231

PART 3

Between Spain and Rome

8 Writing the Historia natural y moral de las Indias (1584–89) 251

- 1 Acosta's Last Years in the Americas 254
- 2 Sánchez, Acosta, and Iberian Imperialism in Asia 259
- 3 From *De natura novi orbis* to the *Historia natural y moral de las Indias* 276
- 4 The Historia natural y moral and the De auxiliis Controversy 281

9 The Memorialista Crisis (1588–91) 295

- 1 A Shifting Political Landscape 296
- 2 The Politics of the Spanish Inquisition 303
- 3 Acosta and Sánchez in the Court of Philip 11 310
- 4 Acosta's First Trip to Rome 315
- 5 Acosta, Visitor 323

10 The Fifth General Congregation (1591–1600) 331

- 1 The Acosta Brothers' Gambit 333
- 2 The Fifth General Congregation 344
- 3 The Final Years 363

Epilogue 369 Bibliography 373 Index 392

Acknowledgments

This book has been the hardest one for me to write. I began thinking about a biography of Acosta about ten years ago. But between personal turmoil and a pandemic, the project stalled. If this book is finally coming out, it is due to the people who supported and encouraged me along the way. In the first place, my wife, Kerri. Her love, support, and determination have been essential for me all this time. She also read more iterations of the same chapters than it was fair of me to ask of her. And in those times when I could not find it in me to go back to the manuscript, she always knew how to steer me right. This book is dedicated to her.

I would also like to thank Robert Maryks, who has always shown interest in my research. Every time he saw me, he asked me about this book. His deep knowledge of Jesuit history (and of early modern history in general) and his generosity in sharing it have always been both inspiring and instructive. Many other friends have also been instrumental in the completion of this book. Peter Elmore, who as chair of the Spanish and Portuguese Department at the University of Colorado at Boulder did everything in his power to facilitate my research. Later, as a colleague and friend, Peter read several chapters of this book. His vast knowledge of Peruvian history helped me make this a better book. Ivonne del Valle, who in a long talk in San Juan, Puerto Rico, helped me see new avenues for research into Acosta. I would also like to thank my friends and colleagues, John Slater and Julio Baena, who generously read several chapters of this book. Research at the Jesuit archives in Rome during the summer of 2019 was made possible by a generous LEAP Grant from CU Boulder's College of Arts and Sciences. In Rome, Robert Danieluk went out of his way to make me feel at home at ARSI. Many thanks also to Álex Bermúdez Manjarres, who speaks Latin like an ancient Roman. His help in making sense of Acosta's elegant and sophisticated Latin texts has been invaluable. Special thanks also to the anonymous readers. Their suggestions helped make this a better book.

I started thinking seriously about Acosta in grad school, in no small part due to a passing comment made over coffee by my advisor, the late Osvaldo F. Pardo. This book is the belated product of our conversations.