

**Making True Miracles:
How the Church Created Modern Sainthood**

Paolo Parigi*
Stanford University

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Abstract

Neo-institutional theorists have largely viewed social movements as agents of change and organizations as defenders of the status quo. Consequently, interaction between the two actors has been viewed almost exclusively as contentious and rules as instruments of naked power. This paper challenges this perspective by documenting a case in which a social movement and an organization acted together to seek change and rules created a mechanism for integration between the two actors. The analysis is an extreme-case study useful for a theory building approach. Data comes from the archives of a special commission within the Catholic Church that developed rules for adjudicating miracles performed by candidates to sainthood. The social movement is composed of candidates and their supporters who mobilized local communities using miracles. The period of the analysis was the aftermath of the Protestant Schism, when long established practices and beliefs were fundamentally challenged. By approving miracles that created ties between individuals that spanned across kinship and social status boundaries, the commission was able to channel legitimacy into the wounded core of the Church. At the same time, receiving Rome's approval reduced the competition the candidate's supporters faced from other religious activists. The non-contentious interaction that occurred between the two actors gave birth to the field of modern sainthood. The main implication for organization theory is that, even in the absence of conflict, a new environment and ideology can emerge endogenously and transform both the organization and the social movement.

Keywords: Organizations, Social Movements, Social Networks and Catholic Church.

Neo-institutional theory has placed the genesis of organizational change outside of the organization itself and in the hands of the social movement (McAdam and Scott 2005; Scott 1991; 2008). Organizations change because social movements prompt them to change, either directly (Weber, Rao, and Thomas 2009) or indirectly, via the state (Fligstein 1996), the market (King and Soule 2007), or a combination of the two (Van Dyke, Soule and Taylor 2004; Meyer, Brooks and Goes 1990; Ingram and Rao 2004). From this perspective, rules have become the main instruments organizations use for resisting external pressures and avoiding real change (Edelman 1992; Westphal and Zajac 2001). This line of inquiry rests on two assumptions. First, that the interaction between an organization and a social movement is a zero-sum game pitting the defenders of the status quo against the agents of change: the gains of one are the losses of the other. Second, that rules are an instrument of power in the hands of either the organization or the state.

Still, there are instances when the interaction between the two actors cannot be seen as contentious and when rules cannot be reduced to the expression of power. For instance, Schurman and Munro documented the successful opposition to genetically modified food in the UK during the 90s. Unlike their counterparts in the U.S., British grocery stores and activists sided together on the issue, winning the approval of consumers and halting the commercialization of "Frankenstein food" (2009). At other times, a social movement originates directly from the efforts of an institution or a business (Walker 2009). A growing number of contemporary social movements, operating in the market instead of targeting the state, are not contentious in the way that McAdam, Tarrow, and Tilly (2001) defined. Instead many serve primarily as a mechanism for the translation of private concerns into the public sphere (Alexander 2006). Furthermore, in many circumstances rules operate mainly as a mechanism of greater integration between the goals of different actors and not

as an expression of naked power, as Norbert Elias documented for the historical cases of the court of Louis XIV (1969), Robert Dahl for the Democratic Party in New Haven during the 1950s (1989), and Durkheim for society at large (1997).

Zald, Morill, and Rao attempted to conceptualize non-contentious interaction between a social movement and an organization (2005). They noticed that the presence of a common ideology among corporate officials and activists can serve as a path by which social movements gain access to organizations (2005). This intuition needs two qualifications to become empirically consequential. First, that if such an axis exists then a mutual exchange takes place between the social movement and the organization, resembling commitments between organizations seeking to reduce uncertainty (Selznick 1980; Thompson 1967). Second, that organizational rules can create the basis for the ideological alignment to occur by making the common interests of the two actors explicit. This is what happened in the early 1980s, for example, when new rules promoted by the management of Fiat showed the established union leadership the interests they shared with management, at the expense of the more radical unions (Locke 1997).

This paper is a case study of how organizational rules can create the basis for a non-contentious exchange between an institution and a social movement, which in turn, by producing greater integration between the two, generates a new institutional environment. Institutional uncertainty sets the boundary for this argument. The function of rules as a mechanism for integration emerges clearly during legitimacy crisis (Aldrich and Fiol 1994) although not exclusively, as Dalton argued (1965). During periods of crisis an established organization and a social movement seek change because they both stand to lose from the perpetuation of uncertainty. The integration of interests through rules, therefore, does not mean the preclusion of change but the recognition of common interests so that the changes that occur will not occur at the expenses of either actor. The recognition of common

interests restores the possibility of calculating the impact of change (Luhman 1993; Knight 1921) and makes possible the emergence of a new institutional environment without conflict (Lounsbury 2007).

A non-contentious interaction

Most definitions of a social movement emphasize the idea of contention (Della Porta and Diani 1999). Thus, for example, Tarrow writes that social movements are contentious networks able to sustain challenges to powerful opponents (1996). For Tilly, social movements are organized, historical actors that use contingent repertoires for protesting against authority (1985).

It is precisely because movements are contentious, i.e., they seek change, that the merging of social movement theory with the neo-institutional theory has been theoretically useful (Armstrong 2002). Without social movements, processes such as isomorphism (DiMaggio and Powell 1983), legitimacy (Tolbert and Zucker 1983), and structuration of the environment (Giddens 1984) would quickly lead to a theoretical standstill. If social movement theory has saved neo-institutional theory from boredom (Friedland and Alford 1991; Tolbert and Zucker 1996), it has done so at the price of hiding what institutional scholars showed decades ago: organizations are powerful actors that shape the environment, including the movements (Selznick 1980; Abbott 1988). For example, in describing the interaction between the Tennessee Valley Authority and local organizations, Selznick noticed that a procedure that "...channels the administration of a program through established local institutions... tends to reinforce the legitimacy of the existing leadership" (1980: 72).

Meshing the insights of current organizational scholars theory with classical institutionalism means recognizing that organizations, like social movements, are also agents of change and that the interaction between the two cannot be considered

a priori contentious. Although organizations fare better in integrated environments (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) characterized by the predictability of inputs and outputs (Parsons 1959), this implies only a general aversion to conflict rather than to change (Thompson 1967). Only uncertainty makes change impossible, as Knight pointed out several decades ago (1921). For example, Powell, Koput, and Smith-Doerr showed that precisely the absence of conflict is what gave rise to the biotech industry (1996).

Treating the presence of conflict as something that needs to be explained rather than as the starting assumption requires the adoption of a new definition of a social movement. In this paper, I followed Alexander's approach; he writes: "Social movements... can be seen as devices that construct translations between the discourse of civil society and the institution-specific processes of a more particularistic type" (2006: 233). Several cases can be used to illustrate non-contentious exchanges between organizations and social movements. For example, Weber, Heinze, and DeSoucey argued that in the case of grass-fed meat and dairy products, organizations and activists created a new economic object through the sharing of cultural codes rather than direct confrontation (2008).

Rules for exchange

When organizations have been seen as active players, procedures and rules become either the instrument through which the organization directly exerts power (Piven and Cloward 2005) or the expression of the organization's interests (Fligstein 1996). Recently, social movement scholars have also recognized the importance of rules as an instrument of power. Yet, in line with a contentious approach, social movements theorists have seen rules as the avenue activists can travel for encoding the movement goals into policies (Soule and King 2006), as a tool activists can use

for challenging established organizations (Schneiberg and Bartley 2001), or for creating new competing market identities (van Dyke, Soule and Taylor 2004).

The idea that organizations can be as active as social movements in promoting change, however, also has implications for how rules and procedures operate. When both actors occupy a similar structural position, organizations can use rules for creating a new political logic (Friedland and Alford 1991) that also proves beneficial for the movement. The key to understanding how this happens lies in recognizing that rules are more than instruments of power (Kaminski 2004; Merton 1996); they are also tools for coordinating behavior (Elias 1992) and creating integration (Durkheim 1997).

The more recent literature on rules and organizations has ignored the latter aspects favoring rules as expressions of naked power. While this is easy to see when a clear asymmetry exists between actors (Edelman 1992), researchers have extended this perspective even to cases when all actors hold positions of power. Thus, for example, Westphal and Zajac saw de-coupling in the enactment of buy-back programs as a symbolic power game between CEOs and boards of directors (2001). Nevertheless, as Edelman suggested, the creation of equal opportunity offices within organizations during the 1970s produced greater diversity in the workforce over the long run (1992). The finding that formal rules are more than symbolic actions is consistent with the analysis of Alvin Gouldner of the behavior of three organizations during the 50s. In order to be effective, Gouldner argued, rules have to align with the interests and the beliefs of all actors within an organization (1965). However, rules do not always operate in the direction of integrating actors. More troublesome, rules often give rise to unintended practices because of their interaction with the social and situational contexts in which actors operate (Vaughan 1999). Even considering these caveats, the capacity of rules to produce integration

among the goals of different actors remains a relevant and understudied subject in recent organization theory.

In what follows I am going to show that by relaxing the assumption that movements are the only actors seeking institutional change, and that rules are exclusively a tool for exerting power, a new institutional environment can develop that simultaneously transforms the organization and the social movement. My analysis is an extreme case study, useful in a theory-building approach.

The case

This paper is a case study of one organization—the Catholic Church—and several social movements—made up of candidates for sainthood and their supporters—at a crucial juncture in the history of Catholicism: the aftermath of the Protestant Schism. Local religious activists used miracles to mobilize popular consensus and the Church crafted rules for adjudicating miracles that channeled this consensus toward Rome. I examine 411 miracles reported by more than a 1,000 testifiers in the canonization trials of seven candidates during the period 1542-1642, that is, from the creation of the *Santo Uffizio*, or Roman Inquisition, to the Church's adoption of new regulations for sainthood (*Decreta et ordo procedenti in causis beatificat. et canonizat. sanctorum, S.D.N. Urbani P. P. VIII iussu editus*). While the candidates performed some miracles during their lives (*in vitam*), the bulk of them occurred after their death (*post mortem*). Evidence was extracted from three archives—the Vatican Secret Archive (ASV), the Vatican Apostolic Library (BAV) and the *Archivio della Congregazione per le Cause dei Santi* (ACS)—and coded in English from the original language—Latin, Italian or Spanish.

In order to view a miracle as a mobilizing event used by candidates for sainthood and their supporters, and to document how the Church harnessed this mobilization,

we must first establish a nonreligious definition of a miracle, and second, give context to a world in which bizarre events could have the power to mobilize. My research hypotheses immediately follow these two more historical exercises. Because the rules for adjudicating miracles were developed by a special commission within the Church, the *Congregatio Sacrorum Rituum*, or Congregation of the Sacred Rite (Papa 2001; Gotor 2000; 2004), I will document the history of this commission in great detail. To further emphasize the uniqueness of the sources, I gave ample space to the description of my sample of cases, separating my discussion of them from the discussion section on data and methods. The analysis uses standard statistical methods applied to social networks. The subsequent discussion suggests some implications for how organizational rules can produce a new institutional environment.

The religious environment of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries

The late sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries were periods marked by deep religious and social uncertainty (Braudel 1992). An external "jolt" (Meyer, Brooks, and Goes 1990)—the Protestant Schism—shattered the common religious beliefs of the continent, throwing old practices into a state of disarray (Firpo and Tedeschi 1996). As a direct consequence of the Schism, the Church lost a large segment of its supporters. Although there are no reliable estimates of the European population at the time, demographers estimate that Northern Europe had perhaps as many as 10 million inhabitants (Molls 1979; Flinn 1983), the great majority of whom followed their rulers in abandoning Catholicism in the sixteenth century (according to the principle, *Cuius regio, eius religio*). Similarly devastating for Rome was the post-Schism loss of property to Protestants, including convents, monasteries, and land. Before 1517, Rome directly controlled a quarter of the land in what is roughly

today's Germany and Czech Republic, the majority of which the Church lost in the aftermath of the Schism (Streit 1929). At the same time, within Catholic territories, an explosion of heretical (Ginzburg 1976) and heterodox (Keitt 2005) ideas followed the Schism. Both the hierarchy of the Church—the Curia and the Papacy—and the local religious activists living in Southern Europe were operating in a fragmented (Rusconi 1992; Le Bras 1955; Thomas 1983) and risky (Mols 1979; Petrocchi 1970) religious environment.

The crisis also challenged longstanding religious practices in Southern Europe (Evennett 1968; Bossy 1985). For instance, a peasant woman from a village in Galicia (Spain), when interviewed by an Inquisition official, expressed the following opinion about priests: "What sort of Mass should I go to? There is no priestly Mass which is not a swindle and humbug, for the whole thing merely consists of taking a lump of dough and putting it between two hot irons, and afterwards taking out a host and saying it is Our Lord" (Contreras and Henningsen 1986: 121). Carlo Ginzburg documents how in the same period the circulation of books enabled the diffusion of heterodox ideas both between elites across regions and within a territory across social strata (Ginzburg 1976, 1970). Charismatic local leaders, some of whom became candidates for sainthood, harshly criticized what they perceived as Rome's corruption (Delumeau 1976). Some, like Capuchin General Bernardino Ochino, were forced to leave Italy to escape incarceration (Adorni-Braccesi 1994). As Massimo Firpo and John Tedeschi have noted, heterodox ideas fueled religious dissent that involved "common people, artisans, teachers, merchants, but also celebrated intellectuals, high-ranking preachers and prelates as well as members of the highest social classes, reigning princes and great aristocrats" (Firpo and Tedeschi 1996: 335). In the aftermath of the Protestant Schism, Rome was facing a legitimacy crisis within its territorial core.

In this fluid environment, new religious movements centered on charismatic

leaders flourished (Boesch-Gajano 1999; Bossy 1985). For instance, the number of petitions for the opening of a canonization trial that reached the *Congregatio* during this period grew exponentially (ASV, Index of the *Congregatio*). Bearing in mind that a large number of these trials did not result in any official recognition, this statistic nevertheless provides a sense of the religious fervor that characterized Catholic countries at the time. Sallmann, for instance, compared the number of petitions that reached the *Congregatio* in this period to the top of a pyramid whose base was made of many more charismatic leaders that lacked either the support or the sophistication to draw the attention of Rome (Sallmann 1994).

Religious activists found themselves in competition with each other in order to attract the believer support for their message of reforms. While Rome looked at this competition as a potential source of further unrest, it also had an interest in channeling it because local mobilization could generate legitimacy for the Church as a whole. Since miracles had been the leading source of local support and mobilization for a thousand years (Stark 1997; McMullen 1984; Stanko 2000; Bloch 1973; Caciola 1996), competition among activists and Rome's resolve to control religious fervor converged on issues related to miracles. Controlling the production of miracles implied controlling sainthood.

Just a few years after the establishment of the *Congregatio*, religious competition was creating havoc at all levels of Catholic hierarchy. For instance, a priest in a small village near Milan was exasperated by all the attention attracted by a crying image of the Virgin Mary in a nearby parish. During the trial held by the Church authority on the case, he told the judges explicitly that his constituency was diverting prayers and money to the other parish, creating problems for him and his church (Sangalli 1993). Competition was particularly fierce where supernatural results were perceived to be produced by a candidate's relics. For example, the internal organs of Filippo Neri (one of the candidates considered in this paper) were secretly taken

from Rome and brought to Naples, where they ended up in the hands of a noblewoman (*Il primo processo*). Similarly, the head of Bernardino of Santa Lucia, another candidate included in this analysis, was stolen from the Franciscan Church in Agrigento, Italy, where the whole body lay exposed (ASV 2209). Such anecdotal examples could continue for several pages.

Yet, for the candidates and their supporters that had received Rome's seal of approval local competition dissipated. A saint performs miracles as a matter of fact and, therefore, candidates that became saints attracted donations, and often pilgrims, for the local church that housed the body of a saint or some of his relics. Furthermore, Rome's approval could mean the creation of a new religious order, with offices and often a complex bureaucracy, at the disposal of the candidate's supporters. For local activists, reaching canonization was the path for progressively reducing local competition.

Efforts to channel the mobilization that miracles produced locally toward canonization could have had dangerous consequences. The risk common to both the Church and local activists was the rising to power of religious leaders capable of monopolizing mass support by ignoring Rome's requirements. These leaders might easily have started a chain of schismatic movements throughout Southern Europe, increasing competition in the religious environment and further challenging the authority of Rome. This threat was particularly acute in the case of the Jesuit candidates for sainthood, who could count on the support of their rigidly disciplined religious order. In fact, Jesuits in this period faced hostility both from the Curia and from other religious activists (Wright 2004). In short, Rome's desire to control the production of miracles and the activists' need to attract popular support appeared only superficially to stand in opposition.

What is a miracle?

The material conditions of everyday life in sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe provide a starting point for understanding why miracles were such a powerful mobilization tool. Uncertainty shaped every aspect of individual life, and people had different strategies for coping with hardships. A miracle was a cultural product that reduced uncertainty—something unusual occurred, and a miracle explained why. Because of their power to explain the inexplicable, miracles brought comfort (Gertz 1966; Boesch-Gajano and Modica 2000).

Common acceptance of miracles as reducers of uncertainty constituted the necessary social context for explaining their mobilizing power. From this perspective, it is not surprising that each generation had its saints to give a sense of meaning to life's hardships and mitigate life's vicissitudes. The rapid succession of saints in time resulted from the inner logic of people striving for stability in an unstable world. Miracles were welcomed as long as people's material conditions continued to be precarious, and generation after generation, charismatic individuals emerged to perform them.

The relationship between miracles and the living conditions of the receiving population is very clear when one considers the miracles performed by candidates operating outside of Europe. Though non-European candidates are not part of this analysis, a brief comparison between these and European candidates will help illustrate how miracles reduced uncertainty. The Jesuit Father Joseph Anchieta, for instance, performed several miracles in São Paulo, Brazil. His canonization trial, which took place in 1627, reports that Father Anchieta could talk to animals and that he controlled the rain and the flooding of the rivers. Healing miracles represented only 47% of Anchieta's miracles as reported during the trial, versus a minimum of 60% for the European candidates considered in this analysis. In 1627, São Paulo was far from the urban metropolis of modern times. Its inhabitants were preoccupied

with establishing congenial living conditions in an untamed environment (ASV 317), and Anchieta's miracles reflected his believers' needs. Given that needs were shaped to a large degree by location, the content of miracles varied greatly.

At the root of a miracle was a collective need for security. Without this shared need, a miracle was just a personal fantasy. Witnesses were necessary, then, not just to satisfy the Church's official legal requirements, but to qualify in the first place as a miracle in the popular imagination. Any event could therefore be interpreted as a miracle, as long as it was out of the ordinary. I illustrate this point with two examples taken from the trials I examined. The first comes from the trials of Carlo Borromeo. On November 24, 1587, three years after Borromeo's death, Signor Giacomo Lomatio visited his tomb in the Cathedral of Milan. For the five years preceding this visit, Lomatio had endured such intense pain in his legs that walking had become difficult for him, so it was with the aid of a cane that he arrived at Borromeo's tomb, where he shouted: "[Carlo]... if you are the saint that everyone thinks you are... [you will give me] from God the health of my legs." At the end of the mass, Lomatio threw away his cane and walked firmly on his legs. In 1601, during Borromeo's first canonization trial, seven people testified about this miracle, including Lomatio's wife, Brigida, and one of his servants, Isabella Cernuscola (*folio* 583r, ACS Antico, Borromeo *Summarium Miracolorum*).

Another example occurred in Rome in 1588, when Fulvia de Cavalieri's cousin apparently died. De Cavalieri asked her husband, Francesco della Molar, to bring Filippo Neri to visit her cousin to try to resuscitate her. Neri came and said to the seemingly dead woman: "You are not going to die today." The woman replied: "Father, I am already dead!" Neri assured her that she would feel better, which subsequently happened. Della Molar mentioned this miracle on August 7, 1595, during Neri's first trial (Il primo processo). Something unexpected had occurred in the lives of each of the individuals described above. What happened *after* were

miracles, because the people involved constructed mental frameworks that explained how a mortal disease was defeated, or how walking became possible again.

Research hypotheses

The deep uncertainty of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and the conflicting goals around the production of miracles make this historical period a perfect natural experiment for testing two related hypotheses of how an organization and a social movement can create a non-contentious interaction on the basis of rules and produce a new institutional environment.

Organization theory predicts that organizations perish under conditions of uncertainty due to a mismatch between environmental pressures for change and an organization's established set of practices and beliefs. This line of inquiry suggests that the only action organizations can take to survive uncertainty is resisting and waiting for the turbulence to pass (Weber, Rao, and Thomas 2009; McAdam and Scott 2005; Van Dykae, Soule, and Taylor 2004; Powell and DiMaggio 1991; Meyer and Rowan 1977). Yet, as Knight argued many decades ago, change is at the core of the life of an organization and the threat that uncertainty poses to organizations comes from making change impossible (Knight 1921).

Because change and uncertainty have been coupled together however, neo-institutionalist scholars have conceptualized social movements as the sole agents of change, which thrive in conditions of uncertainty (Tilly 1985; McAdam 1999), and organizations as mainly their opponents, which operate to resist uncertainty. Nevertheless, to the extent that an organization and a social movement want to reduce uncertainty, change can become their common goal. Sharing a common objective is a necessary condition for creating a non-contentious interaction, but it is not sufficient. To the extent that rules promote integration, they can become the

instrument for the recognition of the communality of interests between the two actors.

When organizations have operated as agent for resisting changes, they have used rules to de-couple internal practices from external pressures (Edelman, Uggen and Erlanger 1999) or as tools of symbolic compliance in the hands of organization leaders (Westphal and Zajac 2001). This perspective suggests that rules express power (Fox Piven and Cloward 2005). However, in her research on the creation of equal opportunity offices, Edelman briefly points out that while firms create these offices for symbolic compliance, the offices nevertheless produce effects, even if not immediately (1992). Thus, outside of compliance, rules can provide symbols for coordinating behavior. For example, Mitchel Abolafia shows how the rules of the Chicago Board of Trade created greater integration among its members so that a free market could continue to exist *despite* the self-interest and opportunism of the traders (2001).

When organizations and social movements occupy a similar structural position, i.e., they have a potential set of common interests, rules can provide the basis for coordinating the behavior of both actors by making explicit their shared interests. I label the effect of promoting integration through rules *reverse de-coupling* in order to differentiate it from compliance. While compliance means that certain practices become illegitimate and are replaced by others, reverse de-coupling means that rules give new meaning to the established practices of both actors. This new meaning in turns generates new practices (White 1992).

The religious uncertainty that followed the Protestant Schism presented the Church with two conflicting imperatives—incorporating the local consensus around miracles while simultaneously promoting a consistent version of sainthood across locales. Similarly, activists had to adopt heterogeneous practices in order to attract support of different social strata while at the same time looking for Rome's approval

of their practices. A strategy of reverse de-coupling would imply that the Church's rules adjudicated miracles independently of the actions that candidates took that created them. At the same time, ignoring activists' practices increased the commitment of both actors to each other, i.e., it made possible for Rome to harness the mobilization power of miracles and it reduced competition for local activists.

Conversely, if the Church were pursuing a strategy of compliance to its new rules, the old practices that had produced miracles would be considered largely illegitimate. A contentious interaction would develop between local religious activists and the central officials. Rome's use of force—in the form of the feared Inquisition—would have been common, and the miracles that the Church deemed true would all be similar. Considering that the content of miracles largely reflected the different practices that activists used to make them possible and considering that Rome did not commonly employ the force of the Inquisition (Tedeschi 1991), my first hypothesis is:

H1: If reverse de-coupling was used to structure the relationship between Rome and the local activists, holding other things constant, the content of a miracle became irrelevant for the adjudication of miracles.

While H1 makes possible a non-contentious exchange between a social movement and an organization when both actors seek change, by itself it does not imply the creation of a new institutional environment. In fact, conflict has been interpreted by some as the necessary condition through which new dominant practices emerge to give birth to a new environment (Lounsbury 2007). Kellogg for example documented how the creation of a contested space was fundamental for explaining the adoption of new practices in a New England hospital (2010). The institutional literature suggests that the absence of conflict between an organization

and a social movement would perpetuate the status quo, favoring the reproduction of the organization and the defeat of the social movement.

To a large extent, this perspective assumes that because conflict shapes the interactions between social movements and organizations, new practices (beliefs and values) are its main consequences. But if it is possible to conceptualize movements not just as organizations seeking conflict (Alexander 2006; Melucci 1985), it is also equally possible to see that new environments often emerge in the absence of conflict (Micheletti 2003; Gerve, Pozner, and Rao 2006). Thus, the new market for meat and dairy products emerged in the US from the confluence of goals between activists and producers (Weber, Heinze, and DeSoucy 2008), while the birth of the biotechnology industry rested precisely in the absence of conflict among the Silicon Valley firms (Powell, Koput, and Smith-Doer 1996). Extending these insights suggests that a new institutional environment can be forged without contention when a basis has been established for the recognition of common interests. In the absence of conflict, the organization and the social movement both transform themselves in the new environment.

The uncertainty confronting religious activists and Rome in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries had its roots in a growing skepticism of the supernatural capacities of human beings. Rationalism was pervading Europe, challenging religious doctrine from South to North (Weber 1922). Religious activists reacted locally to this skepticism and mobilized believers as members of the Church, petitioning for reforms. Indeed, the need for reforms was pressing because Rome's indifference to regulating the local mobilization that surrounded miracles (Boesch-Gajano 1999; Vauchez 1989; 2000; Mecklin 1941) helped fuel the general skepticism. The Protestant Schism aggravated the situation by removing the veil from this bizarre world and revealing its apparently superstitious basis (Zarri 1991; Hill 1958). The Curia, the pope, and local activists realized reform was needed (Dormeier 1994;

Bossy 1976; Dickens 1968) in order to save the institution of sainthood. If this was the case, the new rules for adjudicating miracles became the basis for the recognition of the common goal and the production of a new environment that allowed for the transformation of the movement and of the Church.

If, on the contrary, Rome perceived the local religious activists as a threat, and the local religious activists mobilized precisely because they saw in Rome more of an obstacle than a resource for achieving change, then the rules for adjudicating miracles served the purpose of co-opting powerful local movements and avoiding conflict, instead of producing a new environment. For instance, Tilly documented extensively how the building of the modern state occurred through the co-optation of local brokers in Europe (2004). There are some indications that indeed Rome operated in a similar direction, favoring powerful local candidates, especially in the years immediately after the Schism. The result of co-optation would be an institutional field for sainthood substantially similar to the one prior of 1542. Thus, my second hypothesis is:

H2: The rules of the *Congregatio* created a new institutional field that substantially broke with the tradition of sanctity prior to 1542 and that at once transformed both the organization and the local social movement.

The transformation of sainthood

Before 1542, Rome did not have a monopoly on adjudicating miracles and consequently two versions of sainthood existed—one *high* (or learned), based on formal procedures promulgated by Rome, and the other *low*, based on popular support (Boesh-Gajano 1999; Duby 1980; Ginzburg 1976). While Rome's recognition lent greater prestige to a candidate's cause, it was de facto unnecessary for becoming a saint. Support for Rome's saints tended to come from the higher strata of European societies, although this did not exclude other kinds of support. By

contrast, *low* saints tended to have many followers among the lower classes. The institutional structure of sainthood sustained the religious heterogeneity of Europe (Duby 1980; Vigo 1994; Moore 2000; Thomas 1983; Hall, 1965).

The consequence of the division of sainthood was that while Rome's saints had prestige, people's saints had followers (Vauchez 1989). In both cases, however, miracles were judged on the basis of their content. While Rome considered true the miracles that imitated those recounted in the Gospels (Gotor 2000; 2004; Boesch-Gajano 1999), the true miracles that popular saints performed were those that contradicted common beliefs about how nature worked (Hertz 1928; Delumeau 1976; Delooz 1969). Adjudicating miracles on the basis of their fidelity to the Gospels helped Rome promote its version of sainthood as high, since these miracles ultimately imitated those that Jesus had performed. Conversely, the content of the miracles that people's saints performed answered the needs of their audiences (Kleimberg 1994), which assured these saints a large following.

If we shift our focus to the period after 1642, however, we notice two significant changes. First, imitation of Jesus stopped being the criterion for adjudicating miracles; second, accessing canonization became more complicated. Starting with the latter, while 16% of the candidates whose first trial occurred after 1642 are now saints, 34% of the candidates whose first trial occurred between 1542-1642 are now saints (ASV, Index of the *Congregatio* of the Rites; ACS, *Registrum Decretorum in Causis Servorum Dei*). Excluding the possibility that individuals whose cases were initiated before 1642 had stronger supernatural capacities than those who began the path to canonization afterwards, the reduction in the number of saints unequivocally shows Rome's success in restricting access to sainthood. Yet, at the same time, cases continued to arrive copiously to Rome.

Though imitation of Jesus ceased to be the criterion for adjudicating miracles, this shift did not occur all at once. In the period 1542-1642, for instance, a large

number of approved miracles continued to consist of healing the blind or deaf (10 miracles total, Delooz 1997), two of the most common miracles recounted in the Gospels. After 1642, however, approved miracles showed few similarities to those of Jesus. An example illustrates this clearly. Pasqual Baylon, one of the candidates for sainthood analyzed in this paper, performed miracles at the beginning of the seventeenth century, a few years after the *Congregatio's* establishment, and also around 1660. Some of Baylon's Church-approved early miracles were healings from blindness (2 miracles) and lameness (ASV 3393; 3399), all miracles similar in content to those described in the Gospels. By contrast, Baylon's true miracle in the later part of the century involved a poor peasant, Domenico Perez, who lived in a small village in the diocese of Valencia (Spain), and who desperately needed water for his land. The property he owned was arid and had no value. On a summer day in 1661, the exasperated Perez set off to look for a water spring in the name of candidate Baylon. Ignoring his neighbors' derision, he began shoveling at random in the hard soil. Water suddenly started pouring out (ASV 3403). The description of this miracle, contained in the 1669 proceedings of Baylon's canonization trial held in Valencia, includes detailed maps and calculations showing that the nearby river that bordered Perez's property had to be ruled out as an explanation for the new water spring. Besides the fact that these maps are fascinating study, what is most relevant is that the Gospels contain no mathematical calculations.

The table below summarizes the main characteristics of sainthood before 1542 and after 1642.

Table 1: Sainthood before 1542 and after the Congregatio's reforms

Historians have interpreted the shift in the adjudication of miracles and access to sainthood as a reduction of popular support for the institution (Delooz 1969; Vauchez 1989). According to this literature, this shift occurred mostly through a

restriction of the pool of candidates—only those with substantial economic support had a shot at becoming a saint (Sallmann 1994). To be sure, the cost of canonization ballooned after the *Congregatio* was established. Still, a systemic analysis of the *Congregatio's* registry for the period 1542-1642 (*Registrum Decretorum in Causis Servorum Dei*, stored in the ACS) clearly indicates that candidates continued to be drawn from different social strata. More recent historical scholarship confirms this more nuanced interpretation of the transformation of sainthood. For instance, Andrew Keitt documents in great detail the popularity that prophets and visionaries of all types continued to enjoy in the early part of seventeenth century in Madrid (Keitt 2005). Some of them became candidates for sainthood during this period. Furthermore, focusing exclusively on the candidates' access to economic resources involves an implicit assumption that the Church emerged from the legitimacy crisis that followed the Protestant Schism mostly relying on the Inquisition's control of the lower social classes. New evidence has shown, however, that the Inquisition played a smaller role than previously thought (Tedeschi 1991), and that the Church actually assimilated some of the religious fervor that characterized the period (Evennett 1968; Rusconi 1992). Notably, the changes described in Table 1 took place amid a constant growth in the number of requests for opening canonization trials that reached Rome (ACS, *Registrum Decretorum in Causis Servorum Dei*), indicating the importance that local activists placed in winning the approval of central authorities. Table 1 suggests that sainthood was transformed in the span of just a century. How this transformation occurred remains an unsolved organizational puzzle.

New rules for sainthood: The Congregatio Sacrorum Rituum

In the span of 100 years, sainthood was transformed from a local institution

centered around candidate miracles to a centralized legal procedure based on candidate virtues (Vauchez 1989), all without losing popular support. The crucial junction in this transformation came in 1588, when Pope Sixtus V charged the *Congregatio* with cleansing the institution of sainthood from the abuses and inconsistencies of the past (Pastor 1938).

The *Congregatio* set out to achieve these goals by taking control of the miracles that candidates for sainthood performed. Miracles were organized in three degrees (Paschini 1952). First-degree miracles were those against nature, as when the Red Sea opened to let the Jews escape Egypt. Nature, in this case, would have had a disposition against the act of God. Second-degree miracles were exercised over nature, as when Jesus resuscitated Lazarus. In this case, nature by itself could not have produced this outcome. Third-degree miracles, finally, were thought beyond nature, as when Jesus gave sight to a blind man by touching his eyes. In this case, nature could have produced the event but not in the form and under the circumstances in which it happened. Candidates for sainthood could only perform true miracles after their death, and most of them specialized in miracles of the third degree.

This organization of miracles had existed since the early Middle Ages (Vauchez 1989) but it was the *Congregatio* that first systematized it and routinely applied it to all candidates (Papa 2001; Gotor 2004). As part of this rationalization process, the *Congregatio* organized the collection of evidence on miracles and on the virtues of the candidates as a legal procedure. From 1588 onward, canonization entailed a series of repeated trials during which witnesses were called to the stand to testify to the miracles and virtues of the candidate. Two paths existed—one for recently deceased candidates and one for long-deceased candidates. This paper considers only candidates who died in the sixteenth century, that is, candidates whose trials were contemporary with the *Congregatio's* first years. A contemporary candidate

earned a new title in each of the three phases of the legal process, moving from *venerabile* (venerable), to *beato* (blessed), to saint. The crucial junction in this path toward sainthood was the state of blessed. Local authorities themselves carried out the investigations (*Processo Ordinario*) to determine whether an individual could be considered blessed, thus asserting some autonomy from the Roman Curia. The institution of blessed was, in effect, a compromise between Rome's desire to assume direct control over matters of sainthood and the needs of local communities, which had chosen their own saints for centuries.

The canonization process that the *Congregatio* designed was lengthy and organized in steps (Veraja 1992; Papa 2001). In order to move from the position of venerable to that of blessed, a recently deceased candidate would need to have performed two true miracles if there were eyewitnesses (*de visu*) or three true miracles otherwise. The same rule applied for the next step, from blessed to saint. In each case, finding miracles true meant establishing with precision their degrees. This explains why, despite the fact that the number of required miracles for sainthood was at most six, canonization trials before 1642 report many more supernatural events. The candidates and their acolytes were, in other words, learning the rules of the *Congregatio*. Thus, for instance, the average number of miracles performed by the candidates this paper considers was sixty-six (Sodano 1999, on this point). The *Congregatio* disregarded as false the overwhelming majority of the miracles reported during the trials before 1642.

With the proliferation of procedures and trials, the cost of canonization ballooned. The canonization of Carlo Borromeo, for instance, cost 26,000 *julii*. The candidate's promoters had to bear these costs, paying all the cardinals in the *Congregatio* for their services, the copying of the documents, the promoter's team of attorneys, the pope's attorney, and the pope himself; they also had to pay for most of these people's servants. Finally, the promoters would pay for the decorations of Saint

Peter's Basilica, in Rome, for the mass that led to the canonization (ASV 6866 n.13, "*Ristretto delle spese d'una Canonizzazione cominciando dal Decreto sino alla Bolla...*"). By my conservative estimate, at current value the canonization expenses of Borromeo correspond to 260,000 euros (see also Ferrero 2002 for a similar figure). Local activists therefore had to attract a great deal of financial support in order to get Rome's attention. Miracles proved to be fundamental for building support, as the remaining part of the paper will show.

While this historical evidence brings broad support to my research hypotheses—the *Congregatio* transformed sainthoods and religious activists continued to mobilize local communities—only a more analytical analysis could provide a test for both H1 and H2.

Data

Sample construction strategy

The Vatican archives provide a list of people that underwent canonization trials. Since canonization required a candidate to perform miracles, the transcripts of canonization trials contain descriptions of candidates' miracles and serve as the source of data for my analysis. Trials were recorded in Latin and in the native language of the witnesses; that is, if a trial took place in Madrid, the questions and the proceedings of the trial would be in Latin and the witnesses' answers in Spanish. Trials varied in length and number of witnesses—with some documented in fewer than 100 pages and some taking up thousands of pages. By 1642, the *Congregatio* had held trials for 178 individuals.

This relatively high number of cases requires careful interpretation. The majority of the 178 candidates had weak local support and their acolytes used trials to generate broader consensus. Thus, a large number of the trials were short, involved

very few witnesses, and listed few miracles. The *Congregatio* either ignored or rejected these weak cases without providing a systematic rationale for its decisions. Further complicating matters, the *Congregatio's* decision for each miracle can only be reconstructed for the cases of saints and blessed, because it is only for those cases that official records exist in the archives. In other words, one cannot create a list of approved and rejected miracles for all 178 cases of the period based on the *Congregatio's* archives. Examining the *Congregatio's* rules relating to miracles therefore implies restricting attention to cases that already had enough support to attract the *Congregatio's* careful notice. This restriction could potentially bias my findings, since the overall mobilizing capacity of a case positively correlates with the number of records the *Congregatio* kept on it. In the methodological literature this problem is known as sampling on the dependent variable.

I did two things to address this problem. First, I restricted the number of cases from which to sample by defining a candidate for sainthood as an individual who died in the sixteenth century for whom the *Congregatio* had approved at least one trial. By 1642 there were 42 candidates for sainthood according to this definition. These candidates were in three states: saints, blessed, or venerable. While I could only reconstruct the *Congregatio's* miracle-by-miracle decisions for saints and blessed candidates, I could assess the amount of support any candidate had by examining his trials. Therefore, despite the restriction in the number of cases, my definition of a candidate allowed enough variation for testing the research hypotheses. Second, I constructed a typology of four ideal cases in order to extend the representativeness of my sample, and I selected candidates according to this typology.

The scant sociological research on sainthood suggests that saints performed for an audience (Kleinberg 1994) and that the type of miracle they performed varied according to local characteristics (Delooz 1969). I identified two dimensions that incorporate these findings. The first key dimension was spatial—the candidate

operated either in an urban or rural community. City dwellers were exposed to a wide range of ideas and had many opportunities to encounter foreigners. On the other hand, tradition governed life in the countryside. The gulf between urban and rural lifestyles widened after the invention of the printing press: large proportions of city dwellers began reading books, while peasants remained rooted in oral tradition (Zemon-Davis 1975; Moran 1973). Literacy influenced popular belief in the supernatural powers of candidates and thus the type of miracles people were willing to believe they could perform. In order to sharpen the analytical power of this division I considered life in small towns similar to life in rural settings. The second key dimension was the institutional constraint that the candidate faced as a member of the Church—that is, whether he was a member of the secular or regular clergy. Secular clergy included priests, cardinals, and bishops, who lived in close contact with lay people and interacted with them frequently (Bonnet 1954). The regular clergy, on the other hand, were monks, friars, and nuns, who lived in the seclusion of monasteries or convents. Miracles performed by members of the regular clergy reflected this spatial constraint, in that their recipients were for the most part members of the monastery where the candidates lived.

In light of the two dimensions, four ideal typical candidates emerged:

1. *The Spiritual Priest*, characteristic of Italian commercial cities that still retained some of the ferment (and wealth) of previous periods but were headed for decline. This candidate interacted with a large and heterogeneous population whose demands, in terms of spiritual needs and miracles, reflected the disruption caused by economic and social forces.
2. *The Learned Monk*, typical of the Spanish cities that were still experiencing the boom of the *Siglo de Oro*. The characteristics of his order—Dominican, Augustinian, Franciscan, etc.—played a

fundamental role in the candidate's interaction with the population. As a consequence, requests from his audience were more segmented compared to those facing priests operating in urban areas.

3. *The Folksy Friar*, operating in the countryside or small towns of Italy and Spain and dealing with a mostly peasant population. Some of the pre-Christian beliefs that still informed the culture of these areas emerged clearly in this type of candidate's preaching and miracles. Miracles related to controlling natural elements formed an essential part of the supernatural palette of this candidate.
4. *The Practical Priest*, characteristic of impoverished rural areas of Southern Europe. This type of candidate was deeply ignorant of Catholic dogma and lacked access to the resources available to rural friars and monks. His audience was mostly impoverished peasants.

I pursue my strategy of maximizing the number of miracles included in my analysis by populating the previously constructed typology through a mix of selected and randomly chosen candidates. Only five candidates achieved canonization before 1642 and of these, one (Francis Xavier) operated mostly outside of Europe and so is excluded from the analysis. The miracles recorded in the trials of three of these saints, Carlo Borromeo (1538 - 1584) in Milan, Filippo Neri (1515 - 1595) in Rome, and Teresa of Jesus (1515 - 1582) in Salamanca and Avila, are included.¹ While the first two saints hailed from urban environments in Italy and Spain, Teresa of Jesus operated in a rural environment (Avila) in addition to an urban one (Alvar 1994; Lozano 1993). Both Borromeo and Neri were members of the secular clergy—the former as a priest, the latter as a bishop—while Teresa was a nun.

¹ The records of Ignatio Loyola's trials, the other saint recognized in this period, are not in the Vatican but followed Napoleon to Paris when he occupied Italy (Blouin 1988).

The remaining group of 37 candidates reached canonization after 1642 or are still under evaluation. These candidates fall into two subcategories—a group of 15 blessed and a group of 22 venerable. I selected one candidate who had extensive trials and came from a rural environment. Pasqual Baylon (1540 - 1592) achieved the status of blessed in 1618 and that of saint in 1690. I analyzed all of the miracles described in Baylon’s trials, which were held in the village of Villa Real, Spain. I also randomly selected three candidates from the group of venerable: Alonzo Orozco (1500 - 1591), Bernardino (1545 – 1587), and Rainiero of Borgo San Sepolcro (died in 1589). These individuals performed their miracles, respectively, in Madrid, Agrigento, and the countryside around Todi, Italy. Orozco and Bernardino were urban candidates, while Rainiero was a rural candidate. These three venerable were members of the regular clergy: Rainiero and Bernardino were both Franciscan mendicant friars, while Orozco was an Augustinian monk.

The table below shows the candidates included in my analysis organized by the two dimensions. Along with their names, the table reports their status in 1642 and the number of miracles described in their trials. Overall, the trials of these seven candidates include 460 miracles, of which the *Congregatio* considered 31 true.²

Table 2: The candidates

Among the candidates in my sample, no secular clergy from rural areas were represented. This is because there were no rural priests among the 42 candidates for sainthood in the period 1588-1642. Priests from small villages and rural areas—the *Practical Priests*—were not part of the sanctity that the *Congregatio* promoted, and while some of them had charismatic abilities that likely made them able to perform miracles in the eyes of their followers, their cases never reached Rome. My

² Teresa of Avila is placed in the *Urban* category of Table 2 because the majority of her miracles occurred in Salamanca. I placed Baylon in the rural category because despite having defensive walls—a vestige of the *Reconquista* of the thirteenth century—Villa Real was more a village than a town; life there centered on agricultural work.

broader research of ASV records confirms that the empty cell in Table 2 is a structural zero rather than a sampling zero. Thus, in the period between 1588 and 1751, none of the 19 cases of secular clergy priests present in the registry of the *Congregatio* were from rural areas. As described previously, mustering the support necessary to open a case required access to social and economic resources after the *Congregatio* was established. The miracles that *Practical Priests* performed are not represented in this research.

The database of miracles

During the trials, testifiers described in detail the circumstances under which miracles occurred. Embedded in their narratives is information relating to each miracle's location, the year it occurred, the number of witnesses involved, whether or not one of the candidate's relics was brought in during the healing, and to broad characteristics of the saved—age, gender, and social status. Not all of this information is available for every miracle, but each characteristic appears often enough to sustain a quantitative analysis. Thus, my database records the characteristics of the 460 miracles that the seven candidates in my sample performed. Furthermore, I used the testifier descriptions and the proceedings of the trials to construct networks of local activists for all the candidates in Table 2. The next section describes the methods I followed in building these networks.

For the saints and blessed candidates in my sample, I created a subset database of miracles' characteristics as shown in the table below. This subset includes 245 miracles. I also supplemented the information extracted from the narratives with the position of the miracle taken from the networks of activists.

Table 3: The database of miracles

A miracle could be in a component with other miracles—in which case I labeled it

a connected miracle—or it could be isolated. Connected miracles means that at least one testifier experienced more than one miracle, connecting all the testifiers in a component. Conversely, an isolated miracle is not an isolated node but rather a miracle with only one saved and several witnesses. Usually an isolated miracle had the shape of a network star: a saved tied to many witnesses that were not related to each other. Finally, I coded the decisions of the *Congregatio* on these 245 miracles.

Methods

This paper aims both to reconstruct the local mobilization that miracles generated and to evaluate the *Congregatio's* decisions with respect to this local mobilization. I use networks of local activists to show and explain local mobilization. Instead, I explain the *Congregatio's* decisions about the miracles of the saints and blessed candidates of my sample (Table 3) using a *logit* model with clustered standard errors.

Network building procedures

The information about miracles presented here is drawn directly from the testimony of canonization trial witnesses. I divide the "testifiers" into two groups: recipients of miracles (the saved), and witnesses of miracles.³ Thus for each miracle there is at least one saved and, in most cases, at least one witness. During a canonization trial, two questions dealt directly with miracles: testifiers were asked whether they knew of miracles the candidate performed *in vitam*, that is, while alive, and whether they knew of miracles the candidate performed *post mortem*, that is, after his death. I treated as a miracle, but not necessarily a "true" miracle, any event testifiers described in response to either of these questions.

³ This distinction follows the Church classification of *miracolati*, i.e., the recipients of miracles and *testimoni*, i.e., the witnesses of miracles affecting the *miracolati*.

I used only the question about the *in vitam* miracles for identifying acolytes. Since an acolyte was somebody that believed in the sanctity of the candidate before it was officially recognized, I defined an acolyte as an individual that experienced a miracle—either by witnessing or receiving—while the candidate was still alive. *In vitam* miracles turned believers into acolytes. Becoming an unofficial living saint, that is, being able to perform miracles *in vitam*, was the *sine qua non* for becoming an official candidate for sainthood and being able to perform miracles after death. The living saint was the leader of a religious group and occupied a position in the social structure as a connector of acolytes that had no relationship to each other prior to their encounter with the candidate (Blau 2005).

The descriptions of the miracles and the official information recorded in the trials create a rich dataset of characteristics for the testifiers. Church officials paid particular attention to the testifiers' social status. Nobles and merchants represented the upper class of trial testifiers. In the trial records, a title such as duke, count, or prince identifies a noble. Merchants, including wealthy traders or anyone else with a lucrative business, are identified with the title *dominus* or *domina* in the trial records. I considered commoners all the testifiers whose names lacked such titles. Finally, I again made the distinction between secular clergy, individuals such as bishops who lived in close contact with the laity, and regular clergy, who lived secluded lives in monasteries.

Combined with information about the testifiers, the Church's official transcripts allowed me to reconstruct the network of relationships among the testifiers. For instance, in each miracle several witnesses had kinship relationships to the saved and thus to each other. Other times, the only relationship between testifiers was that of having witnessed a miracle. For each candidate, I pooled both types of relationships across time in order to create networks. For a clearer idea of what this means, consider the descriptions of the following three miracles that Carlo Borromeo

performed *post mortem* in Milan. The first two miracles were healings from malaria while the third was a healing from the "disease of the ants." The table below reports the recipients of the miracles (third column) and the list of some of the witnesses (fourth column). Miracles are listed chronologically.

Table 4: Three post mortem miracles in Milan

The third column also gives the kinship relationship between (a) the saved and the witnesses, and (b) among the witnesses, if there is such a relationship. Because some people experienced more than one miracle, pooling miracles across time results in one component:

Figure 1: Network building

For example, De Filgeri, a friend of Emilia De Spadis, testified to only the miracle that saved her friend, while De Spadis testified to two miracles—one that healed her *dominus* in 1584 one that she herself received later. Thus, De Filgeri has only one tie, while De Spadis has two. Similarly, *dominus* Ambrosio Lomazio witnessed a miracle *dominus* Ottaviano received in 1584 (*Summarium Miracolorum Borromei*, ACS, folio 583). A few years later, he too became a recipient of a *post mortem* miracle (folio 611). Thus, in this network ties represent either kinship relations between the nodes or the witnessing of a miracle, while nodes represent either saved or witnesses. More precisely, in each miracle there are at least as many ties as there were witnesses testifying. In addition to these types of ties, kinship ties join related witnesses in each network.⁴

I repeated the procedure for all the miracles the candidates in my dataset performed. That is, although the *Congregatio's* judgments on miracles are recorded only for candidates that became saints or blessed, I created networks for all the

⁴ If the saved and the witnesses were related, that is, if they shared two ties—witnessing of the miracle and kinship—only one tie was retained.

candidates in the sample. Figure 2 (Panels A and B) gives network graphs for two of the seven candidates. Monks, friars, nuns, and their religious sisters and brothers in the same monastery are treated as members of the same family.

Figure 2: Networks of Rainiero and Teresa of Avila

The two networks are the most extreme cases: Teresa's is the most dense structure, with the majority of nodes tied into one component, while Rainiero's is the most sparse, with small components scattered in the underlying social structure. Among all the candidates analyzed, Rainiero had the lowest holy status at the conclusion of his trials—that of venerable—and his network testifies that his miracles brought together fewer people than those of the other candidates. The networks for Baylon, Borromeo, Neri, and Orozco were constructed in a similar fashion to the ones described for Teresa and Rainiero.⁵ The figure also shows two structural arrangements of miracles; they were either isolated or occurred in a cluster with other miracles.

The Formal Model

Because of the nature of my sample and data, I tested my research hypotheses with a variety of methods, mostly drawn from network analysis. I looked at the overall connectivity of the networks and at the size of the largest components for each candidate as evidence for the type and extent of local mobilization. Furthermore, I considered one measure of centrality—betweenness—as a way to capture the acolytes' role building the networks. Betweenness centrality measures how many times a node falls in between pairs of other nodes; it captures the potential that each node has for controlling the flow of communications (De Nooy,

⁵ Despite having had two trials, Bernardino of Santa Lucia had only 21 miracles to his credit, described during trials by 34 witnesses. Further, his miracles were described only during his second trial. Because of this small number of miracles and witnesses, I did not draw a graph for his case.

Mrvar and Batagelj 2005). In this context, high betweenness centrality identifies those most responsible for connecting others in the cult of a candidate.

Finally, I predicted the likelihood of miracle's approval ($M = 1$) with a *logit* model for the miracles of Table 4.

More formally:

$$[1] \quad Pr(M_i = 1) = \text{logit}^{-1}(X_i\beta + \text{con}_i\theta)$$

Where, M_i is miracle i

X_i is a matrix of covariates on the miracle

$\text{con}_i = 1$ if miracle $_i$ is connected and 0 otherwise

and

$$\text{logit}(x) = \left(\frac{x}{1-x} \right)$$

The effect of interest is the coefficient for the dummy variable *con*. If significant, it will suggest that *Congregatio* officials looked closely at the mobilizing capacity of miracles, what I refer to as their form, and focused less on their content.

I controlled for the fact that miracles were clustered around candidates by using clustered robust standard errors. Assuming that miracles were independent only across candidates produces the following robust variance estimates:

$$[2] \quad \hat{V}(\hat{\beta}) = \hat{V} \left(\frac{m}{m-1} \sum_{k=1}^m u_k^G u_k^G \right) \hat{V}$$

where m = number of candidates

and,

$$[3] \quad u_k^G = \sum_{j \in G_k} u_j \quad , \text{ i.e., the pooled contributions to the robust variance estimate by candidates.}$$

Nevertheless, even taking into account the clustering of miracles within candidates, the results of the model are limited by the non-random nature of the

sample. The typology of cases that Table 2 identifies is an attempt to increase the representativeness of my findings by showing that the *Congregatio's* rules operated similarly despite the different settings and the different institutional constraints that activists faced.

The mobilizing power of miracles

Witnesses described a wide range of events as miracles. Consider the following miracle that Fabrizio Massimo reported on September 13, 1595, during Neri's first trial. Massimo said that when Neri arrived at his house, his son Paolo was already dead. Nevertheless, Neri put his hand on the forehead of the boy, who suddenly opened his eyes and asked for a place to urinate. Within 15 minutes, Paolo died. Overall, Paolo's brief resuscitation played a small role in Massimo's account of Neri's powers and virtues. During his second deposition, on February 20, 1596, Massimo gave more details of Paolo's fifteen-minute return from the dead. After Paolo was resuscitated, Massimo reported, he began talking with Neri, who asked the boy if he would have liked to die and go to see his sister, who had died a few days before, and his mother, Lavinia, also dead. Paolo replied that he would, and only then did Neri let him die. A few months later, Massimo commissioned the painter Cristoforo Roncalli, known as Pomarancio, to paint a representation of Paolo's resurrection. The painting portrays the scene as described in Fabrizio's second deposition: Neri resuscitates the boy and lets him die only after Paolo expresses his wish to go see his sister and mother. Pomarancio reproduced the scene in two paintings, one of which was lost in a fire, and the other of which is a fresco, still visible today in Rome's *Chiesa Nova*.

During Teresa's trial in Salamanca, Doña Maria Alvarez reported that his five-year-old son Antonio suddenly fell into a coma. His parents called several doctors, but no one could wake the boy. His desperate mother went to the monastery of the

Discalced (barefoot) Carmelites and begged the sisters to lend her one of Teresa's relics. The sisters gave her the oil that had dripped from Teresa's body when it was displayed. Back at home, Antonio's mother rubbed the oil on the boy's head. He woke up laughing a few minutes later as if nothing had happened (ACS, *Concistoro Secreto*, vol. 63).

Detailed descriptions reveal that a miracle can describe a vast array of events, ranging from the trivial to the important and, sometimes, to the mean-spirited—Paolo's 15-minute resuscitation appears to be a cruel trick played on a little boy and his father. A miracle was a shared frame for an event that had no other explanation. It was this shared interpretation that distinguished a miracle from a personal fantasy. What people collectively believed to be inexplicable, however, changed according to the characteristics of the venue where miracles occurred. The table below summarizes both *in vitam* and *post mortem* miracles for all the candidates according to a schema proposed by André Vauchez (1989). Miracles were sorted into two groups, according to the setting where candidates operated:

Figure 3: Miracles by community

Seven of the above categories are healing miracles, while *Freedom & Protection* and *Religious Miracles* refer to the broad category of miracles of protection. A miracle of protection is one in which the recipient asks the candidate, either personally or by praying, for help in performing a task, in starting a voyage or, more generally, for protection in difficult times (for instance being incarcerated).⁶ *Other*

⁶ The categories of the classification are self-explanatory. However, in order to have a firmer sense of their meaning, consider that under the definition of *Resurrection* fall all of those cases of children healed after falling into rivers or ponds or under wheels. *Contagious Diseases* are mostly fevers, and *Paralysis* includes the broader category of difficulty in movement. The category *Wounds* includes fractures and other non-fatal injuries, most of which arose during work activities. *Mental Diseases* include cases of possessed individuals and epileptics. The category *Birth* includes sterility and difficult childbirth. Finally, the category *Protections* includes miracles of liberation from captivity, visions, and punishments for blasphemy. An independent coder assigned the observed cases to the categories. The inter-code reliability with my classification was 0.93.

includes all miracles that do not fall into these categories, such as flying. Finally the category *Other Disease* includes all healings that were missing details assigned the other healing categories. The most common healing is that of *Organic & Contagious Disease*. This category includes the general illness "fever," a symptom rather than a disease, which was the most common ailment in the dataset. Some hints for deconstructing the broad category of fevers come from the environment in which the candidate operated. For instance, it is likely that individuals that got sick in the spring in rural communities had allergies (Delooz 1997). The content of miracles varied because the characteristics—and needs—of communities varied (chi-square = 28.485; $p = .0015$). For instance, urban areas were perceived to have a disproportionate number of "sad" individuals, grouped under the label *Mental Diseases*, compared to more rural areas; miracles related to *Birth* were also more common in cities than in the countryside. It is precisely because of this customization that miracles mobilized people.

Despite local specificities, the table below suggests that the three ideal typical candidates were capable of performing all sorts of wonders:

Table 5: Miracles by ideal type

The variety of wonders that each ideal type was capable of performing created an inclusive mobilization within each locale (chi-square = 56.321; $p = .000$). The heterogeneity of miracle content indicates thus that at the dawn of modernity candidates catered to many segments of their local society. Further, sorting the group of the witnesses by gender with respect to the urban / rural areas dichotomy shows the absence of any statistical difference: Men and women were equally likely to witness miracles regardless of the type of community in which the miracles occurred. Given the deep cleavages that organized social life 400 years ago, the evidence that candidates performed a vast array of miracles points toward a

substantial break with the model of sainthood that had been common in Europe for more than a thousand years.

The creation of a heterogeneous local movement exacerbated competition between religious activists. It also increased the need of local activists to receive Rome's approval, as a way for reducing competition. However, Rome's traditional policy of considering true the miracles whose content imitated Jesus's miracles risked alienating local support and of being of little help for activists, precisely because it operated by reducing heterogeneity that was instead necessary for attracting donations. Rome's traditional policies on matters of miracles appeared in contradiction with the activists' practices. Conversely, the activists' practices appeared in contradiction with Rome's desire to promote a high version of sainthood, that is, on limiting what could be considered a miracle. Finding a solution required considering the structural characteristics of miracles rather than their content.

Local mobilization

A large proportion of miracles performed by the sample of candidates created components that connected several saved individuals and their witnesses, potentially spanning divisions of kinship and status. The existence of a large component for all the candidates but Rainiero suggests that the practices that made miracles possible had something in common despite the different contexts in which they occurred (Salamanca, Avila, Milan and Rome) and the different institutional constraints faced by the candidates. For example, more than 70% of the nodes in Teresa's network were connected in one large component; the next highest such proportion was in Neri's network (.4), followed by Orozco's, Borromeo's, and Baylon's (.38). Understanding how this came about requires focusing the analysis on those who experienced more than one miracle—that is, those who occupied central positions in the networks.

Both *in vitam* and *post mortem* miracles helped produce the large component to which the above statistics refer. Yet the two types of miracles had different structural roles. *In vitam* miracles created a social structure of early believers that became the foundation for the occurrence of *post mortem* miracles. As a religious leader, a candidate attracted followers who admired his virtues and his exemplary Christian life. Seventeenth-century religious leaders were expected to have supernatural abilities. Miracles, then, were an expected expression of leadership; in other words, it was the social position of the religious leader, rather than the leader himself, that produced what people thought of as miracles. In the acolytes' eyes, the candidate was a living saint before becoming an official saint. No candidate who was not considered a living saint before he died became an official candidate for sainthood. Before 1642, there is no candidate who only performed miracles *post mortem*. The salient point is that the relationship between miracles and sanctity was the reverse of what one might expect: it was not the case that someone performed miracles and was therefore a saint. Rather, someone was considered a saint and therefore produced miracles (Kleinberg 1994).

An example will help illustrate how *in vitam* miracles created a heterogeneous but unified structure out of a highly segregated social world. When Filippo Neri was just another priest in Rome, he encountered Francesco de La Molar, a nobleman, who spent the year 1584 wandering around Rome under the impression that he was *Belzebu'* (the devil). Neri instructed him to be happy and to start singing, whereupon de La Molar started following Neri. At a certain point, Neri grabbed de La Molar's head and started whispering incomprehensible words to him, perhaps in Latin; by the end of this exchange, de La Molar was healed and had stopped thinking of himself as *Belzebu'*. He told Neri: "I am healed, you are a saint!" The seemingly random nature of miracles of this sort, the majority of which the candidates performed *in vitam*, played a key role in creating a social structure of individuals who

might have nothing in common otherwise but who shared faith in the same candidate. Thus, de La Molara became part of a group of believers that also included other priests, bricklayers, ex-prostitutes, friars, and other nobles. For the three candidates with more than 30 *in vitam* miracles reported in the trials—Neri, Orozco, and Rainiero—my analysis indicates that, on average, these miracles created sparse networks, i.e., that while alive candidates produced miracles of the structurally isolated arrangement. This type of social structure—sparsely connected and heterogeneous with respect to the status of the people involved—was well suited for diffusing the candidate’s reputation for supernatural powers after his death.

The most common *post mortem* miracles recorded in the trials were healings performed by acolytes. These healings followed a predictable pattern. Upon his arrival at the sick person’s house, the acolyte would invite everyone present to pray, often instructing them to kneel and pray aloud together. During the prayer, the acolyte would ask his candidate for grace for the sick person and at that point usually took out one of the candidate’s relics, which he applied to the invalid while the others in attendance continued to kneel in prayer. The acolyte would then depart, and the invalid’s friends and relatives would notice a sudden improvement in his condition. Immediately or within a few days, the sick person would be perfectly healed, having become a saved.

For example, Maria Jaraz de Arraya had nearly completed her pregnancy, but on April 28, 1620, she suddenly fell ill. She rolled her eyes back and began experiencing seizures. Antonio Gutierrez, de Arraya’s husband, enlisted a surgeon to help deliver the baby and a doctor to save his wife. A priest accompanied the surgeon and the doctor, and while the latter two were practicing their art, the priest placed several relics on de Arraya’s body. Nothing worked, however, and Maria lay there, rigid and cold, on the verge of death. Juan de Herrera, Orozco’s most active acolyte, meanwhile found out what was happening at the Gutierrezes’ house. He

rushed over, asked the priest to remove the relics from de Arraya's body, and invited everyone to pray while he fastened Orozco's belt around de Arraya's stomach. Half an hour later, de Arraya recovered her strength and delivered a stillborn baby. All those present hailed this event as a miracle, even though the baby did not survive it (ASV 3033).

Yet miracles took place that did not involve acolytes. Healings that occurred without acolytes took the general form of private exchanges between two individuals, a client (the saved) and a patron (the dead candidate). This private agreement, known as *ex voto* (Cousin 1983), were common in Catholic countries during the seventeenth century. These exchanges produced miracles similar to those that acolytes produced. Indeed, all candidates for sainthood engaged in private exchanges of the sort after their death. Sometimes a detailed list of *ex voto* was included as extra evidence in the canonization trials. This was the case for Carlo Borromeo. The list of every *ex voto* that occurred from his death to the time of his first trial was brought in to support the claim of Borromeo's long lasting saintly fame. Private exchanges helped the reputation of a candidate, but were not by themselves sufficient to organize popular consensus into a social movement.

The *ex voto* bound only the two individuals included in the exchange. Instead, by virtue of their access to the relics of the candidate, acolytes moved from household to household, adding people of different families and social statuses into the network of their candidate's supporters. The table below reports the proportion of individuals who had experienced an *in vitam* miracle and had a higher than average betweenness centrality. The proportion is taken over the total number of nodes in the giant component. The expectation is that if acolytes used relics to build mobilization, they would occupy central positions within the networks of believers. Most of the nodes in the giant component with the highest betweenness correspond

to individuals that experienced a miracle performed by the living candidate.⁷ In Orozco's graph, for instance, almost 90% of the nodes with a high betweenness represent people who interacted personally with the candidate. Recall that acolytes are defined as people who experienced *in vitam* miracles. Thus, the table provides evidence that the acolytes bore the most responsibility for holding the large component together. With respect to the networks of Figure 2, clusters of miracles represent the structural images of the acolyte's activity. Any component with at least two saved individuals highlights the role of the acolytes in attracting new members to their candidate's cult.

Table 6: Proportion of acolytes (largest component)

But acolytes appear to have played a different role in Teresa's case—for her, only 40% of the nodes with the highest betweenness centrality were acolytes. Teresa's cult diffused mostly within the boundaries of the monasteries and convents that she founded. Opening a new convent was an intense experience for the participants; convents were often founded in very poor areas, yet the women there relied on charity and donations for their survival (*Il libro della mia vita*). In a sense, fewer miracles were necessary to convince Teresa's spiritual sisters of her sanctity, since surviving the most adverse circumstances with Teresa's guidance was itself a miracle. This type of sainthood, physically centered within the walls of monasteries and convents, would become dominant after 1642.

Reverse de-coupling

Direct evidence of the importance that the Church placed on the social structure

⁷ The proportion for Borromeo could not be calculated because there were fewer than five *in vitam* miracles recorded in his trials. Such a small number would produce unreliable calculations. This does not mean that Borromeo performed only five miracles *in vitam*. Rather, it shows that the local authorities where Borromeo operated complied more fully with the rule that established only *post mortem* miracles as valid for canonization.

that acolytes created independently of the practices they used can be found in the size of the largest component. Candidates with the largest components saw their cases advance faster within the *Congregatio*, controlling for the number of witnesses and miracles.⁸ For instance, Friar Rainiero had the smallest large component of the candidates examined here, and his case took the longest time to advance. A ranking of candidates according to the sluggishness of their progression to blessed from the time of their death (the *dies natalis*) puts Friar Rainiero in first place, followed by Orozco, Baylon, Borromeo, Teresa of Jesus, and Neri. This ranking correlates highly with the ranking of candidates according to the size of their largest component, from smallest to largest—the observed Spearman coefficient (ρ) is .78.⁹

These statistics suggest that the Church paid little attention to the content of miracles but they are not enough for testing hypothesis H1. The table below presents the results of a *logit* model tested on the miracles performed by the candidates with enough local mobilization supporting them (N=245). It is only for these candidates—Neri, Borromeo, Teresa, and Baylon—that a list of approved miracles exists. A miracle is considered connected if it belongs to a component of more than one miracle. In Figure 2, two or more saved make a component. Clustered robust standard errors are reported, along with their respective probabilities. The coefficients of the *logit* model refer to the odds ratio.

Table 7: Logit model

The variable *connected miracle* tests the hypothesis that the structure of local mobilization mattered for a miracle's being approved. This variable is significant at

⁸ For instance, Teresa of Jesus had only 40 witnesses but was canonized at the same time as Filippo Neri, who had 119 people testifying about his miracles. Orozco, instead, had almost the same number of witnesses (125) as Baylon (126). Yet, while Baylon became a blessed in 1618, Orozco remained a venerable for 250 more years.

⁹ The ranking of candidates according to the size of the largest component was, from smallest to largest: Rainiero, Borromeo, Orozco, Baylon, Neri, Teresa. The ratio is calculated by counting the nodes in the largest component over the total number of nodes in the graph. The rankings of the candidates from the day of their death to the attainment of the status of blessed were measured in years.

the 90% confidence level ($p=.06$). The odds that a connected miracle would receive approval (versus an isolated miracle) increased by a factor of more than three, controlling for other factors. This suggests that the *Congregatio's* officials paid particular attention to the structure of local mobilization, since acolytes were the ones responsible for connecting miracles. The importance of the acolytes is reinforced by the significance effect of relics in increasing the likelihood of approval—acolytes were relevant net of their access to relics.

The *logit* model also provides support for the claim that the *Congregatio* paid attention to the amount of local mobilization, not just its form: each additional witness increased the odds of miracle's approval by a factor of almost 1.5. Miracles with a larger number of witnesses were therefore more likely to receive approval. Together with the structural finding, Table 7 suggests that a large and structured mobilization increased the chances of miracle's approval and thus of the candidate's reaching sainthood. This statement can be further refined by considering the status of the miracle's recipient. If the saved was a commoner (the reference category in the model), the likelihood of a miracle's approval decreased. If the saved was a nobleman, by contrast, the likelihood of the miracle's approval increased. Considering the historical argument that during the Counter-Reformation sainthood increasingly excluded women (Zarri 1991), the non-significant effect of a female being saved is somewhat surprising. This indirectly suggests that the *Congregatio* preserved part of the spirit of inclusive mobilization the candidate and his acolytes created locally.

The figure below represents the complete set of miracles that Filippo Neri performed in Rome during his life and after his death. Approved miracles, the circled nodes in the network, disproportionately occurred in the largest component or in a component of at least two miracles.

Figure 4: Neri's complete network

The Church certified as true miracles those that bridged social cleavages, uniting people across differences of status and kinship. This form of miracle corresponds structurally to the components of saved and witnesses. The cornerstone of the *Congregatio's* logic, codified in the new rules, operated by disregarding the content of miracles.

Rules and formal procedures equipped Church officials with the capacity to distinguish between "true" and "false" miracles. The Church explained its decisions only in terms of the categories of its own code, ignoring the meaning participants gave to what they were doing (Luhman 1998). Thus, a false miracle simply reinforced the legitimacy of the code rather than undermining miracles as such. This created an institutional avenue for local activists to have their claims recognized despite the heterogeneity of practices that produced them. Furthermore, the results of the *Congregatio's* selection were then made public—by the Papal bulls that described the approved miracles (Veraja 1992; Delooz 1997). Local religious activists became aware of what Rome wanted and began creating the social conditions that allowed not just any miracle, but *true* miracles. True miracles cut through pre-existing kinship and social cleavages. Producing true miracles reduced the competition that acolytes were experiencing locally. The coming together of Rome's and acolytes' needs turned the supernatural abilities of a candidate into a social fact (Parigi 2006). The rules of the *Congregatio* operated a reverse decoupling with momentous consequences.

A new institutional environment

The changes introduced by the *Congregatio* in the 50 years or so following its creation were formalized in 1642 and became the basis of modern sainthood. This

code of rules remained almost unchanged until John Paul II became pope in 1978. After 1642, true miracles all had the same form, a sort of exportable good, so to speak, dis-embedded from the local contexts that produced them (Bearman 1993). Acolytes had learned how to reproduce the form of a true miracle and, therefore, they performed only the required number of miracles during the trials (six at the most). For example, in the trial of Freymont that took place in 1730 in France, half of the proceedings involved just the one miracle that she performed *post mortem* on Maria Dronier (ASV 875). This miracle had several witnesses from all social strata of Lyon, where the trial took place.

Canonization trials called for fewer witnesses with the overall result of making the trials shorter. Thus, of the 738 canonization trials held in Western Europe in the period between 1588 and 1751 (ASV, Index of the *Congregatio Sacrorum Rituum*), those that took place before 1642 were significantly shorter than those that followed ($F=13.95$, $p=.0002$). Trials before 1642 lasted on average almost 7 years while trials in the latter period lasted an average of 4 years. The same dynamic obtained in countries with the largest number of trials—Italy, Spain, Portugal. In Italy, trials shortened in duration from 7.75 years to 4.4 ($F=87$, $p=.0018$); in Spain and Portugal the average decreased from 6.13 years to 3.4 ($F=5.75$, $p=.0182$); in France the figures were 3.6 before 1642 and 3.5 afterwards ($F=0$, $p=.982$).¹⁰ Consider also that the average number of trials per year did not change before and after 1642 (4.36 to 4.48). By the second half of the seventeenth century, a new and more modern sainthood was well in place.

A new institutional environment came into being because all relevant actors saw an advantage in the reduction of the heterogeneity of religious practices. Instead of seeing in the Church the threat to institutional change, activists saw in

¹⁰This difference is not significant, of course.

establishing a relationship with Rome the tool for promoting a change that reduced competition. Conversely, instead of using co-optation for neutralization the activist threats, Rome altered its procedures in order to channel local legitimacy to the Church at large.

Discussion

Some neo-institutional theorists that have looked at the emergence of institutional environments describe the process as a struggle between competing logics (Thornton 2002). It is from a primordial soup of various beliefs that a dominant organizational form emerges to produce stability (Meyer and Rowen 1977). Thus, a challenge to the existing order and competition among the challengers are the key elements for the creation of an environment when taken-for-granted beliefs are absent. Others have instead highlighted the exogenous role of state regulations in creating not just a new matrix of acceptable behavior but also new ideologies of what constitutes a firm (Davis, Diekmann, and Tinsley 1994) and how to properly control it (Fligstein 1990). Exogenous state regulations, that is, produce new environments not through the re-organization of beliefs but through the legitimacy of the state itself (Davis and Greve 1997). In summary, organizational literature suggests that two routes lead toward the creation of a new institutional environment (Greenwood, Suddaby and Hinings 2002). One route starts with the absence of taken-for-granted beliefs and passes through conflict; the other starts with exogenous regulations that produce new ideologies (DiMaggio 1991).

This paper highlights a third path: when organizational rules make explicit the common interests of all actors (Selznick 1979; Zhou 1993). On the basis of such rules the organization and the social movement create a lasting interaction. This lasting interaction operates similarly to a commitment where legitimacy and control get exchanged (Thompson 1967; Kraatz and Zajac 2001). For the organization to

receive legitimacy from the social movement, the organization has to have the capacity, or be perceived to have the capacity, to increase the social movement's control of the environment. Rules create this capacity if they achieve, or help to achieve, the latter's goals; if they fit with the movement's overall values and practices; or if they are neutral to the (potential) status conflict among the internal cliques of the social movement (Dalton 1964; Gouldner 1965).

Turning a scenario of uncertainty into an opportunity for institutional change requires that the organization look outside of its boundaries and use rules to create a stable exchange with a social movement capable of bringing legitimacy to the organization's core operations. This third path for creating institutional stability (Greenwood, Suddaby and Hinings 2002) transforms the organization and the social movement because it generates an ideology that transcends the interests of the dominant actor (Clemens 1997; Rao, Monin and Durand 2003; Gramsci 1995) and serves instead the common interests of all actors operating within the same environment. The experience of the Church teaches us that its rules were successful because they created a lasting interaction between local religious activists and the Church that solved the competition problems of the activists and the legitimacy crisis that Rome was facing in the aftermath of the Protestant Schism.

Conclusion

This paper shows that during the Counter-Reformation the Church developed rules that adjudicated miracles independently of their content and that local activists began producing the conditions for the occurrence not of miracles but of "true" miracles. Rules integrated the organizational need of Rome with the activist's goal of reform to create modern sainthood.

The integration occurred via a process that I labeled reverse de-coupling. Reverse de-coupling differs from compliance because it does not banish existing

practices. Instead, reverse de-coupling provides practices with new meaning that later, in turn, generate new practices. Using a metaphor from linguistics, reverse de-coupling made rules the semantics and actions the grammar of miracle-making.

The integration between the goals of the two actors made possible the emergence of a new institutional field whose main tenants remained untouched for more than four centuries—until the reforms of John Paul II. The ideology at the roots of modern sainthood emerged endogenously through the non-contentious interactions between Rome’s central officials and local activists. Rules gave stability to this exchange, making it similar to a commitment where legitimacy and control were exchanged between the two.

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Table 1: Sainthood before and after the *Congregatio*

Before 1542	After 1642
High and Low versions of sainthood	One sainthood exclusively
Open access to sanctity	Restricted access to sanctity
Miracles adjudicated on the basis of their content	Declining importance of content for adjudicating miracles

Table 2: Candidates to sainthood

	<i>Secular Clergy</i>	<i>Regular Clergy</i>
<i>Urban</i>	“The Spiritual Priest” Carlo Borromeo (Saint, 71) Filippo Neri (Saint, 74)	“The Learned Monk” Bernardino of Agrigento (Venerabile, 21) Alfonso Orozco (Venerabile, 82) Teresa of Avila (Saint, 40)
<i>Rural</i>	“The Practical Priest” (Structural zero)	“The Folksy Friar” Pasqual Baylon (Blessed, 97) Rainiero of San Sepolcro (Venerabile, 75)

Table 3: The database of miracles

Variable	
Gender of the saved	Male: 104 Female: 141
Status of the saved	Nobles & Merchants: 55 Regular & Secular Clergy: 67 Commoners & Peasants: 115 <i>Missing</i> : 8
When did the miracle occur?	<i>in vitam</i> : 66 <i>post mortem</i> : 179
How many witnesses?	Min: 0 Max: 14 Median: 2
Was a relic present?	Yes: 99 No: 127 <i>Missing</i> : 19
Was the miracle connected?	Yes: 118 No: 127
Was the miracle approved?	Yes: 31 No: 214

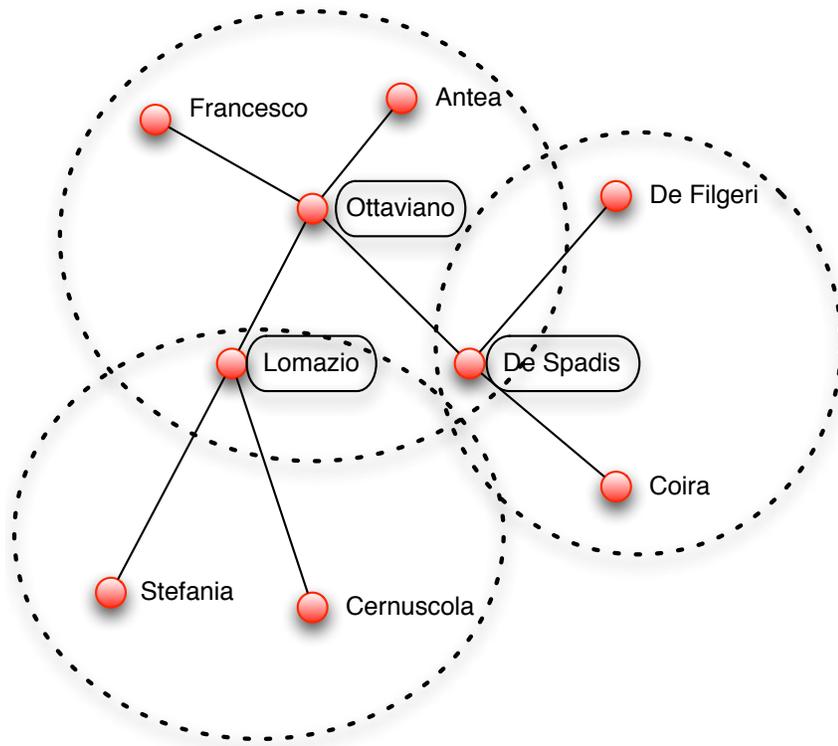
Table 4: Three post mortem miracles in Milan

Time Order	Description	Saved	Witnesses
1	<i>Febre terzana</i>	Ottaviano	<i>Domina</i> Antea (Ottaviano's wife) <i>Dominus</i> Ambrosio Lomazio <i>Curato</i> Francesco Emilia De Spadis
2	<i>Febre quartana</i>	Emilia De Spadis	Giovanna De Filgeri Laura Coira
3	<i>Morbum formicalem</i>	Ambrosio Lomazio	Isabella Cernuscola <i>Domina</i> Stefania (Lomazio's daughter)

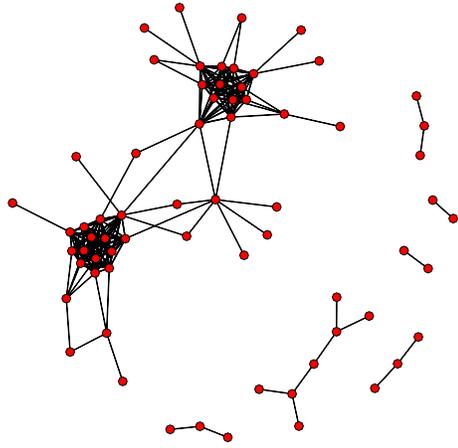
Table 5: Miracles by ideal type (proportions)

	Folksy Friar	Learned Monk	Spiritual Priest
Birth	0.05	0.10	0.07
Blind & Deaf	0.08	0.04	0.05
Freedom & Protection	0.01	0.02	0.01
Mental Disease	0.03	0.06	0.10
Organic & Contagious Disease	0.24	0.16	0.25
Other	0.08	0.11	0.00
Other Dis.	0.03	0.20	0.21
Paralyses	0.22	0.13	0.21
Religious Mir.	0.10	0.08	0.02
Resurrection	0.03	0.04	0.04
Wounds & Fractures	0.11	0.06	0.03
N	172	143	145

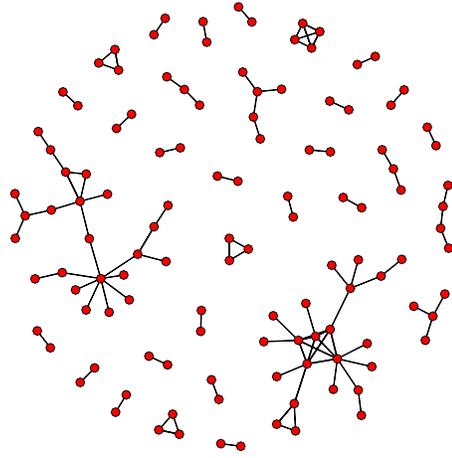
Figure 1: Network building



Teresa of Avila miracles. Salamanca & Avila



Friar Rainiero miracles. Todi, in vitam & 1589-1628



(a) The most connected network

(b) The most sparse network

Figure 2: The two most extreme networks

Figure 3: Miracles by community (percentages)

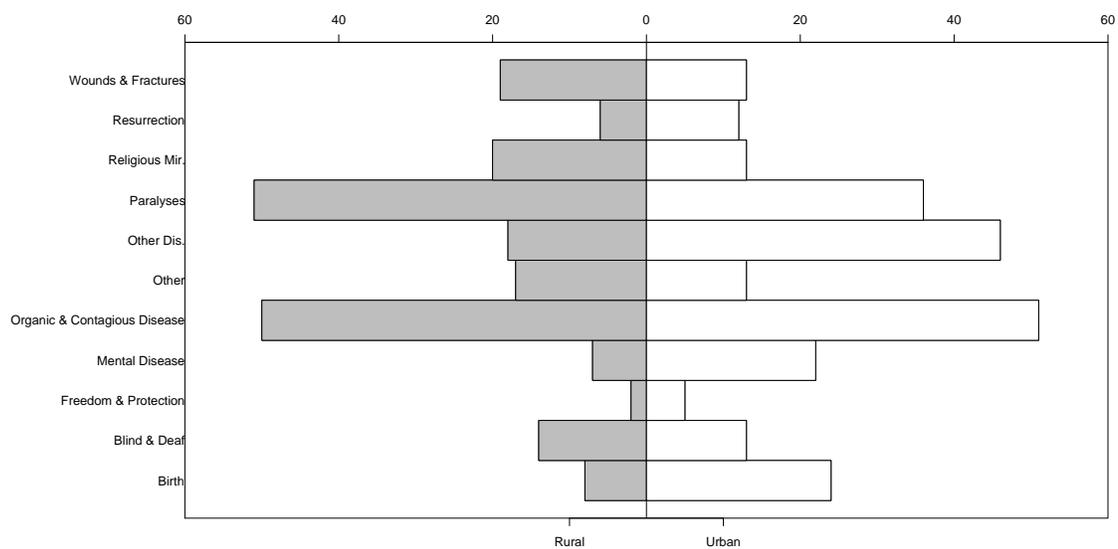


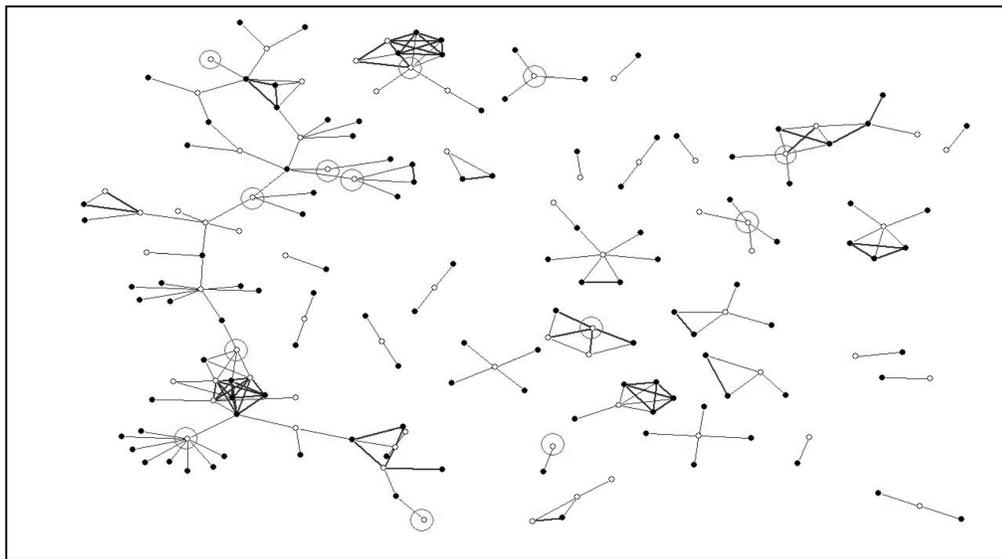
Table 6: Proportion of acolytes (largest component)

	Candidate	<i>in vitam</i> vertices > avg. betweenness
<i>Rural</i>	Baylon	.56
	Rainiero	.57
<i>Urban</i>	Neri	.833
	Orozco	.894
	Teresa	.4

Table 7: Likelihood of miracles approval (Clustered Robust Logit Model)

	coef	robust clst. s.e.	robust clst. z	P> z
(Intercept)	.013	1.29	-3.37	.00
Saved Female	.86	.45	-.33	.74
Saved Noble	.571	.20	2.80	.01
Saved Clergy	.618	.43	-1.12	.26
# Witnesses	1.462	.11	3.31	.00
Relic	2.61	.28	3.44	.00
Connected Miracle	3.12	.61	1.87	.06

Figure 4: The approved miracles (circled nodes) for Filippo Neri. Complete network



NOTE - White nodes indicate saved; dark nodes indicate witnesses.
Thick edges indicate kinship relationships exclusively; thin edges indicate witnessing relationships.