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# Pilgrimage to the Qoyllur Rit'i and the Feast of Corpus Christi. The Relationship of Local to Regional Ritual in Cuzco

## Summary

This article critically discusses the categorical distinction between local and regional rituals, especially of pilgrimages and patronal festivals, introduced by Victor Turner and John Sallnow. Based on ethnographical and ethnohistorical data from the Department of Cuzco/Peru, he analyzes the pilgrimage to the Qoyllur Rit'i and the Corpus Christi celebration in Cuzco City, two of the most important religious celebrations in the region, to which Sallnow also referred. In contrast to the latter, however, it is shown that both events merge directly into one another, arise from similar motivation, share many participants and symbols. Thus it is made clear, that local and regional forms of cult cannot be separated clearly.

Keywords: Qoyllur Rit'i; Corpus Christi; pilgrimage; processions; patron feast; Cuzco

Der vorliegende Artikel setzt sich kritisch mit der von Victor Turner und John Sallnow geforderten kategorischen Unterscheidung von lokalen und regionalen Ritualen und insbesondere von Pilgerfahrt und Patronatsfesten auseinander. Er stützt sich auf ethnographische und ethnohistorische Daten aus dem Departement Cuzco/Peru und analysiert mit der Pilgerfahrt zum Qoyllur Rit'i und der Fronleichnamfeier in Cuzco-Stadt zwei der wichtigsten religiösen Feiern der Region, auf welche sich auch Sallnow bezog. Gegenüber letzterem wird jedoch gezeigt, dass beide Veranstaltungen unmittelbar ineinander übergehen, ähnlicher Motivation entspringen, sich zahlreiche Teilnehmer und Symbole teilen. Damit wird deutlich, dass lokale und regionale Formen des Kultes nicht klar voneinander getrennt werden können.

Keywords: Qoyllur Rit'i; Fronleichnam; Pilgerfahrt; Prozession; Patronatsfeier; Cuzco

The text was translated by Ute Luig.

## I Introduction

Since the 1980s pilgrimage has been an established term in the social and cultural sciences.<sup>1</sup> The label ‘anthropology of pilgrimages’ is used quite frequently.<sup>2</sup> However, the definitions and limits of the concept are still not really clear. Problems result from the transcultural application of the Christian term ‘pilgrimage’. Because different elements are subsumed under it, neither does it do justice to specific traditions, nor are equivalent emic meanings found.<sup>3</sup> Moreover, several difficulties exist in differentiating pilgrimage from secular forms of travel, such as mass tourism or trade journeys.<sup>4</sup> This difficulty becomes even more evident in relation to para-religious forms of travel, e.g. Elvis fans undertaking a pilgrimage to Graceland,<sup>5</sup> or the homecoming of black slaves’ descendants to Ghana.<sup>6</sup> However, within the Christian context, the usage of the term is more precise. Its scope predominantly results from being distinguished from more locally limited ritual dynamics such as processions. The criteria for the definition are the setting and the range of coverage:<sup>7</sup> pilgrimages have a destination that is reached over long stretches of journeying.<sup>8</sup> In contrast, processions served to celebrate local sanctuaries. Most of the time they were part of patron saints’ day celebrations. According to Zika processions were thus exclusively local cults.<sup>9</sup> Therefore, they remained “wholly under the control of local authorities”<sup>10</sup>

A series of formal specifics resulted out of this fact: the movement is festive and ordered. The movement and the speed of the members of the processions are heavily synchronized.<sup>11</sup> Processions are described as civic parades.<sup>12</sup> They serve primarily as forms of prestige and orthodoxy whereas pilgrimages are rooted in folk beliefs, being subversive in character.<sup>13</sup> They are based on individual and free involvement. This is why they develop a totally different social dynamic.<sup>14</sup>

I will argue in the following article that this classification can be traced back to Victor Turner. Thereafter, the relationships between procession and pilgrimage as well as between patron saints’ days and pilgrims’ celebrations will be checked empirically regarding the Corpus Christi and the Qoyllur Rit’i in Cuzco. Against the background

1 Murphy 1994; Hauser-Schäublin 2008. The anthropological preoccupation with pilgrimages has predominantly focused on V. Turner 1975, and V. Turner and E. Turner 1978.

2 Morinis 1992; Graburn 1989.

3 Glazier 1983; Schenk 2008.

4 Delaney 1990; Badone 2004.

5 Davidson and Gitlitz 2003.

6 Schramm 2004.

7 Davidson and Gitlitz 2003, 7, 17.

8 Gutschow 2008, 400; Hammond and Bobo 1994, 19, show that pilgrimage “is not necessarily a long-distance phenomenon”.

9 Zika 1988, 63.

10 Zika 1988, 63.

11 Mulla 1967, 820; Grimes 1987, 2; Fellbecker 1995, 213.

12 Sallnow 1987, 268.

13 Sallnow 1987, 199.

14 Sallnow 1987, 55.

of these two forms of celebration the general problematic of a dichotomized division between local and translocal rituals shall be made visible.

## 2 Local versus translocal: a spatial classification of rituals

Turner<sup>15</sup> differentiates in his analysis of ethnographic and historical material two types of spatial rituals with varying outreach which refer to two disparate ritual landscapes. On the one hand, Turner and Turner identify a local cult that is linked to the chapels and shrines of settlements, which remains “entangled with its practice in the local situation.”<sup>16</sup> This cult is determined by the established social structure and is oriented towards an increase in social status. Through the representation of hierarchy, the static social structure is ritually confirmed or effects even “deeper commitment to the structural life.”<sup>17</sup>

On the other hand, Turner identifies “a looser, voluntaristic religious affiliation focused on distant shrines.”<sup>18</sup> It distances the believers from the structures of their everyday lifeworld. As an example, he cites Christian pilgrimages. Like in tribal forms of rituals of transition, its participants are removed from their local settlements and as a consequence social structures are dissolved. Turner and Turner understand pilgrimages as a Christian form that generates liminality.<sup>19</sup> The pilgrims step out of their local context, their kin group, and culture. Very often, pilgrimages transcend social, ethnic, and political boundaries.<sup>20</sup> They join a community that is based on free will, self-determination, equality, and friendship.<sup>21</sup> Turner and Turner explain the pilgrimage as a search for *communitas*.<sup>22</sup> In many regards, it could even be described as the realization of a “global *communitas*.”<sup>23</sup> The scope of the rituals apparently becomes the point of origin for a qualitative definition. Whereas pilgrimages are described as voluntary, equal, and inclusive, local religion is associated with constraint, hierarchy, and exclusivity. Turner and Turner’s analytical categories of structure and anti-structure are thus synchronically pitted against each other.

Turner’s theses were intensively discussed. In many cases, they have been used for the description of Latin American pilgrimages.<sup>24</sup> One of the most prominent applications originates from the British sociologist M. J. Sallnow.<sup>25</sup> He problematized Turner’s

15 V. Turner 1975, 177, 191.

16 V. Turner and E. Turner 1978, 15.

17 V. Turner and E. Turner 1978, 9.

18 V. Turner 1975, 191.

19 V. Turner and E. Turner 1978, 4.

20 V. Turner and E. Turner 1978, 6, 16.

21 V. Turner and E. Turner 1978, 13, 177.

22 V. Turner and E. Turner 1978, 5.

23 V. Turner and E. Turner 1978, 171.

24 Crumrine and Morinis 1991; Garma Navarro and Shadow 1994; Barba de Piña Chan 1998.

25 Sallnow 1987.

concept of *communitas*<sup>26</sup> but adopted his spatial categorization. Patronal cults and pilgrimages are opposed as local and translocal rituals. The patron saints' days are dominated by the official religion<sup>27</sup> and the elites.<sup>28</sup> They depict political hierarchies and relations of power and are in the last instance an aspect of exercising political power. The patron saints originate from the standard inventory of saints and have no relation to the local context. Their veneration is determined by residence and custom.<sup>29</sup> They serve to differentiate communities and social groups from each other. Their supporters are accordingly homogeneous. Patronal cults are thus fragmented, "marked off sharply from the translocal and regional."<sup>30</sup> A proof of this is their static nature. Change is described only as degeneration.<sup>31</sup>

In contrast to his view of patron saints' days Sallnow gives a very dynamic picture of pilgrimages.<sup>32</sup> Like Turner he assumes that pilgrimages remain outside ecclesiastical, administrative, and state control. Therefore, they are strongly marked by unofficial religiosity. The normally widely separated spheres of official Catholic religion and unofficial native religion here come into direct contact, whereas normally both spheres are meticulously divided from each other.<sup>33</sup>

Pilgrimages are not determined by social or territorial ascriptions but by "mental disposition."<sup>34</sup> They cut across political and ecclesiastical forms of local administrative and even ethnic structures. Only pilgrimages transcend the isolation of localities, a pilgrimage "joins the community to the macrocosm"<sup>35</sup> and links it to "processes of synchronic articulation and diachronic change."<sup>36</sup> Because of this integrative strength, it is the pilgrimage that defines the important social and historical processes of change. As in the work of Turner a qualitative opposition between local and translocal forms of cult is stressed. In conclusion, it is evident that Sallnow is drawing directly on Turner. He confirms and underlines his distinction between local and translocal cults in all aspects.

### 3 Pilgrimage and the ceremony of the Patron Saints in Cuzco

In the following I will show that this classification is rather problematic. In a first step I will map the fiesta of the Qoyllur Rit'i, on which Sallnow mainly bases his argument.<sup>37</sup>

26 See Sallnow 1981. Sallnow demonstrates the severe conflicts between different groups of pilgrims. He describes their pilgrimage as the negotiation of diverse cultural and ethnic identities, and political, territorial, and ideological attributions and motives.

27 Sallnow 1987, 6.

28 Sallnow 1987, 98.

29 Sallnow 1987, 167.

30 Sallnow 1987, 98.

31 Sallnow 1987, 98.

32 Sallnow 1987, 166.

33 Sallnow 1987, 3.

34 Sallnow 1987, 9.

35 Sallnow 1987, 201.

36 Sallnow 1987, 99.

37 Sallnow 1987.

Next, the ceremony of Corpus Christi in Cuzco is described, which he cites as an example of a local cult. The comparison will prove that the two festivities have a lot in common and that they cannot be dissociated from each other.

### 3.1 Qoyllur Rit'í

The ceremony of the Qoyllur Rit'í is the most prominent pilgrimage of the department of Cuzco and one of the largest in the Andes. A minimum of 10 000 pilgrims arrive every year from the department of Cuzco, but also from surrounding regions and even from neighbouring countries such as Bolivia and Argentina. Most of them are indigenous believers. Therefore, the pilgrimage is interpreted as a predominant expression of Andean religiosity.<sup>38</sup>

Qoyllur Rit'í means in Quechua 'shining snow' or 'star of the snow'. It is the name of a glacier positioned at 5000 m height on the Sinkara mountain, which lies in the massif of Ausangate in the province of Quispicanchis, around 150 km southeast of Cuzco. There is a chapel of a figure of Christ, called the Señor de Qoyllur Rit'í. He is supposed to be the protector of the poor, of the indigenous farmers and shepherds. His shrine is one of the most popular pilgrim's shrines in the Quechua and Aymara region. According to historical sources it was founded around 1780. The legend attributes it to the apparition of Christ who presented himself to a poor shepherd in the *gestalt* of a fair-skinned youth. He gave him food and increased the number of his animals in miraculous ways. When some priests tried to capture Christ, the shepherd boy died of grief and turned into a cross of stone that was venerated in the neighboring village Tayankany. Christ changed into a rock with the image of Jesus, around which the chapel for the pilgrims was built. In addition, a statue was dedicated in the nearby village of Mawallani, which is supposed to be the birthplace of the shepherd boy.

Anthropologists explain the sanctuary with reference to a pre-Christian mountain cult. The mountain Sinakara with its glacier Qoyllur Rit'í is regarded in the local mythology as son of Ausangate, the holiest mountain in the region.<sup>39</sup> The local population believes it to be responsible for the health and well-being of the people.<sup>40</sup> It is also worshipped as tutelary divinity of the animals, which explains the influx of pilgrims from the highlands.<sup>41</sup> Meanwhile the basis of the cult has widened. It cannot be overlooked that an impressive number of pilgrims have urban and mestizo backgrounds.<sup>42</sup> Flores

38 Brachetti 2002; Alvarez Blas 2006. However, Molinié 2002 is not of this opinion.

39 Valderrama and Escalante 1975; Sánchez Garrafa 1995.

40 Nuñez del Prado Bejar 1970.

41 Ricard Lanata 2008.

42 Also an increasing influence of women can be remarked, Ceram Padilla 1999. They seek help from the Virgen de Fátima for their weaving of textiles.

Lizana, who has interpreted the requests for intercession of recent years, was able to disclose the multitude of wishes, covering all aspects of life.<sup>43</sup> This is also evident at the sanctuary on the *Mercado de Alacitas* where the pilgrims buy the miniatures of desired goods, such as animals and farmsteads, but also vehicles, business enterprises, and even educational achievement. They are certain that Christ will definitely fulfil these wishes.

The ceremony of the pilgrimage is organized by a higher-ranking brotherhood, *Hermanidad del Señor de Qoyllur Rit'i*. It predominantly gathers representatives of neighbouring communes that are traditionally in control of the shrine.

The nucleus of the pilgrims is divided into eight groups (*naciones*) according to their origins. The most important are Paucartambo, Urubamba, Quispicanchis, Canchis, Acomayo, and Anta. This division refers to their provinces of origin. It also reflects ethnic and socioeconomic differences.

In Paucartambo and Urubamba it is mostly Quechua of the farm regions who gather. Quispicanchis however represents the cattle-herding Aymara. These groups distinguish themselves through clothes and by marking their campgrounds. Hierarchies between them are expressed in manifold ways and are often defended by force.

The official festivities begin on Ascension Day with the procession of the statue Señor de Qoyllur Rit'i of Mawallani and of the Cross from Tayankany. They are transported by both communes under the leadership of the village elders and other officials to the chapel on the Sinakara glacier. On Sunday the first Mass and a procession of the Holy Host are celebrated. Only after this ceremony, but still during the night, do the majority of pilgrims move to the sanctuary. The majority of them travel by buses and trucks to the road village of Mawallani. From there the last 1000 metres have to be covered on foot. This foot march is extremely exhausting because of the darkness, the difficult path, the thin and extremely cold mountain air, and the weight of the provisions. It is perceived as a sacrifice to the Señor de Qoyllur Rit'i. At each wayside cross prayers are said and candles are lit. As a result, the sanctuary is reached only shortly before dawn.

Most pilgrims arrive as part of a delegation from communes and brotherhoods. They are led by the officials. Every group of pilgrims is accompanied by musicians and dancers who compete in an almost endless duel. Only with movement and in ecstasy is it possible to survive the five days in the altitude and cold.

Many pilgrims are masked elaborately. Legendary examples are especially the Ukukus, zoomorphic figures who are supposed to express superhuman forces. They are in fact the strongest young men, who either function with their whips as the security guards of the festival, or replace missing dancers and support weaker pilgrims. Also, they are allowed to climb the glacier as representatives of their *naciones* on the penultimate day of the festival. On the peak of the mountain they fight a ritual combat during the night with

43 Flores Lizana 1997.

demons. At dawn they chop ice blocks from the glacier and bring them down to the valley at sunrise (Fig. 1). They are awaited in a ceremony by the rest of the pilgrims. All kneel down, remove their masks, make the sign of the cross, and greet the sun which rises above the glacier. The Ukukus are led to the chapel in a pageant. There, the ice of the glacier is blessed during a final mass and with a procession to the Señor de Qoyllur Rit'í. It is believed that the ice and the snow water have a healing and stimulating capacity. The pilgrims put it in small bottles and wear them as an amulet and as a kind of medicine. The Ukukus carry the ice blocks, which can weigh up to 30 kg, with them to their home community. There, the snow water is poured on the fields for fertilization or on kin and animals for therapeutic reasons. The celebrations end for most of the pilgrims with this mass. But the men of Mawallani and Tayankany have the duty of returning the figure of the Señor de Qoyllur Rit'í and the Cross of Tayankany back to their home villages on isolated mountain paths (Fig. 2). They are accompanied by the Ukukus during this procession of twenty-four hours, which marks the official end of the pilgrimage feast.

It is often overlooked that many pilgrims and also Ukukus take part in the celebrations of Corpus Christi in Cuzco.<sup>44</sup> These begin the following day.

### 3.2 Corpus Christi in Cuzco

While Qoyllur Rit'í is described as an Andean festival, the ceremony of Corpus Christi in Cuzco is characterized as the "Apotheosis of the Christian Cuzco".<sup>45</sup> According to the dogma of Trent, Corpus Christi honours the real presence of Christ in the Sacrament of Holy Communion. The Spanish initiated its diffusion in the whole of Latin America. But since colonial times it has been nowhere more sumptuously celebrated than in Cuzco.<sup>46</sup> It is the most important titular feast of the department and is designed as a fusion of the patron saints' festivals of eight communities. Every year, 50–60 000 visitors are counted. Because of its importance, it became a model for the patron saints' celebrations of the entire region.<sup>47</sup>

#### 3.2.1 *The course of the ceremony*

The date for the feast of Corpus Christi is not fixed. It depends on the Easter celebration, and so falls between May 21 and June 24. In Cuzco, it is divided into several phases. The main procession takes place on a Thursday after the Octave of Pentecost. However, the central part of the festivities in the cathedral, situated in the historical center of the town, takes nine days. The celebrations continue with the so-called small Corpus in the

44 Brachetti 2002.

45 Bernales Ballesteros 1981, 280.

46 Dean 1999, 23.

47 Sallnow 1987, 63.



Fig. 1 Pilgrims returning from the Sinakara glacier.

community churches until the last Sunday in July, the day of the (holy) Santiago (St. James the Great). In addition, it fuses with other feasts taking place at the same time, such as the solstice (Inti Raymi) on June 24. This means that a festival timespan of over two months can develop.

The beginning of Corpus Christi is marked by the ‘walk in’ (*entrada*) of fifteen saints of the most important urban departments and of the hinterland of Cuzco into the town center. The processions are accompanied by contingents from the communes; they are led by the priest and the sponsors of the festival. The first leg brings them to the convent of Santa Clara directly before the western town gate (Fig. 3). They are awaited by thousands of spectators. In the church of Santa Clara the saints are gathered. They will spend the night there and only on the next morning will they move in a long procession



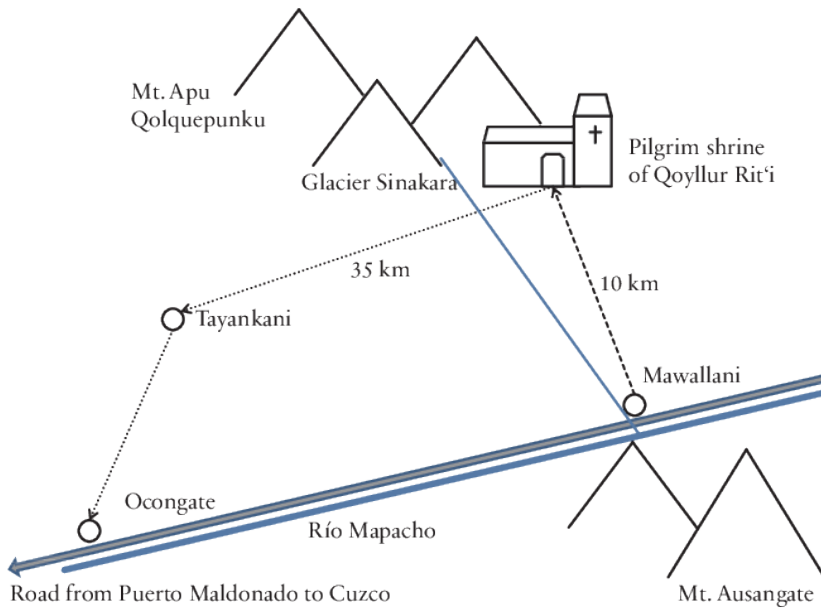


Fig. 2 Map of the pilgrimage route near the sanctuary.

to the cathedral in the center of town. Before the main altar they are arranged into the 'heavenly congregation' (*asamblea celestial*).

The procession of Corpus Christi proper begins the following morning. From day-break, the different communities and brotherhoods are eagerly occupied preparing their saints for the big appearance. To this end they are placed outside in a semi-circle in front of the cathedral (Fig. 4).

In the cathedral one mass after the other is read for particular saints. The *Te Deum* ends the ceremony with the blessing of the host by the archbishop.

### 3.2.2 *The Corpus Christi Procession*

The host is placed in an immense monstrance (*templete*)<sup>48</sup> on wheels in the form of a sun and is then driven outside in the middle of the saints. The religious and political authorities of the town present themselves in front of it. Speeches are delivered and

<sup>48</sup> It is massively gilded and decorated with numerous diamonds, rubies, emeralds, and pearls.



Fig. 3 The Saints enter the city.

thanks are uttered. Just before midday the main procession begins to move around the central square. The beginning is made by the monstrance and then follow:

1. San Antonio (St. Anthony of Padua) from the chapel of San Cristóbal
2. San Jerónimo from the chapel of San Jeronimo
3. San Cristóbal (St. Christopher) from the church and city district of the same name
4. San Sebastian from the chapel of the district of the same name
5. Santa Barbara from the chapel of the village Poroy
6. Santa Ana (St. Ann) from the chapel of the same name
7. Santiago Mayor (St. James) from the chapel of the same name
8. San Blas (St. Blaise) from the parish church of the same name
9. San Pedro (St. Peter) from the parish church of the same name
10. San José (St. Joseph) from the chapel of the Virgen de Belén
11. Virgen de la Natividad (Virgin Mary of the Nativity) from the church of Almudena
12. Virgen de los Remedios (Our Lady of the Remedies) from the church of Santa Catalina
13. Virgen Purificada (Virgin Mary of Candlemas) from the chapel of San Pedro



Fig. 4 Preparation of the Virgins for the Corpus procession.

14. Virgen de Belén (Our Lady of Bethlehem) from the parish church of the same name

15. La Linda: Virgen de la Inmaculada Concepción from the cathedral

The saints are carried in a convoy around the central square of the town (*Plaza de Armas*). The distance is not more than 600 m. The convoy stops again and again. The bearers have to rest, the saints receive petitioners, or they pray in front of provisional altars. Also, a plurality of saints and crosses of lesser importance, e.g. from associations or families are carried along and are put into contact with the main saints. The procession is watched by a thickly packed crowd which will hesitantly give way. The spectacle lasts three hours at a minimum. Finally, the saints line up again before the cathedral. They give their blessings to the crowd and to the town with deep bows and are then transported back into the cathedral and are grouped in front of the main altar.

Outside a great feast begins. The active participants are asked into the houses of the festival sponsors to participate in the banquet. The other participants are offered typical food for feasts, like *chiri uchu* (cold chili) or *anticuchos* (grilled hearts of cows). Often the feast extends until the crack of dawn.

### 3.2.3 End of the celebration

The gathering of the saints in the cathedral lasts eight days (*octava*). During this time the festival sponsors of their communities provide them regularly with fresh flowers and other presents through small processions. Thousands of devotees flock into the cathedral in order to present their problems and wishes to the saints. To end the *octave* a further joint procession is undertaken which resembles the one from the central day. After that

the saints return to their own churches one after the other. Already in the afternoon Santa Ana and Santa Barbara say goodbye. The other statues return for one more night to the cathedral. It is said that they joyfully celebrate their leave taking (*kacharpari*). The next morning, however, they too return home. Leaving the central square they bow before the spectators before they leave. And, as belief has it, they bless the town for the coming year. When they arrive home in their parish churches they are welcomed enthusiastically. It is believed that they bring a special blessing with them as well as the licence for the celebrations of the next patron saints' days in the communities (*corpus parroquial*).<sup>49</sup>

## 4 Interpretation

### 4.1 The entanglement of Qoyllur Rit'i with Corpus Christi

I argued in the theoretical introduction that traditionally a deep contrast between local and regional cults, that is between patron saints' feasts and pilgrimages, is emphasized. These two ritual systems can be fundamentally differentiated also in the existing case. During the patron saints' days local saints are venerated whose sanctuaries constitute the center of towns, or their districts. The pilgrims to the *Qoyllur*, however, leave their home places since the shrine is in the mountains, far away from settlements and the political and ecclesiastical centers. Insofar the situation matches exactly the description of Turner and Sallnow.

However, looking more closely several elements oppose a very strictly dichotomized conceptualization. Rather unconvincing is the image of two distinct ritual landscapes. It becomes evident that local and regional cults are entangled in the department of Cuzco. The patron of the pilgrims, *Señor de Qoyllur Rit'i*, and the cross of *Tayankany* are at the same time patrons of their local communities. They are jealously protected from local strangers. Only members of their own community are allowed to transport them; otherwise they would become so heavy that they could not be lifted up again. Their processions open the pilgrimage and also end it. The pilgrimage to the *Señor de Qoyllur Rit'i* overrides local forms of veneration and also builds upon them.

But, above all, the pilgrimage merges directly into the celebrations for Corpus Christi in Cuzco. Many participants describe the two ceremonies as belonging inseparably together. Indeed, Molinié characterizes the feast at the Qoyllur Rit'i as an Andean implementation of Corpus Christi.<sup>50</sup> The ice of the glacier becomes associated with the Body of God. This argument is enhanced by the fact that the two ceremonies are linked in

49 Huayhuaca Villasante 1988.

50 Molinié 2002.



Fig. 5 Pilgrims dancing before a portrait of the Señor de Qoyllur Rit'í during Corpus processions in Cusco.

time. The pilgrimage always takes place one week before the feast of Corpus Christi and it ends one day before the beginning of the Corpus. This timing enables the pilgrims to participate in the Corpus Christi celebrations, in which they often fulfil important functions (Fig. 5). For instance, the pilgrims from Urubamba traditionally take the lead in the opening procession of the Corpus Christi. First of all, they accompany San Jerónimo (Fig. 6). This saint, officially the translator of the Bible who as a doctor of theology has to insist on the strict observance of dogma, is called by the pilgrims only by the diminutive form, our 'little doctor' (*doctorcito*). They believe that he possesses healing power and that he also blesses the snow meltwater which they take home for therapeutic reasons.

San Jerónimo starts his procession already at dawn from the district town San Jerónimo, which is 13 km away from Cuzco. At the edge of town, he is already awaited by San Sebastian. Between the two processions a fierce race develops. San Jerónimo has to arrive first in the center so that the coming year will be a happy one. The *Ukukus*, the security guards of the pilgrimage, run in front and clear a path for him through the spectators with their whips.

The contingents of pilgrims not only participate in the opening ceremony but also constitute one of the highlights of the main ceremony. Separated into contingents, they march directly before the main procession into town, where they are received triumphantly. The *Ukukus*, carrying the ice, also participate in the Corpus Christi procession and are accompanied like saints as their path is cleared with whips.



Fig. 6 Pilgrims and Ukukus leading San Jerónimo into Cuzco.

Pilgrims from Paucartambo accompany the Virgen de la Natividad from the Almudena as dancers. They believe that the Virgen has scratches on her face which resemble the stitched cross on their pilgrims masks.<sup>51</sup>

Many pilgrims link themselves to San Cristóbal. He is the official protector of pilgrims and travellers. There is also a direct association between him and the *Qoyllur Rit'i*.<sup>52</sup> It is believed that this saint, who is identified as *indigena*, carries the Christ child of the *Qoyllur Rit'i* on his shoulder. The river which he crosses is associated with the water of the glacier. Like the massif of the Ausangate, to which the pilgrims' home area belongs, San Cristóbal is also considered to be "the greatest who can be always seen".<sup>53</sup> Characteristics of the pilgrim's home area, such as altitude and water, are thus symbolized in his figure (Fig. 10). This reveals how much, in the perception of many participants, Corpus

51 Roca Wallparimachi 1992.

52 Alvarez Blas 2006, 19.

53 Pilgrims maintain that he was once even taller. His legs had had to be shortened so that he could pass through the door of the church.

Christi is determined by the foregoing pilgrimage. Obviously, the dichotomized differentiation between pilgrimage and patron saints' days does not do justice to the dynamic of the events.

Even in a formal perspective the distinction is difficult to maintain. The mobility pattern, which at first glance seems the most obvious medium to differentiate between procession and pilgrimage, is by no means so clear-cut as is usually stressed.<sup>54</sup> For example, the otherwise loose order of the pilgrim group is enhanced during important phases and can lead into a procession when arriving at the shrine. Often the contingents are ordered hierarchically, carrying their staff of office and other insignia of rank with them. On their way back the pilgrims may organize in less formal groups, which however reorganize as processions when they participate in the Corpus Christi celebration, especially when they march into the center. On the other hand, the movements in the Corpus Christi processions are by no means always ceremonial and orderly. They can change fluidly into normal or even rather playful movements and dance. In an entirely unpretentious way statues of the patron communities are put on lorries in order to overcome long distances. Hence, it may be other factors that suggest characteristic movement patterns.

Of importance is without doubt the theatrical character. The number of spectators and the degree of formality of a situation noticeably influences the form of the movements. Another important impulse for strongly ritualized movements may be the contact with religious symbols. During a pilgrimage the contact with them is progressively intensified by a sequence of stops, but is especially intense at the place of arrival. However, the central symbols and other objects of veneration are carried along during the whole route of a procession. In addition, it can be observed that especially the character of the objects is decisive for the form of movements. If the image of a saint or a similar central collective symbol is carried along, it is done with intensive veneration, formality, and prudence, mostly in the form of a procession. If, however, something of lesser ritual value is transported, it is usually done in a much looser form. But also very banal characteristics of an object, such as height and weight, can have an effect on the form of movement. The massive figures of the saints are normally carried in synchronized movements by the bearers. They try not to bend their knees under the weight of the statues, which leads to a mechanical swaying back and forth that quite often is transmitted to the accompanying crowd. In this context, it is interesting to note that the weight of the statues will be increased intentionally.<sup>55</sup> To carry a very heavy load counts as a sacrifice for the saints.

54 Mulla 1967, 820; Grimes 1987, 2; Fellbecker 1995, 213.

55 For this reason, for instance, a stone was embedded in the base of the sedan chair of San Cristóbal. The stone allegedly originates from the Inca fortress Sacsayhuaman.

Finally, also the *gestalt* of the objects carried affects the form of the movement. In many processions, mimetic intentions are evident. Old San Antonio marches forward with dignity while the youthful Santiago gallops forth but then returns hesitantly. The Virgins follow with small graceful footsteps. The saints greet each other by bowing down; sometimes they bend to the enthusiastic spectators. This mimetic performance confers on the processions a lot of expressiveness and a lot of their typical characteristics.

In summary, we have to conclude that pilgrimage and patron saints' days in Cuzco intertwine. They virtually coincide. In part, the members are the same, and their motivation as well as the symbolism is very similar.

#### 4.2 Feast of Corpus Christi as local ritual?

Sallnow's thesis that patron saints' days are "marked off sharply from the translocal and regional" is not convincing with regard to the described connection between the Corpus Christi and the translocal pilgrimage to the Qoyllur Rit'i.<sup>56</sup> But also in the territorial structure and coverage it is not adequate to describe the feast of Corpus Christi in Cuzco as a "purely local event."<sup>57</sup>

##### 4.2.1 Catchment area, members, and motivation

Corpus Christi was already a translocal or even supraregional feast in colonial times. All communities inside a radius of ten Spanish miles (*leguas*) around the town were obliged to participate.<sup>58</sup> Barrionuevo reports that originally 117 images of saints were involved.<sup>59</sup> The majority of them originated from the indigenous communities in the more distant surroundings. But also images of saints from other departments, like the Virgen de Cocharcas from Huamanga (Ayacucho) participated. Even saints from neighboring countries such as Lorenzo from Tucumán or 'La Peregrina' from Quito arrived.<sup>60</sup> With regard to its catchment area Corpus Christi outreached by far the pilgrimage of the Qoyllur Rit'i, "attracting participation by all castes and estates"<sup>61</sup> This great attraction of the colonial feast is no longer attained at present. But without doubt Corpus Christi is still a translocal feast and it confirms the "unrivaled preeminence of Corpus in the liturgical calendar of the southern Andes."<sup>62</sup> Not only are saints from eight communities of the town summoned, but with Santa Barbara and San Sebastián also saints from other places and districts are directly involved (Fig. 7).

56 Sallnow 1987, 98.

57 Sallnow 1987, 63.

58 Esquivel y Navia 1980 [1749], 41.

59 Barrionuevo 1980.

60 Barrionuevo 1980, 50.

61 Cahill 1996, 84.

62 Cahill 1996, 84.



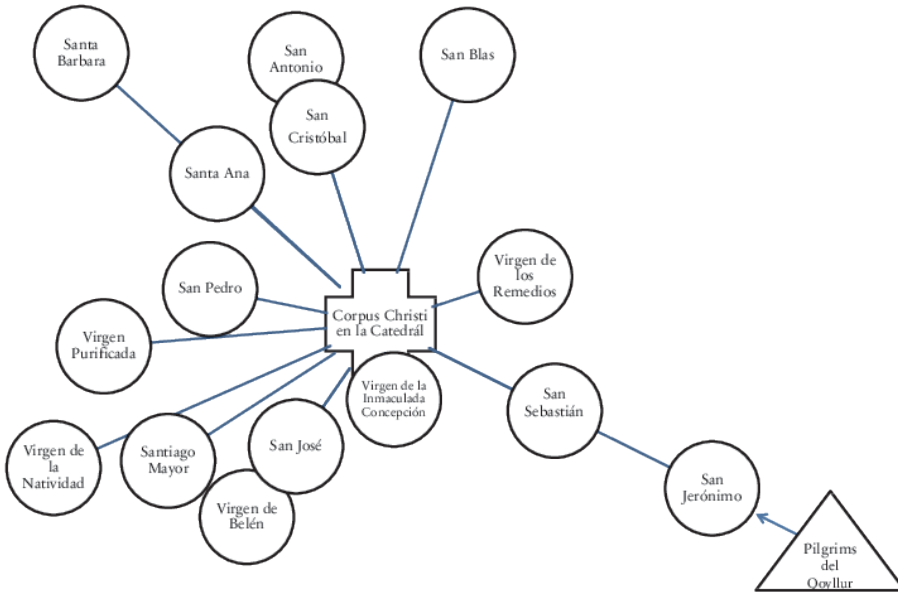


Fig. 7 Spatial presentation of the Corpus Christi in Cuzco.

Already, the basic organization of the feast is multilocal. The infrastructure is the same as the one for the community celebrations. Most of the work and expenditures are supplied by the different parish communities and the local brotherhoods. Their appearance is merged in a central performance. Significantly, even the ‘mother community’ of the cathedral is totally reliant on the support of the subordinated communities (Fig. 8). Sedan bearers of the parish San Pedro proudly underline that La Linda, the patroness of the cathedral, is not able to leave the church without their help.

It is also to be remembered that the participants only originate partly from Cuzco. Many travel from distant regions, such as the neighbouring departments, Arequipa, or even Lima. Also, international visitors are seen. The majority are spectators who just enjoy the spectacle. But some of them assume important functions. Especially prominent are the musicians and dancers from the province of Paucartambo. As extras, they accompany the Virgen de la Natividad from Almudena. Also, believers from the neighboring department Apurímac accompany this saint. They do not come as single persons but as delegations (*delegaciones*) from their villages. The saint is supposed to be the older kin of



Fig. 8 Procession of sponsors of indigenous neighborhoods bringing gifts for Santa Barbara into the cathedral.

their own patroness. It is the duty of the sponsors of the festival to visit her in the year of their engagement and to dance before her.<sup>63</sup>

Remarkably, many participants come from the far distant Puno and other places in the Altiplano, such as Juliaca or Illave. Even *delegaciones* from Bolivia arrive to demonstrate typical dances such as the *Qollabuada* or the *Diablada*. Their presence is so strong that many Cuzqueños complain. When all these arguments are taken together, the classification of Corpus Christi as a “purely local event”<sup>64</sup> is not adequate.

The assignment to a particular saint during the festival is dependent on the territorial affiliation, as Sallnow remarks. As an inhabitant of a parish one is normally obliged to its patron; migrants uphold their bonds to the patron of their local village. A further criterion which quite often correlates with residential status is the association of saints with specific social groups. Many devotees precisely differentiate between indigenous saints (like San Cristóbal and Santa Bárbara) and those of the mestizo elites (Virgen de la Belén and San Blas).<sup>65</sup>

Nevertheless, Sallnow overlooks the fact that the veneration of saints also results from the functions of their patronage. San Cristóbal is the patron of travelers. This is why his procession is mainly supported by the guild of taxi drivers and by traveling

63 Escobar Medrano 1999.

64 Sallnow 1987, 63.

65 The bearers of San Blas scrupulously ensure that he does not come into contact with saints from subordinate parish communities.

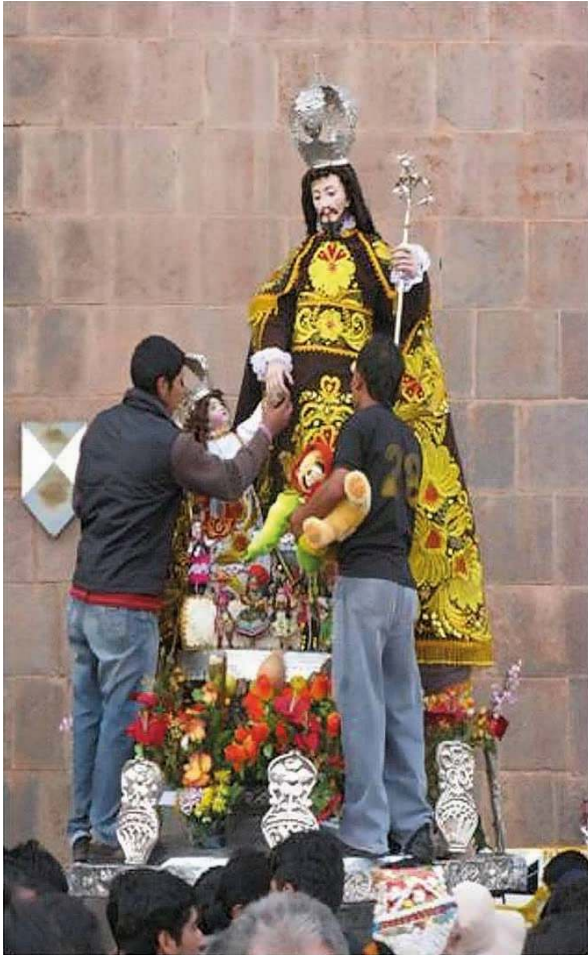


Fig. 9 San José in front of the cathedral decorated by young fathers.

traders. Often the links result from unofficial associations, which are related to iconographic specifics or the life of a saint. For example, Santa Barbara is attributed power over lightning according to legend. She is therefore worshipped by electricians, producers of fireworks, and a battalion of artillery. Often, the classification can be temporary and induced by a direct request. For instance, San José (Joseph) is carried traditionally by young fathers and is presented with cuddly toys, in order to secure the well-being of their children (Fig. 9).

The adoration can reflect highly personal preferences and/or can be grounded in dreams. Accordingly varied are the motives for participation in the Corpus Christi fes-

tival. The membership of the patron saints' days is by far less inevitable, socially determined, and homogeneous than Sallnow maintains.<sup>66</sup> In fact, the Corpus Christi in Cuzco demonstrates that different social and ethnic strata can get together during patron saints' days.

### 4.3 Corpus Christi: an official interpretation

According to Sallnow patron saints' days are dominated by official religion and by the political elites.<sup>67</sup> Their processions are described as obligatory parades which display<sup>68</sup> political and ecclesiastical hierarchies.<sup>69</sup> Indeed, the festival is quite instructive in its function for the Catholic Church. Corpus Christi is a very Catholic feast. It presents the Body of Christ as a sacrament; its celebration performs the practical transformation of the dogma of the real presence of Christ in the Eucharist. It was founded in its typical form during the Council of Trent and is closely linked with the disputes of the Counter-Reformation.<sup>70</sup>

Actually, one could understand the formation of Corpus Christi in Cuzco as a response to Protestant critique. The saints are gathered around the host as the Body of Christ to receive their legitimation. In the procession, Christ is celebrated as the head of the community of saints. But it can only be accepted with reservation that the procession is a reaction to Counter-Reformation conflicts, since there never was any kind of Protestant danger in the isolated colonies.

It is more likely that in Cuzco the triumph of Christ is oriented against other 'enemies' of the Catholic faith.<sup>71</sup> In fact, the majority of authors have pointed out that the aim was to superimpose Corpus Christi on autochthonous cults. According to the chronicler Polo de Ondegardo<sup>72</sup> the Inka midwinter festival *Inti Raymi* was supposed to be replaced.<sup>73</sup> Zuidema<sup>74</sup> pointed out that Corpus Christi took the place of an Andean harvest festival, while Flores Ochoa<sup>75</sup> demonstrated that the procession was a Catholic version of an Inka procession of the mummies of their ancestors.

The promulgation of Corpus Christi can also be understood as part of a general attempt to increase dependence on the Catholic clergy. As a matter of fact, the feast of Corpus Christi in Cuzco is designed to orchestrate the priesthood as the indispensable administrator of salvation. While images of the saints are accessible without any

66 Sallnow 1987, 98–99.

67 Sallnow 1987.

68 Sallnow 1987, 63.

69 Sallnow 1987, 6.

70 Browe 1928, 111.

71 Voragine 2006, 160. Interestingly, the Virgins are followed by a small dragon, the symbol of Satan and sin, which is kept down by an archangel. Presum-

ably, this is a motif from the Golden Legend. There, the dragon, stricken by Saint George, is not dead and runs behind the Virgin like a timid small dog.

72 Polo de Ondegardo 1916 [1584], 21–22.

73 According to Hocquenghem 1989, 173, celebrations regarding the Pleiades were overwritten.

74 Zuidema 1999.

75 Flores Ochoa 1990.

problems for unorthodox usage or are completely uncontrollable as familiar devotional objects in the domain of the house, the Host is bound to the officially controlled domain of the church. It has to be stored at the Altar, can leave the church only under direct control of the priests, and even at Holy Communion is it not allowed to be touched by the lay people. These rules are illustrated in the celebrations in Cuzco by means of the tabernacle, which is protected by the clergy.

In particular, the archiepiscopal production of the host is cited.<sup>76</sup> It forms the official centerpoint for the other masses of the saints. The images of the saints of the parishes are ordered according to it, which illustrates the dependency of the parish priests on the benediction of the bishop. The celebration obviously serves as an instrument of the confirmation and visualization of metropolitan authority. Only through the consecrated Host in the cathedral do the saints of the neighboring parishes receive their sanctifying power.

All in all, Corpus Christi should be understood as the far-reaching attempt to center religious practice on the Catholic functionaries and on the places and objects that they dominate. In addition, it was intended to make evident the dependency of the local cults and the lower clergy of the diocese.

According to Sallnow the patron saints' feasts in Peru constitute less a religious institution and more an aspect of exercising political power.<sup>77</sup> In the same way, Guido concluded: "The processions of the Catholic saints were expanded in colonial times in order to win the recognition and confirmation of the Spanish rulers. This is particularly evident in the most important festivals, such as that of the Apostle Santiago and Corpus Christi."<sup>78</sup> Indeed, it seems that the impulse for the introduction of the festival was generated by political officeholders. It was begun by the Viceroy Toledo.<sup>79</sup> On behalf of the parliament of town (*cabildo*) all indigenous groups of the neighborhood had to perform under their leaders in the procession, taking the pictures of the saints with them. The locals were followed by Spanish soldiers.<sup>80</sup> From a political point of view the procession was unequivocally planned as a performance of the conquest and thus as the illustration and renewed implementation of subjection.

In order to understand this, it is necessary to analyse the political context of the introduction of the Corpus festival. The wide dissemination of the cult was carried out in the years after the defeat of the military rebellion of Inka Tuti Kusi in 1565.<sup>81</sup> The rebellion was part of a strong messianic independence movement, called Taki Onqoy ('illness of dance'). It pervaded the totality of the southern Andes, aiming at the reconstruction of the Andean cults and the disappearance of all Hispanic elements. Only

76 Unlike in Europe there were no relics as remedies in the New World.

77 Sallnow 1987.

78 Guido 2003, 38 (Transl. by U. Luig).

79 Granados 2003, 153.

80 Esquivel y Navia 1980 [1749], 41.

81 Wachtel 1973.

around 1570 were the Spaniards successful in putting down the rebellion. In 1572, the relics of the Inka kingdom were destroyed on behalf of the Viceroy, and the last emperor of the Inka, Tupac Amaru, was executed.<sup>82</sup> After the rebellion, the local peoples were organized and resettled into *Reducciones de Indios*. Politically, a weakening of ethnic affiliations was pursued, but at the same time administrative aims became important as well. The absorption of manpower was to be facilitated and the integration into the Christian cults had to be secured. A church was built in each *Reducción* and patronage was provided. The new parishes were structured hierarchically.<sup>83</sup>

The extension of the Corpus festival coincided exactly with this intensive phase of consolidation of the political and religious leadership. It was obviously an integrative part of the wide-reaching administrative reform. It is this new order that Corpus Christi ritually reproduced. The town, the district, and even places beyond are presented as a continuously structured landscape which is oriented towards the colonial centre. The introduction of the festival can therefore be interpreted as an attempt to secure performatively the Toledian administrative reform.<sup>84</sup>

4.3.1 *Places, routes, appointments: the territorial symbolism from an official point of view*

The political as well as the ecclesiastical aim is evident in the territorial symbolism of the celebrations. Sainly figures from nine parishes take part in it. Eight of them, devoted to San Pedro, the Apostle Santiago, San Cristóbal, the Virgin of Belen (that is, Bethlehem), San Sebastian and San Jerónimo correspond to the originally indigenous urban quarters *Chakilchaka*, *Qoqanpata*, *Toqokachi*, *Sañu*, and *Wama*. The ninth parish constitutes the Spanish colonial center of town with the cathedral, incorporating the *sanctum*. During Corpus Christi the saints of the neighboring Indian communities are oriented towards this dominant Spanish center, to which they have to subordinate themselves. In this context one has to remember that the primary goal of the ritual, the cathedral of Cuzco, is far more than a religious symbol. It was constructed as the ‘Church of Triumph’ which marked the site of the final military victory of the Spaniards. Also, it was directly built upon the base of the palace of Inka Huiracocha, the *Sunturwasi*, as the still visible foundation walls attest. Insofar the main cultic center is a clear emblem of the military and political subjection.<sup>85</sup> It represents what Dean has called a metonym of conquest.<sup>86</sup>

82 Millones 1973.

83 Celestino 1982, 151.

84 Subordinate saints of poorer quarters or places, such as Santa Ana or Santa Barbara, have to defer to more powerful saints.

85 The site of the procession, the current *Plaza de armas*, was, already in the time of the Inka under the name of *haukaypata*, the main meeting place of the town “used for major events such as victory celebrations, the installation of new rulers, and the culmination of various seasonal festivals” (Dean 1999, 29).

86 Dean 1999, 24.

Coming to the performance itself: at first the direction of the movement is used to identify the center of the festival. In the first part of the performance the processions are centripetal, whereas they become circuitous in the centre. The pictures of the saints are arranged around the tabernacle. At the end of the festival they are brought back in centrifugal directions to their local homes, where they will constitute the centre of gravity in their parishes. By so doing it seems that a complete hierarchical registration of the ritual space, its diverse elements, and people takes place.

The symbols and directions of the festival correlate skilfully with the social and administrative structures. This hierarchical integration begins at the micro-level. Numerous little saintly figures, crosses, or images are carried in the big processions or placed at the wayside. They consist of shrines of subordinated social units, like subordinate parts of the city, professional organizations, or other institutions, neighbourhoods, or even single families. During Corpus Christi, they will all be brought into direct contact with the saints set above them in order to renew their consecrating power. In this way, they are subordinated to the parish saints, who themselves bow before the Body of Christ from whom they will receive legitimation and strength.

Social differentiation and differing hierarchical positions among the saints become visible in the size, facilities, and expense of their processions. In addition, the sequences of the Corpus festival are expressions of traditional power relations. Already at the arrival in town there is clear demarcation, as is shown in the competition between San Jeronimo and San Sebastian. Subordinate saints from side altars and chapels, as in the case of the Virgen Purificada and San Antonio, are oriented towards the patrons of the church and constitute their retinue. Partly, as in the case of Santa Barbara, pictures representing the patronage of the rural communities are assigned to the saints in the city and they are only allowed to enter the center of town in their company. The saints of the periphery have to sleep outside the town gate. The entrance into the convent church of Santa Clara is also determined by prestige. Saints in poorer parts of the city or in rural communities have to wait respectfully before the entrance until the 'great' saints have arrived. Only at the 'vigil' (*velada*) are the saints of the neighbourhood brought into the former Spanish-dominated center. In a final move, they are allowed to enter the cathedral.

The order in the cathedral and during the procession is strictly specified. However, a historical analysis clearly shows a fundamental change in position and a change in the participating saints.<sup>87</sup> These findings contradict Sallnow's thesis concerning the absence of dynamism in local rituals. The actual sequence presents itself as a result of a multidimensional historical process. Presumably, several regulating principles can be

87 Bernales Ballesteros 1981; for the innovations see also Flores Ochoa 2009.

recognized. Bernales noticed that the saints were ordered according to rank and age.<sup>88</sup> For example, Santiago, who was the first saint of the town, initially led the procession.<sup>89</sup> It seems that a certain role is also played by the calendrical position of a saint's day. San Antonio, whose saint's day is in January, i.e. at the beginning of the year, at present begins the festival as the first saint.

Above all, the sequence is regulated by the social functions of the figures. To start with, the monstrance accompanies the highest ecclesiastical dignitaries, such as the archbishop. The nearness to the host reflects the importance of the participants.<sup>90</sup> The first figures of saints to follow in the procession are San Antonio as monk and San Jeronimo as theologian. In the middle walk, Santiago and Santa Barbara as patrons of the Spanish army, followed by San Blas, representative of a priest with choirboys, and Saint Peter. Possibly, this succession visualizes the competition among the persons of religious orders and priests, having a parallel in architecture in the competition between the cathedral and the church of the Jesuits, which was built at the same place, rivalling each other in size and splendour. The end is marked by San José and the images of Mary, expressing the fact that women were normally the last in processions. It has to be remarked that the procession is led by the monstrance and is ended by La Linda, the Virgen de la Asunción. This implies that the two sanctuaries that belong to the cathedral, that is to the colonial Spanish parishes, frame the saints of the other parishes.

According to Sallnow's view processions are used as an expression of social exclusiveness, which is emphasized by the fact that social divisions and specific identities are displayed with the help of the patron saints. On the other hand, the Corpus processions of Cuzco present society as an organic unity. Bernales perceives here a society that "unites all social strata and categories from nobility to slaves without disruption and fissures."<sup>91</sup> If one follows this argument Corpus Christi can also be described with regard to its integrative function.

#### 4.3.2 *Iconographic symbolism: Santiago as emblem of the conquista*

Santiago is the best example for the thesis that Corpus Christi in Cuzco was conceptualized as the triumph of the colonial order, because only those saints were included who embodied subordination in an especially clear-cut manner. Santiago is portrayed as a helper in battle and represents a Spanish cavalryman. He rides down the nonbelievers while swinging a raised sword.

The beginning of the Santiago cult started directly after the final conquest of the Inka empire, that is after the victory of the Spanish in Cuzco. The reason is the report of the apparition of the saint as a helper in battle. In 1535 the Spanish were surrounded

88 Bernales Ballesteros 1981, 285.

89 Bernales Ballesteros 1981, 288.

90 Dean 1999, 44.

91 Bernales Ballesteros 1981, 277.



by the troops of Manco Inka in the town center of Cuzco. It is said that they were completely overwhelmed and sought a last refuge in a chapel whose roof was already set on fire. In this critical moment, the miraculous rescue happened, according to legend, in the guise of Mary and Santiago. While Mary extinguished the fire, and spread dust or hail in the eyes of the attackers, Santiago rode them down with his stallion. The saint became the first patron of the town and he is thought of as a guarantee that the empire will not fall back into heathenism.<sup>92</sup> The cult is installed in the Church of Triumph, one of the first church buildings in Peru, situated directly at the site of the rescue. The church was built inside the cathedral in the seventeenth century and still today forms its northernmost wing. There, one still finds the life-size figure of Santiago Mataindios, representing a Santiago with a subjected Inka under the hooves of his horse. In the main wing of the church a chapel with an altar is dedicated to the saint. On its triptych he is depicted as a fighter against the Inka. In the main apse, there is a figure of Santiago as apostle, while numerous other paintings are distributed in the interior of the church. Between 1571 and 1572 the Viceroy Toledo ordered the building of a parish church for Santiago outside the then limits of the town. The church belonged to a forced settlement of the Inka population but it was also conceived as forming a centre of the neighbouring *Reducción de los Indios del Contisuyu*, that is the entire southwestern part of the empire.<sup>93</sup> Therefore it is built where the road leads to the *Contisuyu*.<sup>94</sup> Before this church the knights of the Order of Santiago of the whole province were sworn in. The scope of the patronage evidently transcended the parish, which proves again that the description of the patronage as “purely local”<sup>95</sup> is not always adequate.

Several authors and sources confirm that the veneration of Santiago constituted from the very first the centrepiece of the Corpus festival. In colonial times he always led the procession of the saints and was not carried in a sedan chair but, like the monstrance, was taken along in a gold-plated wagon.<sup>96</sup> Inside the Corpus festival cycle a special feast day was attributed to the saint, whose *víspera* and procession marked the most splendid stage of the festival.<sup>97</sup>

The procession with the saint led through the whole center, from the city hall back to the cathedral, where the mass was read. Still in the eighteenth century the splendor of Santiago was proverbial. During the procession his clothes and the silver-plated horse gear was changed three times.<sup>98</sup> Carreño describes this procession as a special spectacle:

92 Vargas Ugarte 1956.

93 It appears that the dedication of the town quarter in Cuzco to Santiago is no coincidence. The first *Reducción de indios* in Lima had been under Santiago's control and was opened on his saint's day (Malaga Medina 1989, 23, 36). The first and biggest *Reducción* in the neighboring valley of the Inka, in Yucay, was also dedicated to Santiago (Esquivel y Navia 1980

[1749], 41). Its feast follows exactly the model of Corpus in Cuzco.

94 Garcilaso de la Vega 1943 [1609–1617], VIII, 3.

95 Sallnow 1987, 63.

96 Bernales Ballesteros 1981, 288.

97 Cahill 1999, 9.

98 Bernales Ballesteros 1981, 282.

“The statue, which sat on a wooden horse, was decorated with silver plates. It was carried on a low, likewise silver-plated sedan chair. The forced breaks of the sacred burden at each of the manifold altars that had been erected at three places made the procession last until four o’clock in the afternoon.”<sup>99</sup>

During this day, the procession was led by two superior festival sponsors, the so-called *alfereces reales*. One presented the Spanish, the second the Inka nobility. The latter had been selected by the representatives of the twelve Inka houses, called the *panacas reales*. Behind them walked the authorities and at the end of the procession a troop of Spanish soldiers, followed by the common people. Without any doubt this implies a “performative metaphor for the triumph of Christianity over native religion, and of Christians over ‘pagan’ Andeans.”<sup>100</sup>

The rapid and long-enduring success of the festival gives the impression that the Spanish calculus worked out. Garcilaso de la Vega,<sup>101</sup> the witness of the first years, reported that the subjected participated from the beginning of their free will. Not only the Inka elite of Cuzco marched in the procession, but even the nobility of the provinces came from afar. Bernales noted with surprise: “Ironically, the *indigenas* were the ones who contributed the most to the celebrations and the pomp of Corpus in Cuzco. Possibly, they had at first been encouraged and instructed, but later the feast was based and is still based exclusively on their motivation.”<sup>102</sup>

Of all things, it was Santiago, the emblem of the *conquista*, who was especially hailed by the indigenous participants. The historian Cahill notes: “There is no doubt that it is the most important colonial feast of the Inka.”<sup>103</sup> How much the Inka elite identified with the feast of Santiago is shown by several judicial procedures. With the help of them they enforced that the guidon of Santiago could be carried in front only by the highest-ranking Inka nobility.<sup>104</sup> Does this mean that the subjected celebrate their subordination?

#### 4.4 The indigenous and popular interpretation of Corpus Christi

On the basis of everyday consumption practices Certeau has shown that cultural elements are systematically used in a way foreign to the producers.<sup>105</sup> As he explicitly indicates, this is especially the case in colonial and postcolonial contexts: “Thus the spectacular victory of Spanish colonization over the indigenous Indian cultures was diverted from its intended aims by the use made of it: even when they were subjected, indeed even when they accepted their subjection, the Indians often used the laws, practices,

99 Carreño 1987 [1883], 76 (Transl. by U. Luig).

100 Dean 1999, 32.

101 Garcilaso de la Vega 1943 [1609–1617], VI, 8.

102 Bernales Ballesteros 1981, 279 (Transl. by U. Luig).

103 Cahill 2000, 91 (Transl. by U. Luig).

104 Dean 1999, 243.

105 Certeau 2006 [1980].

and representations that were imposed on them by force or by fascination to ends other than those of their conquerors.<sup>106</sup> Certeau's observation is valid in the present case too.

Cahill noticed that the interpretations of the Spanish and Inka elites were completely different as regards Corpus Christi.<sup>107</sup> The Inka nobility understood the feast of Corpus Christi in no way as a form of subordination, but used the triumphal procession as a stage in order to present their own symbols. On this particular day, the places of honor were taken by the Inka nobility clad in traditional garments and decorated with their insignia.<sup>108</sup> The highest class, marked by the *mascapaicha* (a badge which is worn on the forehead), was allowed to march in front. The procession was led by the *alférez real de los inkas* who carried a *champi*, a baton with the image of the sun, which resembles a sceptre. What was planned by the Spaniards as a triumphal procession on their account was evidently used by the conquered to remember their glorious Inka past.<sup>109</sup> Therefore, several attempts were made to forbid the symbols of the Inka.<sup>110</sup> Even in 1781 the bishop of Cuzco angrily declared that the nobles of the Inka still carry their own flags and sculpted images of their ancient Inka kings during the procession.<sup>111</sup>

Similarly, it seems that the recent popular interpretations and practices of Corpus Christi have nothing in common with the official guidelines.<sup>112</sup> For example, the dogma of the Real Presence which is officially the reason for the festival, is either unknown or of second order to most participants. The special mass by the archbishop in the cathedral does not attract much interest. Instead, a countless number of believer's huddle before the inconspicuous side altar of Taytacha Temblores, also known as Brown Christ. (*Christo Moreno*). His face, darkened by the soot of innumerable candles, is interpreted as an identification with the indigenous believers. Although he plays no role in the official protocol of the Corpus festival, he is made responsible for the feast in the popular interpretation. As host at the cathedral and protector of the town he is thought to convene the congregation of the saints (*asamblea celestial*).<sup>113</sup> Before him, as it is reported with satisfaction, the fair-skinned saints, too, have to bend the knee and receive his orders and blessing.

Indeed, during the feast of Corpus Christi the saints are arranged in the cathedral directly beside his altar in a single aisle. During the calm of the night the affairs of the town and the different communities are discussed under his chairmanship. The saints

106 Certeau 1988, 32.

107 Cahill 1999; Cahill 2000.

108 Uriel García 1937, 189–190, reported: "They brought all the jewellery and things with them that they had worn at the great Inka festivals. Each tribe carried the emblem of his ancestors." (Transl. by U. Luig).

109 Cahill 1999, 9.

110 AGI, Leg. 21.

111 AGI, Leg. 29.

112 Dussel 1986, 110, observes emphatically that, "Indeed two forms of religious performance exist side by side. One is the practice of the people; the other that of the official church. [...] Both practices have totally different meanings. In fact, these are two different religions." (Transl. by U. Luig).

113 Calvo Calvo 1996.

report the urgent problems of their parishes and of their believers. Christ gives advice and directions for the coming year. Sometimes one can hear from outside the low murmuring of the group. However, only the sponsors of the festival who keep vigil with their saints in the cathedral can understand them. In this way they learn something of the destiny of the coming year. Thus, it becomes evident that the congregation of the saints has been completely re-interpreted by popular belief. Instead of the bishop as host, an indigenous saint takes center stage.

During the procession, we find a similar situation. The marvellous monstration does not receive much notice.<sup>114</sup> The participants focus exclusively on 'their' saints. They gather around them and seek to be near them physically. They are believed to be important identification figures relating to human destiny and the lifeworld of the common believers. It happens quite often that the official symbolism which they represent is thoroughly transformed. An example is San Antonio, who leads the procession. Originally, as has been shown above, the reason for this may have been that the hermit represents the friars, who presumably were the leaders of the procession in former times. Another reason is the fact that his feast as a saint is celebrated at the beginning of the year. But the rural visitors conclude from his position as a leader that he is a *Qollana*, which means the 'chargehand' who, as the busiest worker, leads the work in the fields and determines the pace. These are traditionally the youngest men in the indigenous communities, who have to prove their worth at work. Because of this interpretation, San Antonio is considered to be the patron of the youth. Only they are allowed to carry his statue, because it is believed that he will transmit his power to them.

At present, for many indigenous participants problems of agriculture are at the centre of their interest. San Cristóbal, for example, represents for them the patron of the potato harvest. A chain of particularly big potatoes thus decorates his sedan chair. He is decorated as an indigenous elder, the trunk of the palm tree representing his staff of office (Fig. 10). San Jerónimo is the patron of the vegetable harvest. Therefore, the products are accumulated in front of his chair.

The official ascription of some figures is reversed, for instance in the case of the Virgin of Belén. She is the official patron of the town and is believed by the mestizos to be the queen of the event. Her pomp is legendary. She owns hundreds of clothes, which are displayed before the feast on the forecourt of her church. Her decoration consists of real jewellery and gems. However, the indigenous participants evaluate these riches as an expression of moral degeneration. One says in hushed tones that the Virgin of Belén sells herself during the last night of Corpus to the rich saints of the town. Contrary to her are Santa Barbara and Santa Ana. They return home already in the afternoon of the octave. As decent women, they arrive home before nightfall. Both of them are saints of

114 Flores Ochoa 1990, 117.



Fig. 10 San Cristóbal at Corpus with his indigenous followers.

indigenous market parishes and embody simple women. They show themselves without splendid adornment; 'poor but honest' is the slogan of their followers.

It is reported with pleasure that, ironically, the lordly Santiago is attracted by the indigenous Barbara. Every year he appears on his best charger in order to impress this virgin saint. But he never succeeds in catching up with her because Santa Ana, who is an experienced matron, does not let him pass. This example shows that the saints are entangled in emotional histories in which people participate intensively.

The patron saints may originate from the standard inventory of the saints and were most possibly imposed on the native population.<sup>115</sup> It is however clearly recognizable that by way of popular legends and reports of miracles they were fast ascribed local identities which are witty and unique. They are deeply integrated into the social context of their veneration. Admiration for them is based on the motivation of local actors. A particularly brilliant example of that is Santiago, the patron saint of violent conquest.

115 Sallnow 1987, 199.

4.4.1 *The popular appropriation of Santiago*

Already early colonial sources illustrate that the popularity of Santiago among the indigenous population had nothing to do with the requirements of the colonial rulers. Rather he was linked with lightning because of his celestial intervention in Cuzco. The chronicler Guaman Poma de Ayala wrote: “Our master Santiago fell down from the sky with a loud thunder like a lightning bolt, and when he arrived on earth the Indians were terrified and thought that *Yllapa*, known as thunder and lightning, had come down from heaven. And since that time the Indians call lightning by the name of Santiago, because he fell down to earth like lightning *Yllapa*, Santiago.”<sup>116</sup> In a worldlier interpretation, the Jesuit Arriaga analysed the event: “The Indians noticed in the battles with the Spanish that they invoked Santiago when they fired their muskets, which the Indians called *Yllapa* or lightning.”<sup>117</sup> For this reason, an identification of lightning with Santiago is explained through the parallel between firearms and thunder and lightning on the one hand and with the old Spanish battle cry on the other. Recent anthropological authors confirm that Santiago is still associated with lightning by the indigenous people,<sup>118</sup> which is the foundation of his importance.<sup>119</sup> Also, believers in Cuzco report that Santiago protects the houses and people in the poor quarters where no lightning rods exist.<sup>120</sup>

The appropriation of Santiago seems to have been accomplished by patronage of his urban quarter. The cult that was first imposed changed quickly into a local cult. The inhabitants of this parish call themselves *ayllu* (lineage) of Santiago in the colonial title deeds.<sup>121</sup> The stone cross of Santiago in front of the church of 1606 already contains the names of indigenous sponsors. The church, which was completely destroyed in 1650, was built by the members of the community out of their own means. It is in this way that the identification with the saint may have happened, via the association with this part of town. “The carpenters were settled in the quarter Belén and the silver smiths in the parish Santiago”;<sup>122</sup> most probably, Santiago is for this reason provided with a lot of silver. Even his sedan chair is completely clad in rolled silver (Fig. 11). The believers have another explanation for this fact. They believe that he has so much silver because under his church flow two creeks which carry a lot of silver. During the sermon one can hear the murmuring of the water. The silver sounds like little bells whose sounds purify and heal.<sup>123</sup>

116 Guaman Poma de Ayala 1980 [1615], 310 (Transl. by U. Luig).  
 117 Arriaga 1920 [1621], 52 (Transl. by U. Luig).  
 118 Bolin 1998; Yaranga Valderama 1979.  
 119 Claros Arispe 1991.  
 120 With his splendid horse, he can go everywhere, runs the saying. Some people ascribe his speed to the

stylized wings on the knees of the saint’s statue. They are, originally, a reference to his celestial apparition in the battle of Cuzco.

121 Gutiérrez Samanez 2006.  
 122 Malaga Medina 1989, 53 (Transl. by U. Luig).  
 123 This idea possibly leads back to the practices of traditional healers. They often work with small bells.



Fig. 11 Santiago of the Parish of Santiago/Cuzco.

In sum it is evident that the popular interpretations of the saint do not correlate with the official attribution. It is remarkable that the ideological content of the figure did not have much effect even during colonial times. Rather, it was quickly instrumentalized for the implementation of indigenous interests. What was planned by the Spanish as a demonstration of power led in reality to a rapid appropriation of the saint. Building

They unfold purifying forces and call back the life force of the sick.

on destroyed foundations, or the triumphal procession with the insignia of Inka power, offered points of contact and allowed for the confirmation of indigenous identity.

## 5 Conclusion

In conclusion, we can ascertain that the categorical division between pilgrimage and the celebration of the patron saint drawn by Sallnow does not meet what is required by the dynamics of the festivals described. It blurs insight into the many correlations and commonalities between the two forms of cult. The pilgrimage to the Qoyllur Rit'i cannot be clearly separated from the festival of the patron saint and the processions of Corpus Christi. The two festivals merge, they share the same participants, and have similar motivations and symbolism. In addition, the feast of Corpus Christi has many characteristics that are typically attributed to pilgrimages. The festival can be characterized as being multi- and translocal. The participants are extremely heterogeneous; different ethnic and social groups meet without necessarily generating hierarchical structures or relations of power. Although the saints of the Corpus Christi festival are rigidly ordered to reflect social relations and to differentiate communities and groups, it has become evident that the hierarchies and the ascriptions have been interpreted creatively and in multidimensional ways or even reversed by the participants. Corpus Christi is in no way dominated by the official religion and the elites. The example of Santiago demonstrates the very self-determining appropriation by the indigenous people already since colonial times. As I have shown, the recent perception of most participants has rather little to do with the official requirements. Just these manifold contradictions between official and popular practices and interpretations, between mestizo and indigenous views, seem to be responsible for the wit and the attraction of the festival. Inhabitants and visitors, citizens and farmers, *indígenas* and *mestizos*, laymen and religious authorities, come together despite their different motivations and ideas. In this way the feast of Corpus Christi turns into a social arena. In its framework identities are underlined and at the same time critically questioned; structure and anti-structure meet.



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