Defining “Deviance”: Otherness, Sexuality, and Witchcraft in the Spanish and Mexican Inquisitions

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ABSTRACT

This thesis analyzes the role of witchcraft trials in the Spanish and Mexican Inquisitions. The Inquisition fought to enforce religious orthodoxy and also served as a tool for controlling the impact of “other” cultures considered dangerous by Spanish leaders. The histories of the individuals examined in this thesis complicate the story of the Inquisition. A close reading of trial transcripts, inquisitorial reports, and the subsequent instructional document reveals the cultural history of the Inquisition and the regions in which it took place. These sources reveal the changing role held by the Inquisition, as it became a tool used by disgruntled neighbors, political leaders and inquisitors alike not only to limit the power of “deviant” cultures on Spanish society but also to settle a myriad of local conflicts.

In the Basque Country of northern Spain the unique culture of the native inhabitants failed to conform to the dominant Spanish society. Similarly, the indigenous people of Mexico represented a new set of religions and cultures not understood or experienced by the Spanish people. The existence of these distinctive cultural practices threatened the success of the Spanish national project. Furthermore, unsuccessful attempts at conversions in both populations provided the groundwork for the consistent practice of pre-Christian religions and rituals. The Inquisition offered a means for controlling both the religious and cultural practices of these people and preventing them from influencing Spanish society.

The trial transcripts from both northern Spain and Mexico point to individual sexual behaviors and cultural practices among the people tried by the Inquisition that threatened or challenged accepted Spanish norms. In the case of the Indian Don Diego his sexual practices represented not only sins but also customs condemned by the greater Spanish culture. The Spanish women of the Basque Country prayed to and worshipped the devil, and significantly often claimed to have sexual relations with demons and their demonic lord. Neither the Church nor society recognized the Mexican slave girl Juana Maria’s lover. In all three cases, and in the case of all of the trials examined by this thesis, the accused stood trial for reasons greater than their religious practices. Each of them confronted the accepted Spanish society in some way. Therefore the Inquisition sought to limit the influence of these perceived abhorrent cultural practices on the Spanish people. In this way the Inquisition became a tool used to control interactions between the cultures of the native peoples of both the Basque Country and Mexico and their Spanish counterparts.
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INTRODUCTION

The Inquisition served not only as a tool for enforcing religious orthodoxy but also as a way of limiting the influence of cultures that threatened Spanish cultural and societal norms. The histories of individual cases before the Inquisition often challenge accepted understandings of the Inquisition as a fanatical institution devoid of procedures and devoted to correcting religious failings. Because of the meticulous nature of inquisitorial recordkeeping close reading of these inquisitorial trials provide important insights into cultural history. These trials provide a nuanced view of the Inquisition and point to the complicated and multi-faceted reasons inquisitors’ targeted victims.

The people tried in the procedures analyzed by this thesis challenged Spanish and Mexican leaders socially and religiously, and their crimes became labeled as witchcraft. The story of Inquisitor Alonso de Salazar y Frías and his investigation of Logroño reveal important details about the history of witchcraft and the inquisition. For example, in one report Salazar informs the Council of Madrid that the crime known as witchcraft, consists of superstitions: “In almost all the populated places, especially in San Sebastián, Azpeitia, Vitoria and its districts, many superstitions, sorceries, and divinations were used as means of devotion and were very praiseworthy…”¹ These reflections and the testimonies of individuals reveal a more nuanced version of the Inquisition. They provide an image of the time period that is rarely presented by historical studies, as they


Casi en todos lugares más populosos, especialmente en San Sebastián, Azpeitia, Vitoria y sus distritos, hallé introducidas muchas supersticiones, hechizos, o modos de adivinar, como por cosa de devoción o muy loable...
investigate questions of perceived cultural “deviance” and the maintenance of Spanish Catholic orthodoxy.²

The Spanish and Mexican Inquisitions have been reviled and even mocked by modern scholars for their torturous nature, violent punishments, and faulty procedures. However, the simplistic images presented by these arguments fail to understand these Inquisition in the distinct contexts of Mexico and Spain. The Inquisition was the product of a specific set of political, religious, and cultural forces. This context plays a crucial role in what the Spanish and Mexican Inquisition were, what they did, and who they targeted.

Close readings of witch trials in both regions reveal nuances that are often lost in the rush to condemn the Inquisition. In this thesis an analysis of individual trials suggests that the Inquisition functioned as a tool for negotiating boundaries between Spanish culture and “other” cultures perceived as “dangerous”. In the case of the Indian Inquisition, those accused of witchcraft and idolatry faced punishment for relapsing into pre-Catholic religions and pre-Hispanic culture.³ The persistence of these religions and culture worried and troubled the conquering Spanish forces that wanted to limit the cultural interaction with indigenous peoples. This same tension emerges in both Spanish

² Historical works such as Antonio Bombín Pérez’s La Inquisición en el País Vasco: El Tribunal de Logroño 1570-1610 and Joseph Perez’s The Spanish Inquisition addressing detail the focus on religion in the Spanish Inquisition, addressing social behavior only as it relates to religious crimes. Richard Greenleaf has much the same discussion in his work The Mexican Inquisition. None of these works delve into the idea of cultural punishment besides brief discussions concerning the censorship of literature.

³ For the purposes of this paper pre-Catholic beliefs will be used to describe the faith or religion practiced by people before Catholicism was introduced to them. Some sources refer to these beliefs as pagan or identify a specific religion, however, pre-Catholic has no inherent judgment and therefore will be used to describe these faiths. Furthermore, pre-Hispanic culture will refer to the multiple cultures that existed in both the Basque region and Mexico prior to the arrival to of Spanish forces and culture.
and Mexican trials of the 17th and 18th centuries. In both regions the indigenous communities had unique cultures that brought with them a set of beliefs and religions. These beliefs challenged the legitimacy of the imperial project.

Comparing the trajectories of the Spanish and Mexican Inquisitions sheds light on how the Inquisition evolved over three centuries in different parts of the world. In the early modern period, religion represented the greatest focus of identity formation, thus efforts to police identity were central to the cultural politics of state formation. The Spanish Inquisition began in the fifteenth century. The focus of the Spanish inquisition shifted in the early sixteenth century as the Protestant Reformation emerged. However, throughout the Inquisition the greatest concern in Spain remained the Jewish and Muslim cultures and religions. The Spanish colony of Mexico presented a unique set of challenges and the trials there took a decidedly different shape. In Mexico limpieza de sangre or purity of blood was necessary for moving to the colonies, meaning the Spaniards wanted to maintain a pure and Catholic state. Therefore the indigenous people presented a new problem and their presence altered the way trials became conducted in Mexico. The Inquisition became a way to discourage interaction with indigenous peoples in Mexico; in the Spanish witchcraft trials the Basque people represented the same threat. No one could admit that sixteenth-century Spanish Castilian Catholicism lacked a strong hold on the people of the Spanish nation and its colonies. In

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5 For the remainder of the text this religion will be identified simply as Catholicism, however, it is important to note that in reality this religion came from a specific time period and region and that plays a role in how the religion is created and viewed. For a better understanding of how Catholicism manifested itself in sixteenth-century Spain see William Christian Jr.'s Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain or refer to writings by
both regions the Inquisition began to serve as a tool of state authority and take on a new meaning.

The Spanish Inquisition

The large Jewish and Muslim populations on the Iberian Peninsula in the late Middle Ages had an impact on the shape that the Inquisition took in Spain. Conversos or New Christians, Jewish and (to a lesser extent) Muslim people who had converted to Catholicism, were targeted by many Inquisition trials. According to Edwards: “The Spanish Inquisition was originally established to deal with a specific group of individuals known as converses – Jews who had voluntarily converted to Christianity…secretly reverting to their former [religion].” Throughout the first phase of the Spanish Inquisition the New Christian (newly converted to Catholicism) population faced enhanced scrutiny and the majority of trials targeted conversos. The Spanish Inquisition emerged as a means of consolidating power. In a nation that had been united in 1492 the Inquisition helped the new monarchs to enforce their Catholic religion and enforce control over their people, providing a source of unity for disparate lands and peoples.

The emerging Kingdom of Spain used the Inquisition to strengthen the Catholic hold over the nation but also to eliminate the Jewish influence that was in some ways viewed as a threat to Spanish success.

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8 John Edwards, The Spain of the Catholic Monarchs.
Created specifically to investigate the religious orthodoxy of conversos, the Inquisition had no authority over unbaptized Christians, and consequently could not touch the Jews. There can be no doubt, however, that its purpose was to eliminate Semetic culture from official Catholicism.\(^9\)

The Inquisition began as a way to challenge these recent Jewish converts and for the beginning portion of the Inquisition *conversos* represented the greatest target. These people were attacked because the Catholic Church and Spanish nation feared that their conversions were in name only.

The Protestant Reformation in the sixteenth-century forced the Church to respond and become increasingly rigid; and the targets of the inquisition grew to include anyone who challenged Catholicism. \(^10\) The Inquisition extended beyond Spain and this time of fear and panic gripped nations across Europe in reaction to the Protestant Reformation and as a way of reclaiming control. The Protestant Reformation marked a shift in the policies and goals of the Inquisition. The counter-Reformation led to an ultra conservative and rigid Inquisition in Spain:

...the emergence of the Reformed Church led to the hardening of traditional, conservative attitudes within ecclesiastical circles...From the late 1520's the Inquisition deliberately set about associating innovative trends in religious and intellectual life with Lutheran heresy, however far removed they were in actual fact from such a definition. \(^11\)

The target of the Inquisition expanded to include all beliefs and practices that could be seen as counter-Catholic. \(^12\) These crimes included witchcraft, bigamy \(^13\), and other

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\(^12\) James M. Anderson, *Daily Life During The Spanish Inquisition.* 76.

\(^13\) Ibid., 80.
cultural ills that became seen as heresy, therefore becoming targets of the Inquisition. This New Inquisition and the Reformation movement coincided with a rise in witchcraft trials. Like the royal states of Europe the Inquisition evolved and adapted to changing social and political pressures. In this climate of religious uncertainty and warfare, any non-conformist beliefs proved threatening to a militant church bent on success.

Rural and mountainous regions, far from urban centers became a breeding ground for these perceived heresies. The isolated Basque region existed separately from the densely populated urban centers; rural areas like this existed across Europe and through their separation retained some of the pagan and cultural rituals of pre-Catholic societies. The Catholic Church condemned pagan religions for their polytheistic nature but also out of fear. The Catholic Church viewed these pre-Christian religions as challenges to Catholic doctrine and therefore they became targeted by the Inquisition as potential weaknesses. Particularly following the Reformation when the church felt vulnerable and weak other religions viewed as potential opposition for Catholicism were demonized. Levack notes: "As Christianity, the Kingdom of Christ, spread throughout the East and the West, it was only natural that the Church fathers would consign the religions with which they were competing, both Jewish and pagan, to the Kingdom of Satan."14 However, pre-Christian rituals and religions had existed in these isolated regions for centuries and despite the mandated conversion to Catholicism aspects of these religions persisted. While Catholicism became the dominant religion throughout Spain aspects of polytheistic religions remained the in form of adapted rituals.

The Counter-Reformation Church was less tolerant and the rituals became re-defined as crimes of heresy and witchcraft, a shift chronicled by Carlo Ginzburg, among others.\textsuperscript{15} Traditionally the poor and ignorant dominated the populations of these regions. Small towns and tightly-knit communities dominated the landscape of the Basque region. Additionally the French cultural influence that permeated the Basque region brought with it another set of popular religious practices and rituals that soon came to the Inquisition’s attention: “...their principal seat was in the mountainous districts along the Pyrenees, penetrating perhaps from France and favored by the ignorance of the population, its sparseness and poverty.”\textsuperscript{16} The witchcraft trials of Logroño occurred in highly isolated regions that experienced French influence and separated from the more stringently Catholic urban cities, cities under tighter religious and political control. Witchcraft trials dominated this region, while trials concerning new converts happened most commonly in historically diverse Andalusia. The Inquisition thus took a localized shape in the Basque region and a significant cultural separation existed between the peasantry and the educated Inquisitors who conducted the investigations. The inquisitors believed that the superstitions and ignorance of the population in this region left them vulnerable to witchcraft and created an environment in which this type of crime thrived.

The Mexican Inquisition

Nearly a century after the Spanish Inquisition had begun the Mexican Inquisition officially started. The Mexican Inquisition took a different shape than the Spanish


Inquisition for a variety of reasons. The presence of a large indigenous population played an important role in the Inquisition of Mexico. The initial conversion of indigenous peoples took place over a very short period of time in the wake of conquest. Limited resources made it challenging for priests to maintain a presence or conversion. The conversion process was fraught with physical barriers and language barriers, which made the job of traveling to remote villages unappealing. Furthermore, the indigenous population believed in syncretism and therefore struggled to understand the idea of a monotheistic and strict religion.

Fray Juan de Zumárraga conducted the initial Inquisition under the rights granted to Bishops by Philip II in Counter-Reformation Spain. This early inquisition known as the Indian Inquisition targeted only Indians and only for reverting to idolatry following a Catholic baptism. Under the Indian Inquisition a number of indigenous people were tried by the Inquisition for witchcraft and idolatrous beliefs. However, in response to Philip II issued an edict forbidding the trial of indigenous people the Inquisition to redirect its efforts. Following this edict, inquisitors shifted their focus to people of mixed race and Spanish colonists. Accusations of witchcraft often identified indigenous witches but the edict prevented prosecution. Instead their clients became the target of the Inquisition. The Mexican Inquisition never attained the proportions or bureaucratic efficiency of its Spanish counterpart. Nonetheless, it did try a significant number of people for crimes relating to religious heresy and made a concerted effort to enforce orthodox Catholicism in this challenging region.

Trial Transcripts and Instructional Documents

In order to analyze the underlying goals of the Inquisitions in the Basque Country\textsuperscript{19} and Mexico this thesis will compare evidence from the two regions. These documents include trial transcripts and an instructional document that capture the fears and agendas of all of those involved. The trial transcripts record direct testimonies delivered by witnesses and defendants during interrogations. These texts present a number of challenges (some of which are revealed by the instructional document) including inaccurate transcriptions. These inaccuracies can include a lack of detail and changes in wording. Furthermore, the people tried in these trials did not always speak fluent (or any) Spanish, meaning that translations were required in the process of these trials.\textsuperscript{20} The use of multiple suspects, however, allows for stories and facts to be repeated and therefore corroborated.

While trial transcripts comprise some of the most important documents from the Inquisition, instructional documents written to guide the inquisitors also play an critical role in understanding their fears, goals, and obsessions. These instructions included information about proper techniques, important questions and other information that directed inquisitors. The instructional documents shares many similarities with these trial transcripts. Like the other documents it contains significant detail and responds to many of the issues seen in trial transcripts. These documents illuminate the inner workings of the Inquisition as a complex ideological process involving multiple actors and agendas. They alert us to the concerns held by the Council of Madrid and Alonso Salazar, a

\textsuperscript{19} This is a translation of the Spanish País Vasco therefore Country will be capitalized throughout the thesis.

\textsuperscript{20} Carlo Ginzburg. \textit{The Cheese and the Worms}. Translated by John and Anne Tedeschi (Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 1980), xvi-xvii.
member of the inquisitional team from Logroño. These questions and concerns identify issues that motivated the inquisitors and reveal a number of reasons that the inquisitors may have wanted to indict certain victims.

Individual Histories

Many scholars analyzing the Inquisitions in both Spain and Mexico define it as a powerful institution projecting church. Such narratives, however; overlook the most interesting part of the Inquisition found in the individual stories of victims and inquisitors alike. The Inquisitions targeted women, men, young people, old people, and people of many different beliefs and origins. The five trial transcripts and the set of documents written by Alonso de Salazar y Frías contain the individual stories of people involved in witchcraft and heretical trials. The two documents from the Indian Inquisition written in the mid 1530's contain the stories of two men who defied norms dictated by Spanish social and religious conventions. The trial of Don Diego conducted in 1538 reveals that "deviant" behavior played a significant role in making him a target for Zumárraga.21

The trial transcript from northern Spain documents the lives of people who refused to live within the societal boundaries dictated by new Spanish leaders. However, it is the story of the young inquisitor who gathered evidence and questioned the findings of his fellow inquisitors that reveals most about the intentions of the inquisition. Between the years 1609 and 1614 Salazar documented in extreme detail the issues present in the trial of Logroño. His investigations reveal inconsistencies in trial

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procedures and also the process of denunciation. The same issues raised by Salazar in Spain can be seen in the trial of Juana Maria of Mexico in 1730. The young slave girl, like Don Diego centuries before her, sat accused by the Inquisition for crimes greater than just witchcraft. Instead her involvement with indigenous witches and relationship with her unmarried lover Juan Jil dominate the trial. In all three of these sets of documents the histories of these individuals complicate the recognized narrative of the Inquisition. In understanding their unique histories, new insights can be gained into the cultural milieu of the Inquisition along with a better sense for the institution’s practices and procedures.

In the case of all three individuals, the Inquisition adopted a new target, no longer looking to control just the religious beliefs of people. For Don Diego and Juana Maria, the Inquisition punished them for more than just crimes of witchcraft or idolatry. Instead, they are punished for “deviant” sexual and social behaviors that lay outside norms of Mexican society. For them the Inquisition acted to limit their influence on the greater population of Mexico. In the case of Salazar he disliked the way the Inquisition had been used and shaped in northern Spain. He takes issue with the blind punishment of the Basque people and appears to question what really drove the Inquisition and other inquisitors to punish them, bringing a rationalist or empirical perspective to the process. In all three cases a new model of the Inquisition emerges. The Inquisition became a tool used by members of society ranging from disgruntled individuals who wanted to punish their neighbors or remove a blemish on the name of the village, to political leaders who

wanted to limit the influence of cultural anomalies and punish people for not conforming to Spanish values.
THE IMPORTANCE OF CONVERSION AND THE CHALLENGE OF PRE-CATHOLIC BELIEFS

Catholicism became the backbone of Spanish identity after Spain’s unification in 1492. Even today Isabella and Ferdinand are known across Spain as the Catholic Monarchs and in their era religion and politics were synonymous.\(^{23}\) Ensuring that the entirety of Spain converted to Catholicism became a mission of the Catholic Monarchs. The Basque region and its northern neighbors presented a significant challenge in this undertaking. The Basque Country’s unique culture and strong ties to pre-Catholic religion made the process of conversion a test. However, the challenges faced in Mexico made the stubborn population of the Basque region appear stringently Catholic. The large indigenous populations of Mexico spoke several languages and had traditions of polytheism that expanded to absorb new beliefs.

The indigenous people who reverted to their pre-Catholic religions provided early targets to be tried under the guise of idolatry and witchcraft by the first “Inquisitor” of Mexico, Fray Juan de Zumárraga.\(^{24}\) As Greenleaf notes in his authoritative account:

“Fray Juan de Zumárraga, O.F.M, first bishop of Mexico, arrived at his post December 6, 1528, and he began immediately to assume the full powers of his office, especially his subsidiary powers as Protector of the Indians which had been granted him on January 2, 1527...”\(^{25}\) Under the guise of Protector, Zumárraga launched his Indian Inquisition\(^{26}\) and accused indigenous people of heretical crimes despite their limited interaction with Catholicism. This punishment marked the shift from a focus on conversion to the

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\(^{26}\) Ibid., 41.
recognition that conversion had failed. For Zumárraga the existence of indigenous people who had lapsed into their pre-Catholic practices demonstrated the failure of conversion. The actions of Zumárraga provoked heated debates over the rationality of the indigenous population. These debates led to their ability to be tried under the laws of the Inquisition. While some like "Zumárraga viewed the Indian as a rational human being who was in every way capable of salvation..." 27 others thought of the Indian as incapable of understanding the faith.

The debate over the rationality of the indigenous population revealed deeper concerns of the Spanish government. The indigenous population represented "the other,” an unknown and strange population, frequently misunderstood by the dominant leaders. Questioning the humanity of the population left space for the mistreatment of the indigenous population and would later play a greater role in the characterization of the native populations in the Inquisition. Still others thought that because of their limited instruction it was unfair to hold the indigenous peoples to the same standards as the Old Christians. Unlike their Muslim and Jewish counterparts they had had little instruction and less exposure to the religion. Therefore, even in the view of many orthodox sixteenth-century Spanish Catholics, Indians needed guidance and aid and not punishment for heretical beliefs. The debate over the ability of the indigenous people to understand Catholic faith resulted in an edict delivered by the Inquisitor general:

Monastic prelates in areas where there was no resident bishop continued their inquisitions under authority of the bull Omnimoda until a decree of Philip II of December 30, 1571, which removed Indians from the jurisdictions of all inquisitions and placed them under the direct control of the bishops in matters of the faith and morals. 28

27 Ibid., 34.
28 The Mexican Inquisition. p. 74
From this point on the indigenous population could no longer be tried by the Inquisition. However, the significance of the brief Indian Inquisition cannot be ignored. It revealed an immense concern over the influence of the indigenous population on local Spanish colonists and also the perceived importance of conversion held by Spanish leaders in the colonies. The victims of his inquisition threatened the authority of the Mexican leaders and the power of Catholicism.

The close ties between political and religious power in Spain made the importance of conversion considerable in both the nation and its colonies. As the country became increasingly Catholic the political strength of Spain similarly grew. The extreme measures taken to ensure conversion rarely faced condemnation because of the importance of establishing an orthodox religion in Spain and the Colonies. The harsh trials led by Zumárraga and the unforgiving principles of the friars and monks who comprised the conversion forces played an important role in a large imperial and religious project. Under the reign of Isabel and Ferdinand, Catholicism became an exclusive state religion and conversion played a vital role in ensuring the success of this religion often using the Inquisition as its ultimate threat.

The Unique Basque Identity

Converting the people of the Basque Country and the indigenous populations of Mexico presented unique challenges to Spanish missionaries.29 The people of the Basque

29 While multiple orders of mendicant friars went to Mexico to aid in the process of conversion the Franciscans were the first to arrive in the new colony. Furthermore, many of their techniques correspond to those detailed in this thesis and were later adopted by other groups when they arrived in Mexico at later dates. For a more detailed explanation
region never identified as Spanish and their geographic isolation kept them far from the Catholic urban centers of Spain. The Spanish Church faced similar, often overwhelming challenges in both the Basque region and Mexico as it made every effort to enforce strict, orthodox Catholic practices.

The process of converting these populations, particularly the indigenous people of Mexico, remained incomplete. Despite extraordinary efforts, the missionaries and priests living in and attempting to spiritually conquer both regions met significant resistance. However, by the mid-sixteenth century in Mexico and the end of the fifteenth-century in the Basque Country both regions retained aspects of pre-Catholic beliefs and cultures. This arrested conversion allowed for the continued practice of beliefs that would eventually come to be defined as criminal. The incomplete nature of conversion underlay and drove the Inquisition trials in both regions. The contours of conversion in these zones of cultural conflict illuminate the historical forces that shaped accusations of witchcraft and superstition that existed in both regions.

The transition to Catholicism in the northern regions of Spain did not follow the same path of the dense urban centers of Spain. In fact, the slow process in these regions could be seen in the places of worship and idols that had merely been renamed and not replaced. This transition from an ingrained culture challenged the people of the Basque Country and would follow a similar path in Mexico years later. Catholicism was introduced to the Basque Country and despite some resistance assimilated into the lives

of all of the orders who participated in the process of conversion see Serge Gruzinski’s *The Conquest of Mexico.*

and cultures of the people. Beyond conquering the region and establishing a number of
parishes few strategies existed to ensure that Catholicism endured among the Basque
people, a situation replicated in many regions of Mexico. The lack of infrastructure to
support a new religion played an important role in how the Inquisition affected the
Basque Country, as did its rural nature and distance from cities.  

The isolation from the rest of the Spain left the Basque population with little
consistent interaction with the religion or religious people, allowing pre-Catholic cultural
survivals to endure long after the introduction of Catholicism. Indeed according to the
Spanish historian Luis Araquistain: “Of all the Spaniards the Basques remained pagans
longest.” The priests who inhabited many of these villages identified with the
community and proved lax in enforcing the rigid rules of the Catholic Church. Their
relaxed attitude allowed pre-Catholic religions to thrive and the greatest issue that would
be faced in the northern part of Spain would be witchcraft and heresy in the form of
idolatry: “The Catholic Reformation reaffirmed the local side of religion and merely
tried to correct what it saw as its excesses...In much of France, as in Galicia, Asturias,
and the Basque Country, there was more for the Catholic Reformation to Reform.”
Local religion flourished in the Basque Country and the Inquisition provided one
powerful response to reign in the excesses that existed in the region. Few Protestants,
Jews, or Moors lived in the Basque region and therefore the majority of trials focused on
non-conformist Christian rituals.

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The 1614 instructions released by the Council of Madrid noted that in the isolated northern regions the priest played a key role in manipulating and controlling his flock played a critical role in reducing witchcraft. In highlighting the role of the priest these instructions make it clear that priests often became important members of the community and adapted to the cultures of the region. Salazar also documents a variety of actions and crimes committed by witches. Some of these crimes were rituals that existed before the Catholic presence in the area, but now appeared as corrupt and evil. The instructional document released in 1614 reveals important steps that must be taken in order to ensure that the crimes witches claimed to have committed actually occurred. The instructions state that inquisitors must confirm that the: "...people that the witches confessed to murdering took place on the days and nights they said, or if they were sick before, or if there was an accident or other reason for their death..." While crimes of murder and illness seemed extreme they stemmed from the practice of creating potions and remedies that had been a part of both the indigenous Mexican and local Basque cultures of the region for long periods of time. The Council of Madrid's instructions reveal what aspects of the society are being targeted as crimes and draw connections to past religions and cultures.

The Indigenous Strength of Mexico

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...y personas que las brujas confiesan haber muerto sucedieron en aquellos días o noches que ellas dicen, o si estaban enfermas antes, o si hubo algún accidente o causa para que muriesen ...
Unlike the population of the Basque region, the indigenous people of Mexico spoke many languages, none of them Spanish, and they had no experience or knowledge of Catholicism or of monotheism. Therefore, the effort to convert the people of Mexico required trained and dedicated missionaries. The process of conversion began with a group of ten Franciscan missionaries who attempted to introduce a rule-driven religion to a population whose belief system was predicated on flexibility and syncretism. The Aztecs and their many counterparts had experienced conquests throughout their own history. However, rather than demanding that the new population submit entirely to their culture the Aztecs would incorporate aspects of the conquered culture and even religion: “In addition to missionary success one must recognize that in the pre-Hispanic world it was common that a conquered pueblo received the gods of conquerors as a symbol of submission.” The practice of syncretism meant that villages across Mexico had a variety of religions that included the worship of different gods. Thus, when the Spanish arrived they regarded Catholicism as simply another religion to be added to their constantly growing polytheistic faith. According to Richard Greenleaf: “...the Indians of central Mexico, Oaxaca and the Yucatán peninsula followed a pre-conquest tradition of syncretism and absorption of new gods and new religious ideas into their own pantheon.” Catholicism was reconfigured as it absorbed aspects of the pre-Hispanic religion and culture.

Missionaries faced multiple challenges, however, a few stand out as significant including the relative scarcity of priests and the overabundance of “pagan” natives. The

36 Martin Austin Nesvig, ed. Local Religion in Colonial Mexico. (Albuquerque, NM: University of New Mexico Press, 2006), 42.
minimal number of missionaries caused religious instruction to be brief and in some cases after the people received their baptism the priest left to find a new village. According to Greenleaf: "...it is apparent that both pre-baptismal and post-baptismal instruction were very meager indeed."\(^{38}\) The lack of manpower and resources meant that after the initial wave of conversion, little follow-up happened. As a result of the fleeting introduction many members of the indigenous population reverted to their own local forms of religion after the priest departed. Others continued to practice aspects of Catholicism blended with aspects of pre-Hispanic traditions, and still others chose to follow the path briefly laid out by Spanish friars.

The friars charged with the task of converting a population with no common language had been trained to use sermons and speech to convert people,\(^{39}\) however, the use of language proved to be impossible in Mexico. In light of these challenges the friars attempting to convert the illiterate masses used images to tell the story of the Bible and communicate with their pupils: "Consequently non-lingual methods of communication and instruction sometimes had to be adopted. Hieroglyphs were used by the clergy to instruct and by the Indians to reply to the instruction."\(^{40}\) These pictures became a link – one rife with translation problems and contested means, but a link nonetheless – between the Spanish and the multiple indigenous people of Mexico. These new ideograms of important religious texts, typically known as Testerian manuscripts, proved invaluable in the conditions of Mexico and its success in the arena of religion led it to be adopted in


other aspects of Spanish and Mexican exchanges. For religious use “...catechisms, confession guides, and prayer books soon appeared in ideograms, made for use in schools and in the open-air conversation corrals.” Through these manuscripts the Franciscans began to overcome the obstacle created by language. However, this technique allowed for things to get lost in translation and it likely contributed to the creation of a uniquely Mexican Catholicism.

The native people of Mexico adapted to Catholicism by fusing elements of the new religion with traditional practices. Indigenous peoples adopted elements of Catholicism into their lives in a variety of ways, friars baptized the majority of people and some chose to worship God and the saints in a manner modeled by the few Catholic leaders that remained in villages. The indigenous populations that had long been accustomed to the worship of multiple gods treated the saints like deities and worshipped at their altars: “Jacinto de la Serna showed that Indians made sacrifices to Saints (to those whom they revered like gods), hiding behind the cult of the saints their idolatrous rites...” In many ways the saints replaced the void left by the gods that they were no longer permitted to worship, the god of fertility being replaced by a Saint known for having similar qualities.

This adulation, however, frustrated many priests and church leaders because it resembled the polytheistic worship that had characterized the pre-Hispanic religions. Others recognized that capitalizing upon existing similarities between indigenous

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42 Ibid., 51.
43 Martin Austin Nesvig, ed. *Local Religion in Colonial Mexico.* 44.
44 Ibid., 9.
religions and their own could help in the quest of conversion: “The Franciscans in particular were quick to observe those similarities – superficial for the most part but nonetheless real – between Catholicism and native religious expression.” They chose to use these parallels to aid in the process of conversion. The existence of the Inquisition and the Catholic Reformation proves that Catholicism had experienced a variety of local adaptations throughout its history; the Franciscans merely replicated this process in Mexico. Members of the indigenous population rebelled against conversion and saw little attraction in merely adopting the principles of Catholicism.

The Awful Reality of Evangelization, The Indian Inquisition

Prior to the edict delivered in 1571 Zumárraga led a number of trials against leaders of indigenous communities for reverting to their “...native idolatry.” These crimes included: “...idolatry and heresy...various crimes...to conceal idols...” among others. The Protector of the Indians brought these trials against members of the indigenous population who had been baptized in the Catholic religion but had since reverted to their native religions.

One of these cases involves an indigenous man refereed to as Don Diego. The Inquisitional records identify Don Diego as a cacique or leader of an indigenous community. His role as a leader plays a significant role in his trial and the reason he appears before the unofficial Inquisitional board. In the trial Don Diego refuses to

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46 Jaime Lara. Christian Texts for Aztecs. 78.
48 Robert Ricard. The Spiritual Conquest of Mexico. 29-32.
49 Ibid., 19.
50 Luis González Obregón. Procesos de Indios Idolatras y Hechiceros. 177.
“...idólatra y hechicero...diversos delitos...ocultar idolos...”
acknowledge that he returned to his idolatrous ways. His claims of innocence fall on
deaf ears, as the Indian Inquisition was convinced that Don Diego had continued to
practice pre-Catholic beliefs and therefore the inquisitors were determined to see him
punished for his crimes. For inquisitors, his religious practices represented a weakness in
the Catholic Church but his “deviant” sexual behavior that emerges in the trial appears to
trouble them more. Both religiously and socially he refused to fit into Hispanic norms
and therefore came to the attention of the inquisitors.

The trial begins by presenting the accusations made against Don Diego: “...for
the sins committed against God our father...” The transcript then records a number of
interviews with witnesses. These witnesses all respond to a specific set of questions.
The first few questions specifically address Diego’s understanding of Catholicism and his
baptism. The next set of questions demand information about the sexual behaviors of
Don Diego. All witnesses respond to all of these questions, some with greater detail than
others but many reveal the same information. The inquisitors also interview Don Diego
using the same set of questions.

The initial witness against Don Diego testifies: “...He knew that Don Diego had
been baptized, because Don Diego has been heard saying that, but he does not know
much about the baptism, and that the witness knows the above mentioned Don Diego is
able and smart enough to know the Christian religion...” In the trial against Don Diego

51 Luis González Obregón. Procesos de Indios Idolatras y Hechiceros. 93.
52 Ibid., 87
...cometido para conocer de los pecados que se cometen y han comecido contra Dios
Nuestro Señor...
53 Ibid., 88.
Zumárraga takes issue with the fact that a man baptized in the Catholic faith practiced idolatry. However, while he finds witnesses who state that Don Diego had adequate training in the Catholic faith the accused states that he does not worshipping idols.\textsuperscript{54} Throughout the trial Diego never admits to his crimes, merely stating that he practices the Catholic faith.

However, Zumárraga's witnesses suggest that Diego not only worships idols but also participated in ritual sacrifice. Multiple witnesses refer to the suspicious death of one of the servants in Don Diego's household. According to testimony in his trial, Don Diego

\begin{quote}
...had her sacrificed and it was under this suspicion that the above-mentioned Cristóbal de Morales took the above mentioned dead Indian and was bringing her to his house and room to certify, but the servants of the above-mentioned Don Diego took the body from him by force, and for this reason he could not see if she has been sacrificed.\textsuperscript{55}
\end{quote}

The accusation of sacrifice was a dangerous one and represented a significant crime in Catholic practices. Ritual sacrifice had no place in the Catholic Church and while it may have been accepted in pre-Hispanic cultures the "civilized" Spanish society would not have accepted a pre-mediated murder as a religious act. While Diego never admitted to having sacrificed a woman to the gods multiple witnesses stated that he had. The violent reaction of his servants in protecting the body of the victim signified to the Inquisition

\begin{quote}
“...que sabe que el dicho Don Diego es batizado, porque se lo ha oído al dicho Don Diego, pero que no sabe qué tanto ha que se bautizó, y que este testigo sabe que el dicho Don Diego es habil y sufficient para saber las cosas de la cristiandad…”
\textsuperscript{54} Ibid., 93.
\textsuperscript{55} Ibid., 88.

"...la tenía sacrificada y á esta sospecha el dicho Cristóbal de Morales la tomó á la dicha Indian que estaba meurta y la traía á su casa y aposento para certificar, y el dicho Cristóbal de Morales, y que trayéndola le salieron los criados del dicho Don Diego y se la quitaron por fuerza, y á esta causa no se pudo ver si estaba sacrificada."
that Diego had something to hide. The capital crime made Diego a greater threat to the Catholic Church because it lay outside of not only religious but also social norms in Spanish culture.

The questions of Don Diego’s religious practices, including the suggestions of sacrifice, comprise only a portion of the trial transcript. Perhaps more interesting are the frequent questions about Don Diego’s wives and sexual relationships. In fact, Zumárraga asks more questions about this aspect of Don Diego’s life than he does about his worship of idols. These questions include the number of women who Diego had sexual relationships with and questions regarding a relationship between Diego and his sister. Indeed, Zumárraga charges him with the serious offence of incest, claiming: “...that he knows that the above-mentioned Don Diego had been with his own sister, and in her made a son...”

Having sexual relations with a family member not only represented a major sin in the Church but also in Spanish society.

The focus on sexual practices challenged Diego’s character putting him on trial for not only his religious beliefs but also his sexual practices. Diego and other witnesses were questioned about his sexual preferences, with one witness stating: “...that he had bad suspicions about the above-mentioned Don Diego, because he saw him speak about that sin against nature...that [Don Diego] asked a boy if he had a good bottom...” The crime of sodomy and homosexuality, like the other sexual practices raised in the trial

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56 Ibid., 90.

“...que sabe que el dicho Don Diego se ha echado con su propia hermana, en ella hobo un hijo...”

57 Ibid., 91

...dixo este testigo que tiene malas sospechas del dicho Don Diego, porque siempre le vee hablar en aquel pecado contra natura, y que este testigo le vió preguntar al dicho Don Diego, que preguntó á un muchacho si tenía buen culo, y que el dicho Don Diego se avicia en hablar esto, y que esto es lo que sabe á esta pregunto.
against Don Diego, violated both religious and cultural values. It challenged the comfort of the Spanish leaders and angered them that a man lived so blatantly outside of their cultural norms in terms of his sexuality. Don Diego lived according to his own cultural values and made no effort to hide his practices, explicitly challenging the rule of the Spanish culture. The trial against Diego has as much to do with his “deviant” sexuality as it does his religious practices, suggesting that both challenges to the Catholic Church and the Spanish society represented a crime to be tried by the Inquisition.

Zumárraga also targeted individuals who interfered with the process of conversion or refused to conform and discard their own cultural practices. Martín Ocelotl58 represented one of Zumárraga’s greatest fears, as he not only refused to convert to orthodox Catholicism but also attempted to prevent the conversion of his fellow Indians. The trial against Ocelotl lacks the detail and organization seen in the investigation against Don Diego. The transcript similarly uses the testimony of many individuals, however, there are multiple strands of questioning but no consistent set of questions used by the inquisitors. The length of the transcript suggests that Zumárraga had considerable concerns about Ocelotl and determined to search for a large number of witnesses in order to ensure his conviction. The lack of organization and consistent questioning makes the trial difficult to comprehend, however, what clearly emerges is a fear about the power of Ocelotl to influence his peers.

The case against Martín Ocelotl detailed that he “…had spoken with the devil many times at night, and had done and said many other things against our sacred Catholic faith, at great pain

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58 While the trial transcript refers to the accused as Martín Ucelo multiple secondary sources refer to him as Martín Ocelotl including in David H. Darst’s “Witchcraft in Spain: The Testimony of Martín de Castañega’s Treatise on Superstition and Witchcraft (1529).” In Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society and Serge Gruzinski’s The Conquest of Mexico.
and interference with the conversion of the natives…” The transcript details the frustration felt by Zumárraga towards someone who chose to interfere with the conversion of others. The crimes of Martín Ocelotl of idolatry and other crimes against the Catholic faith challenged the orthodoxy of the Church and therefore angered religious leaders. Zumárraga sought to impose these same punishments in Mexico. In the case against Martín, Rafael de Ceruanes, District Attorney of the Holy Office: “…asked his Lordship to order the punishment for the greatest and biggest sins, under the rights established against the fortune tellers and idolatrous people…” The crime of being a fortune-teller and celebrating the idols of past religions angered the inquisitors. Martín had rebelled against the Catholic faith, refusing to accept it into his life.

While the Indian Inquisition did not have official Inquisitors, under the bull Omnimoda religious leaders present in Mexico had the right to conduct Inquisitional trials. Therefore, Zumárraga took it upon himself to punish people of the indigenous population that did not accept this aspect of Spanish life and culture.

Martín Ocelotl, however, refused to lapse into pre-Catholic practices, much like Don Diego; instead he took an active stance against the Catholic Church. Martín “…preached in Tezcuco, and in many other places many things against our sacred Catholic

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…ha hablado muchas veces con el diablo de noche, é ha hecho y dicho otras muchas cosas contra nuestra santa fe católica, en gran daño é impedimento de la conversión de los naturales…

60 Ibid., 24,

“...Viernes primero días del mes de Diciembre del dicho año, á la audiencia de este Santo Oficio pareció presente ante su Señoría el doctor Rafael de Ceruanes, Fiscal de este Santo Oficio, y dixo que premisas las solemnidades del derecho, acusaba y acusó al dicho Martín, indio, é le ponía é puso po acusación la cabeza de este proceso contra el dicho Martín, y pidió á su Señoría le mande castigar á las mayors y más grandes penas, en derecho establecidas contra los adivinos é idólatras…”

61 The Mexican Inquisition. p. 74
faith and against what the friars said and preached...” The anger of Zumárraga and members of the Catholic Church in Spain against Martín emanates in the trial transcripts. Publically announcing his opposition to the Catholic faith and encouraging members of the indigenous population to resist baptism made Martín a target for the Indian Inquisition. Not only did his failure to convert display a weakness in the Catholic Church but his active opposition threatened the further success of the Catholic conversion. According to his inquisitors, Martín held sway among the indigenous population and he used this power to spread and reinforce pre-Catholic beliefs

...when asked if he also said to all the above-mentioned Indians when he was dismissing them to their houses, that in going there it would start to rain, because the clouds who were his sisters were coming and bringing the water, he said; that he did not say that to them...

While Martín denied having made religious statements and encouraging beliefs in polytheistic religions multiple witnesses claimed that they had heard him make statements about weather gods, or other religious deities. Unlike many of the caciques tried under the Indian Inquisition Martín’s crimes directly affected the success of conversion within the larger indigenous population. Zumárraga attacked Martín because he represented a weakness in the success of the Spanish Church and government in Spain. Furthermore, his active preaching against the Church humiliated religious leaders and challenged the power of the Institution while demonstrating his own. If the Church

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62 Ibid., 23

"...predicando en Tezcuco, é en otros muchos lugares muchas cosas contra nuestra santa fe católica é contra lo que los frailes dicen é predicán..."

63 Ibid., 23.

"...preguntado, si asimismo dijo á todos los dichos indios cuando los despedía que se fuesen á sus casa, que en llegando allá había de llover. Porque ya venían sus hermanas que eran las nubes que venían sus hermanas que eran las nubes que traían el agua, dixo: que no les dixo..."
could not prevent this indigenous man from influencing his peers its authority appeared compromised.

The trial of Thomás and María in may of 1548 revolved around their unconventional living arrangement. The two lived together unwed, violating both religious values and social practices. The transcript reveals that the trial against these two individuals lacked the detail and length found in the majority of trials. The procedure consisted of only brief testimonies and an interview with Thomás. However, Thomás and María’s relationship challenged the Catholic Church and Spanish values and despite the brief trial the frustration held by the inquisitors is evident. Their anger over the protection provided by his position in society and the life choices of both Thomás and María translate despite the brief trial.

A letter written by Fray Juan de Stella to the Zumárraga reveals the irritation and dissatisfaction held by the religious leaders. He documents the crimes of Thomás and significantly includes references to his position in society and the protection it affords him and María.

It is the case that this Indian, called Thomás, brother of the Cacique, for many years has [had] his sister-in-law as a mistress, and he has rejected his legitimate wife and is living with this woman, and while he has sometimes been corrected he does not want to make amends, before this two times, he has been brought before me with false testimonies and I felt deceived, and as a principal of the village he comes and goes where and when he wants, and thus sets a bad example for the people getting away with everything.64

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64 Luis González Obregón. *Procesos de Indios Idolatras y Hechiceros.* p. 217

Es el caso, que este indio, llamado Thomás, hermano del Cazique, ha muchos años que tiene una cuñada suya por mujer manceba, y tiene su mujer legítima sin esta, la cual repudiada, ándase amancebando con su cuñada, y aunque ha sido algunas veces corregido nunca se ha querido enmendar, antes por dos veces, ciniendo á mí con falsos testigos me pensó engañar, y como es principal del pueblo, entra u sale adonde quiere y como quiere, y así ha dado mal ejemplo muchas veces al pueblo, saliéndose con todo.
Living together without a Church recognized marriage constituted a sin. Thomas and Maria’s relationship threatened the Church because of their refusal to adhere to Catholic values. Furthermore, the fact that Thomas had a wife suggests the existence of polygamy. Like unwed cohabitation polygamy represents both a religious and cultural crime. The description of false testimonies and deception reveals the true aggravation held by Stella.

The letter to Zumárraga includes mention of multiple attempts to bring Thomas before the Inquisition and punish him for his crimes. However, Stella points out with frustration that Thomas regularly evaded incrimination: “...there have been times that they testified that they did not believe or suspect that they would continue to make offers to the devil like they had when he was the high priest, and twice he had left the hands of the V.S. free and with his dignity intact...”

This consistent elusion of conviction and crime represented the power of Thomas within his community. Additionally, like many of the people tried under the Indian Inquisition Thomas committed multiple crimes against the Church. The crimes of demonic offerings and Devil worship frightened the Inquisitors; the sexual and romantic crimes angered them. His role as a high priest suggests that he held sway in his community as does his relationship to the Cacique. Therefore, Thomas and his crimes became a greater threat to the Spanish.

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...que tiene ciertos tiempos deputados que no parece y sospechán que en ellos ofrezze al demonio como lo hacía cuando era sacerdote mayor; y como ya dos vezes ha salido libre de manos de V.S. y tornado á su dignidad...
Thomás like Martín Ocelotl did not apologize in his statement to inquisitors. The declaration chronicles the evolution of the relationship between María and Thomás and at no point does Thomás apologize. His statement insinuates happiness in his relationship with María, something that would have certainly angered Inquisitors:

...that it has been twenty years since her husband died, and that as soon as he died Thomás joined in happiness with his sister in law, and he was living with her for ten years before they were asked to atone for their sins, and after they were sent apart to marry others by a clergyman, and to be baptized because they were not baptized, and that each of them marry for themselves, and they were baptized by monks in the town of Toluca, and (he) was married to an Indian names Madeleine who died from cocliffe\textsuperscript{66}, and after her death he joined with the aforementioned María, his sister-in-law, and that he would never marry again and it is the second time he has lived with the aforementioned María, his sister-in-law, and that is the truth.\textsuperscript{67}

Thomás and María were asked to atone for their sins before their official baptism; however, at that time they were not brought before the Inquisition. While their social choices frustrated the local clergy they could not be punished without being a member of the Catholic faith. Therefore, the clergy separated them and had them both baptized. However, when the two returned to a state of cohabitation following

\textsuperscript{66} This is an indigenous term that refers to one of the many epidemics that affected the indigenous communities.

\textsuperscript{67} Luis González Obregón. \textit{Procesos de Indios Idolatras y Hechiceros}. p. 218-219

...é que habrá veinte años que murió su marido, é que luego que murió se juntó con la dicha su cuñada, y estuvo con ella amancebada diez años antes que fuese xpiano, é después les mandó apartar el clérigo é casar á los susodichos, é les batizó, porque no estaban batizados; é que cada uno de ellos se casó por sí, é que les batizaron los frailes en el pueblo de Toluca, é que (á él) lo casó con una india que se decía Madalena, la cual murió cuando el cocliffe, é después de muerta, se tornó á juntar con la dicha María, india, su cuñada; é que nunca más se ha casado, é que ha estado agora segunda vez amancebado con la dicha María, su cuñada; é que esta es la verdad.

This translation presented an issue because the word xpiano could not be found in existing dictionaries. However, based on the context and similarities between the spelling of xpiano and the verb expiar I based my translation on this verb.
their baptism they were brought before the Inquisition. In addition to a lack of remorse the statement reveals that both María and Thomás held little regard for the orders of the clergy that punished them. They chose to continue to live together despite the punishments, again like the case of Martín Ocelotl this active choice to rebel against Spanish societal rules served as a frustration to inquisitors.

Neither Thomás nor María converted to Catholicism despite their baptism into the religion. The description provided by Thomás about his union with María reveals that her family consented to their unorthodox union: “...when he joined with the aforementioned Marfa, his sister-in-law, it was with the consent of her kin to marry her in heathenism, and took her for his woman, and had heathen wedding ceremonies.” Thomás describes the union between himself and Marfa as heathenism, enforcing the idea that neither believed in the Catholic God. Furthermore, the fact that they still had a ceremony implies that they participated in more pre-Christian and pre-Hispanic rituals in celebration of the union not recognized by Spanish society and religion. Despite the brevity of the trial the amount of crimes committed by the two Indians characterize them as a considerable threat to the success of conversion and the Spanish social conquest of Mexico.

What is clear from the trials of Don Diego, Martín Ocelotl, Thomás and María, and others is that the bishop felt that once baptized, the indigenous should be held to the same standard as the Old Christian counterparts. Furthermore, any interaction with popular religion or pre-Hispanic rituals was criminal and could lead to an inquisitorial...
process. Ironically, this man did much to protect the indigenous and to educate them in the ways of Catholicism. He played an important role in the conversion of the native populations, something often eclipsed by his angry attack on those who turned their backs on his religion. As Greenleaf concludes “Perhaps the greatest contradiction in Zumárraga was his Indian Inquisition. He was convinced that the Inquisition was just and needed in New Spain, but he knew the Indian’s frailty and instability in the new religion…” This frailty and instability would haunt the Spanish throughout their reign in Mexico. It left room for the constant practice of pre-Catholic ritual. As the racial lines in Mexico began to blur these customs began to directly affect native Spaniards. The Spanish therefore adopted indigenous customs into their own culture something the Inquisitors feared. Therefore, they used the inquisition to limit the influence of the indigenous people and to punish them for refusing to conform to Spanish values, both religious and cultural.

THE WITCHES OF LOGROÑO AND THE INSTRUCTIONS OF SALAZAR

The Spanish Inquisition began as a response to the fear of failure to convert among large groups of Jewish and Muslim people living within the newly formed nation of Spain. These recent converts threatened the strength of the Catholic Church. By virtue of the strong bond between religion and politics in Spain they also threatened the overall success of the nation. The Inquisition became a means of enforcing orthodoxy and also served as a reminder of the power of the new Catholic Monarchs. The Protestant Reformation then threatened the Catholic religion in a broader way. In response, the Catholic Church expanded the power of the Inquisition and began attacking people for any beliefs or practices that lay outside church norms and rules.

Witchcraft and other crimes now came under the jurisdiction of the Inquisition. In Spain the greatest number of witchcraft trials occurred in the isolated Pyrenees. The tenuous conversion in these regions and the strong regional ties created a brand of Catholicism unique to the area and in some ways unrecognizable to the strictly orthodox inquisitors. In these regions their religion was: "...an easy-going combination of vague theology and irregular practice, with a heavy emphasis on local rituals and folk religion." These local rituals and practices fell under the umbrella of witchcraft. The most infamous witchcraft trial in Spain occurred in a small town of the Basque Country. Witchcraft in Spain represented two dangerous strands, one the rejection of Catholic values and the other the rejection of accepted social practices. The trials of Logroño and subsequent writings speak to this dual fear.

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70 John Edwards, *The Spain of the Catholic Monarchs*.
71 James M. Anderson, *Daily Life During The Spanish Inquisition*. 76.
The superficial conversion among a majority of the indigenous Mexican population as well as a persistence of popular beliefs in the Basque lands left room for a continued practice of pre-Catholic rituals, observations, and faith. The Inquisition titled these practices and other interactions as superstitions and witchcraft, fearing them because they represented the power of popular religion and the weakness of Catholicism.\textsuperscript{73} While witchcraft and sorcery had been categories described throughout Europe and other nations and territories, each place had a unique definition. Witchcraft therefore was a creation of society and dependent upon the values and beliefs of a particular region. In Spain witchcraft took the shape of the continued practice of pre-Catholic beliefs as well as a socially constructed worship of or possession by the devil. In Mexico a similar definition was created by the frequent practice of pre-Hispanic rituals and cultural acts. In both nations the use of potions, spells, and artifacts for aid of some kind became associated with sorcery and witchcraft.

These practices that had been a part of society for generations became newly defined as "perverted" by new social codes and values. Witchcraft and superstition frightened the Inquisitors in both Spain and Mexico. In Spain they feared the popular panic that came with rumors of sorcery and witchcraft and in Mexico they feared that their religion's hold on the indigenous populations was tenuous and weak. Understanding the definitions of witchcraft in both regions at the time of the trials is essential in understanding why witchcraft became so frightening and why it became a focus of the Mexican and to some extent Northern Spanish Inquisitions.

\textsuperscript{73} Ruth Behar, "Sex and Sin, Witchcraft and the Devil in Late-Colonial Mexico." \textit{American Ethnologist}, vol. 14, no. 1. Blackwell Publishing. 34-54. 34.
Leaders of society, both political and religious, obsessed over witchcraft. They struggled to understand the reality of witchcraft and attempted to define this ever-changing phenomenon. According to Gustav Henningsen: “Eventually they hammered together popular ideas and learned treatises into a hard and fast theological system which certainly seems to have had very little in common with the witch belief of the common people.”

Perhaps due to the reliance upon scholarly treatises or because of a lack of knowledge of the common people the definition failed to include many of the realities of witchcraft. Instead the definition became increasingly rigid and two major categories emerged as the tenants of Spanish witchcraft:

...the essential distinction between ‘sorcery,’ which is maleficent magic usually involving mysterious rites and invocations, and ‘diabolism,’ which entails submission to the devil. The former was a perennial aspect of village peasant life; the latter was a purely learned notion imposed on the masses from above.

The mysterious rites and invocations that compromise sorcery can often be traced to rituals and practices that were once condoned by pre-Catholic religions. Diabolism, however, had no root in common practices and was instead created by scholars and political or church leaders.

This created definition of witchcraft then became commonly used to attack, torture, and in some (though relatively isolated) cases execute supposed witches.

Furthermore, this definition of witchcraft that was in many ways more frightening

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because it meant that people had turned their backs on Catholicism and abandoned their worship in favor of the devil

“But witchcraft is more; <<the witch has abandoned Christianity, she has renounced her baptism, she worships the Devil like her God, she surrenders to him in body and souls, and exists only to be his instrument to do things to creatures, things the devil cannot do with the help of a human agent>>.” 76

This rejection of Catholic values represented weakness in the Church and that caused Inquisitors to aggressively punish witches. This same reasoning can be seen in the Indian Inquisition conducted by Zumárraga who despised the idea of indigenous people baptized into the Church turning their backs on Catholicism and returning to their former religions. The fear of losing people to other religions drove the Inquisition at all levels.

Therefore, the words witch and witchcraft carried strong negative connotations and as soon as practices became connected with these concepts the people who practiced them were quickly condemned. When villages and people heard that certain practices were considered to be sorcery and that...“...both church and state condemn witch beliefs as heathen practices.” 77 they were quick to denounce their neighbors and friends. Fear became a powerful motivator in witchcraft trials, fear of being denounced, fear of social condemnation, and fear of the torture inflicted by inquisitors. Additionally, the common people did not understand the lofty definitions prescribed by the political elite. The characteristics ascribed to a witch shifted according to the wants and beliefs of a select

76 Antonio Bombín Pérez. La Inquisición en el País Vasco: El Tribunal de Logroño 1570-1610. (Servicio Editorial de la Universidad del País Vasco, 1997), 179

“Pero la brujería es más; <<la bruja ha abandonado el Cristianismo, ha renunciado a su Bautismo, rinde culto a Santanás como su Dios, se ha entregado a él en cuerpo y alma, y existe y a sólo para ser su instrumente de hacer el mas a las otras criaturas, cosa que el diablo no podría hacer sin la ayuda de un agente humano>>.”

77 Gustave Henningsen. The Witches Advocate. 13.
few. Therefore these trials were frequent and unpredictable. In small villages the mere mention of witchcraft resulted in an avalanche of accusations and people hurried to point fingers rather than wait to be accused.

A vicious cycle thus emerges where the scholars, preachers, and inquisitors say that certain characteristics would prove a person to be a witch, and then the person accused is forced through torture to confess she has done those things, thereby proving with ‘experience’ the truth of the authorities’ statements. That witch is then compelled to implicate others...

While many people were innocent of the crimes of which they were accused a simple lack of knowledge and constant pressure caused admissions of guilt and people were quick to point fingers when it guaranteed relief from persecution.

The Abundance of Basque Witches

Witchcraft trials in Spain did not occur with the frequency of other heretical crimes and rarely outside of the Basque Country and its northern neighbors. The most infamous witchcraft trial in all of Spain took place at the auto de fe of Logroño in the year 1610. The initial denunciations occurred against a group of disliked neighbors in the village of Zugarramurdi. The people of the small community blamed their ills on evil and identified people that were already ostracized as witches. Douglas Gifford suggests in his article detailing the witchcraft problems of the Basque villages that local conflicts played a huge role in denunciations:

For the inhabitants of Zugarramurdi it was not a meaningless coincidence when a small child who had previously been healthy suddenly fell ill and

Thousand of people would eventually be named as 'evil folk' or witches creating the greatest witchcraft trial in the history of the Spanish Inquisition. The trial transcripts and subsequent investigations done by the young inquisitor Alonso de Salazar Frías revealed a number of crimes and a wealth of inconsistencies. Reading and analyzing the trials reveals some of the motivations behind the denunciations but also the evaluation processes of these trials.

Fray Antonio Salazar played an important role in changing the way witchcraft trials came to be both viewed and treated. Salazar had a unique perspective on the complicated witchcraft trials of Logroño. He had been raised in the northern region of Spain and therefore had an understanding of the local religion and rituals that existed there. Salazar fought against the belief that widespread witchcraft had occurred in the Basque region, believing that trials had been poorly conducted and that individuals had lied for a variety of reasons. His subsequent investigations and claims led to the creation of a new set of instructional documents that provide insight into the fears of inquisitors but also indicate the excesses and abuses of power that had existed prior to his investigations.

The initial documents produced by Salazar were a series of reports sent to the Council of Madrid in an effort to reveal the missteps taken in the trials of Logroño. Salazar recorded his findings after conducting a detailed investigations and disproving many of the claims made by the accused witches of Northern Spain. These reports reveal

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81 Gustav Henningsen, ed. *The Salazar Documents*. (Boston, MA: Koninklijke Brill NV, 2004), 21
the typical crimes labeled as witchcraft. Furthermore, they reveal the process used by inquisitors and the issues that arose because of these techniques.

Through the process of his investigation Salazar noted the claims made by many of the accused. For the most part many the claims could be proven or disproven by either common sense or actual facts. One of the common assertions made by women involved sexual relations with the Devil. In one investigation Salazar recorded a number of sexual crimes including: “Three other women said that after having sexual relations with the Devil within two hours they gave birth to giant frogs...” These types of sexual relations represented two distinct sins, the first simply being the act of sex and the second being interacting with the Devil. The theme of sexual crimes can be seen in the trials against all witches in both Spain and Mexico.

These crimes challenged both religious doctrine and cultural norms. Women often referred to the Devil as their master and denounced their Catholic faith in favor of a passionate relationship with the Devil. As primary sources reveal: “...and three others on different occasions, in the same room spoke of meeting the Demon and her master...” The recognition of the Devil as their master rather than God not only angered the inquisitors but renounced all cultural norms that existed in Spanish society. Crimes

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82 Segundo informe de Salazar al Inquisidor General (Logroño, 24 de Marzo 1612) in The Salazar Documents, ed. Gustav Henningsen (Boston, MA: Koninklyke Brill NV, 2004), 285. Otras tres mujeres dicen que, habiendo tenido acceso carnal con el Demonio, dentro de dos horas, parieron unos sapos grandes...

83 Archivo de Simancas, Inq. de Logroño, Leg. 1, Processos de fe, n. 8. ...y otras tres en diferente occasion (47) que en la misma sala digeron haberlas sobrevenido alli el Demonia y su maestra...
including sexual deviance or relationships with the Devil became commonplace in
witchcraft trials and Salazar documents a number of these crimes in his investigations.
Besides destruction of property these crimes rank among the most prevalent.

Destruction of property comprised perhaps the greatest number of crimes witches
admitted to or were accused of. Salazar found the same to be true in his investigation.
He noted a number of women who claimed to have created a number of storms on the
day Salazar entered the city. For example, the first woman interviewed: “Catalina de
Aresu...said that they plotted and resolved to make the aforementioned storm...”
While the storm certainly happened Salazar was incredulous that the storm had been created by
man or the Devil. He became more skeptical when other witches could not provide
details. Salazar documents another young woman providing only a few broad claims that
lack all supporting detail: “Isabel de Castro...said that she was present for the storm that
the witches created when I entered the city...she could not name the people that came
with me or any other detail.” Salazar took her inability to name his companions as an
indication of her lies. Throughout his investigation Salazar noted a number of
inconsistencies in witches’ confessions. He considers these contradictions to be proof of
lies or the witches’ innocence.

84 Segundo informe de Salazar al Inquisidor General (Logroño, 24 de Marzo 1612), 287.
Catalina de Aresu...dijo que en él fraguaron y resolvieron todos de hacer la dicha tempestad...
85 Ibid., 307.
Isabel de Castro...dijo que se hallo en la entrada y tempestad que allí movieron los brujos
cuando yo entré...no atinó aún a nombrar los alcaldes que venían a mi lado, ni otra caso alguna.
Throughout his investigation he made a concerted effort to prove or disprove the claims of these women. Salazar went so far as to interrogate family members and witnesses regarding the claims made by witches. In one case Salazar recorded an investigation into the veracity of claims made by Catalina de Echevarría, who: “...said in her confessions that the devil took three toes from her left foot when she became a witch...when examined witnesses and people from her house declared that for all her life...she was missing the toes...” Throughout his investigation Salazar successfully disproved the claims made by many of the accused witches. In the case of Catalina Salazar devoted a substantial amount of time to discerning whether her claims were truthful. Salazar struggled to understand why a woman would make false claims and why neighbors denounced innocent people.

Significantly he found that many of the women felt pressured into confession and that this played an important role in the inconsistencies of their stories. Some women went so far as to deny their stories on subsequent interviews: “A girl of fourteen ages said that [she] had seen a snake come down from the ceiling where a certain woman gave it milk...this appeared like witchcraft. When examined again...she denied it...” These types of revocations occurred frequently. People felt compelled to tell lies for a variety

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86 While a number of men were tried at Logroño the pieces of the trial that I focus on include only female witches. It is important to know that more women were tried as witches in both Spain and Mexico but that men did occasionally get named as witches or sorcerers.

87 Segundo informe de Salazar al Inquisidor General (Logroño, 24 de Marzo 1612), 301. Cataliina de Echevarría...dijo en sus confesiones haberle quitado el Demonio tres dedos del pie izquierdo cuando comenzó a ser bruja...examinados los contestes de ello y personas de su casa, declararon que toda su vida...le faltaron aquellos dedos...

88 Ibid., 309.

Porque una muchacha de catorce años dijo haber visto bajar del techo una culebra a un aposento, donde le dio leche cierta mujer...cosa que pareció obra de brujería. Examinada como conteste la dicha mujer...lo negó...
of reasons including fear and torture. Salazar who refused to employ torture recorded a woman stating that merely being questioned by him caused such intense fear that she lied. He wrote: "...with me she confessed a lot about her witchcraft in detail, the other day, before all three of us colleagues she revoked her confession, saying that the fear inspired by my questions made her tell contrary to the truth..." Salazar made an effort not to use intimidation to gain confessions, however, the general dread associated with witchcraft accusations permeated every aspect of the trial process. It became almost impossible to escape intimidation in the process of confession. Furthermore it resulted in a number of lies and some witches were accused and later burned for false confessions and blame.

The pressure to denounce others and accuse people of witchcraft became overwhelming and in Salazar’s investigation he learned that the pressure placed on the accused resulted not only in lies but also remorse. In one investigation Salazar notes that a woman attempted suicide in order to escape the extreme guilt that she felt.

This is also lamentably demonstrated in the tragic case of an old woman from the village of Corres, called Mariquita de Atauri, who in despair cast herself into a river a few days after she had been reconciled in Logroño...expressed great pain and sorrow after returning from Logroño, because her conscience was heavy because of the people she had unjustly accused.

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89 Cuarta relación de Salazar al Inquisidor General (Logroño, 3 de octubre 1613) in The Salazar Documents, ed. Gustav Henningsen (Boston, MA: Koninklyke Brill NV, 2004), 387

...conmigo se alargó mucho a confesar sus brujerías por extenso; otro día, ante todos tres colegas, lo revocó, significando que el temor que cobró de mis apretadas perusaciones la hizo confesarlo todo contra verdad...

90 Segundo informe de Salazar al Inquisidor General (Logroño, 24 de Marzo 1612), 329. Y también lo muestra lamentablemente el triste suceso de una vieja de el lugar de Corres, llamada Mariquita de Atauri, que se desesperó, ahogada en un río algunos días después de haber sido reconciliada en Logroño...significó gran dolor y tristeza desde que vino de Logroño, porque trata gravada su conciencia por los que injustamente había delatado.
Mariquita felt disgust that she had denounced a number of people for crimes that they had not committed. Her guilt led her to jump in a river; importantly Mariquita received reconciliation and returned to her home. Quite possibly her willingness to name others aided in her release and the knowledge that she would be released after naming others compelled her to lie. These false accusations played a number of roles; initially many of the accused were *malos vecinos* or part of ostracized social groups. Therefore, few people felt remorse when denouncing them. Later however, the pressure to denounce others became intense and the number of people lying to gain freedom became greater.

Remorse became a common emotion among the reconciled witches, Salazar recounted the story told by a priest of a number of: “…the dismissed *confitentes*, looked for a way to tell others about their lies they told about themselves and others, they consulted their confessors and other religious authorities but no one knew what they could do…”

These lies included not only false denunciations but fictitious crimes and actions. In his effort to understand the role of the Inquisition in Northern Spain Salazar discovered a number of these lies and found that the current trial process allowed for deceit and made it possible for the inquisitors to target many innocent people.

A conversation documented by Salazar between two women in prison reveals the pressure to reveal names and lie about crimes. Women felt that the only way to escape prison was to confess to crimes whether or not they actually believed in witchcraft and the Devil:

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91 *Cuarta relación de Salazar al Inquisidor General (Logroño, 3 de octubre 1613)*, 383. “...los confitentes despachados, buscando muy descarriados el remedio de lo que de sí y de otros habían mentido, consultado sobre ello sus confesores y otros religiosos, que no atinaban a gobernarlos lo que en el caso debían hacer...”
...one said to the other that she could not confess to what we asked her in the Tribunal, because in reality she wasn't a witch and did not know anything about the others, it was all a lie; Juretegúía responded that she would not leave the prison unless she lied, like she had done...  

This conversation reveals a few issues that plagued the trials of Logroño most importantly false denunciations. People routinely denounced neighbors or relatives without proof of their crimes. Innocent people were targeted by the accused regularly, often times because people felt an extreme pressure to denounce relatives as a means of saving themselves.

Alonso de Salazar Frias and His Answer to the Witch Question

The detailed instructions outlined by Alonso de Salazar reveal the anxieties that plagued the Inquisitors of Spain following the disastrous trials of Logroño. The trial revealed a number of weaknesses and greatly troubled the young inquisitor who had presided over the lengthy procedure. The trials of Logroño raised significant issues about the processes used to convict witches. The denunciations often arose because of hard feelings among neighbors and people began to use the Inquisition as a way of punishing their enemies: “The Zugarramurdi confessions reveal the existence of village feelings and dislikes against malos vecinos or bad neighbours, themselves ideal material for such labeling.” Salazar took issue with the implementation of the Inquisition in the case of witchcraft trials. He saw issues with confession and denunciation that made the trial

92 Ibid., 383.
process weak. Salazar’s critique of the trials resulted in the creation of a new set of instructions that would eliminate much of the subjective nature of the trials.

Salazar’s new instructions targeted the need for standardization of denunciations and gathering testimony. The instructions include an extensive discussion of the need for details and corroboration of witness statements. Salazar took issue with the lack of structure in the witchcraft trials of Logroño. He demanded a new set of standards be produced that would eliminate the subjective nature of the trials and ensure that all people accused of the crime received a fair procedure, or at least a fair procedure within late medieval and early modern legal definitions.

A close reading of the instructions produced as a result of the complaints and questions raised by Salazar reveal significant information about the way trials had previously been handled and the role emotion and feeling had played in the processes. The trial transcripts from Logroño include lengthy testimonies and confessions made by accused witches. The instructions reflect Salazar’s concern that many of these confessions had been coerced or were otherwise false. La Suprema reacted by demanding that inquisitors corroborate the testimonies of the accused

That the inquisitors in cases that happen from this point on concerning witchcraft will make inquiries and find out if the deaths of creatures and people that the witches confess to happened in the days and nights on which they said, or if they were sick before, or if there was an accident or cause for death that was natural or violent...

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94 Las instrucciones dadas por el Conesjo para proceder en casos de brujería (Madridm 29 de agosto 1614) in The Salazar Documents, ed. Gustav Henningsen (Boston, MA: Koninklyke Brill NV, 2004), 475.

Que los inquisidores en las causas que de aquí adelante se ofrecieren de esta material inquieran y se informen si las muertes de criaturas y personas que las brujas confiesan haber muerto sucedieron en aquellos días o noches que ellas dicen, o si estaban enfermas antes, o si hubo algún accidente o causa para que muriesen natural o violentamente...
In Logroño it became clear that many of the people that witches had claimed to kill had died of other causes. The instructions therefore called for this issue to be closely examined, looking for alternative reasons for death. Corroborating the testimony of the accused dominates the beginning portion of the instructional document.

As an inquisitor in the auto de fe at Logroño Salazar took it upon himself to investigate the events included in the testimony of the accused. He found that in many cases pieces or all of the confessions had been false and that while some witches had voluntarily lied some had been tortured into confession. The instructional document reflects these discoveries and routinely calls for a close examination of the facts included in the confessions. The instructions charge the inquisitors to "...find out from the owners if the animals have in fact died, how they died, and what signs were found on them." 95

In finding natural or other causes for the death of animals the inquisitors remove the mysticism from the demise. Often times witches claimed to have damaged crops or physical goods. However, like their claims of murder and illness it became clear that many of the confessions had been fabricated. Therefore the instructions demanded that the inquisitors closely examine these claims.

...[the inquisitors] will find out about the devastations and damage the witches confess to have caused to harvests, crops, and fields, if these were seen or found indeed to be harmed, and if the countryside had suffered at that time hail, fog, or any harmful wind or frost which might have caused the loss of the crops. 96

95 Ibid., 475.

...que se informen de los dueños de los ganados que ellas confiesan haber muerto, si fue así verdad, y cómo murieron y qué señales les hallaron

96 Ibid., 475.

...que se informen de las devastaciones y daños que confiesan haber hecho en los panes, frutos y campos, si los vieron o hallaron dañados o si en aquellos tiempos vino piedra, niebla o algún mal aire o hielo que fuese causa de la perdición de los dichos campos...que se informen si las dichas piedras y tempestades que ellas confiesan que
The destruction of crops had a significant impact on the livelihood of people in a small community; therefore it became easy for people to blame others rather than weather or acts of God. The idea of blaming or coercing confessions of bad neighbors or disliked community members for this painful loss became attractive. The addition of this clause in the instructions made arbitrary blame ineffective and future accused would not be convicted on the strength of testimony alone. Instead, inquisitors would be required to find corroboration, either in the form of an extensive investigation modeled after Salazar’s or find multiple witnesses who make the same claims with the same details.

The instructions begin by addressing the need for detailed understandings of the confessions of witches and their denunciations, an answer to the corruption and torture that dominated the trial of Logroño. Certain points in the instructional document suggest a level of corruption that had occurred during the initial trials of Logroño. For example, one clause in the instructional document demands that “...whenever someone appears spontaneously to make a declaration about himself or others, everything he says should be written with the style, language, and contradictions that he says as stated by the Instructions...” This clause suggests that the transcripts of confessions from the auto de fe at Logroño did not always accurately reflect the language used by the accused. An accurate and detailed transcript plays an essential role in the trial process and the lack of one can hinder the procedure.
Salazar’s issue with the confessions and trial processes extended to include concerns about the purity of statements made by witnesses and the accused. Clauses in the instructional document reveal improper conduct in the gathering of testimony:

…the result being that the witnesses received many suggestions, reading them the narrative of the commissions without prefacing it with the typical questions of the Holy Office, giving them the opportunity to say what they don’t know diminishing the credibility of the depositions.98

The crimes of witches could rarely be seen and many of their supposed interactions with the devil took place in a supernatural world. Therefore, the testimony became one of the most essential pieces of evidence in a trial and the fact that these pieces of information had been compromised threatened the credibility of the whole trial. Revealing questions and information to witnesses had the potential to influence their testimony and the instructions recognize the damage that type of misconduct had on the reliability of a testimony. However, the importance of the testimony also reveals the tenuous hold that witchcraft accusations had upon the victims. Little evidence could be collected in many of the cases and therefore denunciations and accusations played the most important role in the process of indicting witches.

Salazar’s concerns about the purity of confessions included a fear of the use of torture. The instructions suggest that torture does play a role in a significant number of confessions and adds that torture diminished credibility. La Suprema states that the inquisitors “...must add and note the things that may have resulted from violence,

98 Las instrucciones dadas por el Conesjo para proceder en casos de brujería (Madridm 29 de agosto 1614) in The Salazar Documents, ed. Gustav Henningsen (Boston, MA: Koninklyke Brill NV, 2004), p. 479. ...ha resultado haberse hecho a los testigos muchas sugestiones, leyéndoles enteramente la narrativa de las comisiones sin haber precedido las demás preguntas ordinarias del Santo Oficio, dándoles en esto ocasión que digan lo que no saben con que se disminuye el crédito de las tales deposiciones.
extortion, or other circumstances which could diminish the credibility of the testimony so that if they are examined [...] again it will be seen how much credit should be given to them."\textsuperscript{99} The instructions create a judicial atmosphere that demands precision and detail. No piece of the trial should result from coercion or torture on behalf of the inquisitors or other parties. The instructions resist the use of torture.

However, at no point in the document does it explicitly state that the inquisitors themselves cannot employ torture; instead it only forbids external forces from employing the technique. It states that the inquisitors "...should publish that no person, not even parents or kin folk, are to induce, threaten, or punish someone to gain a confession already made to the Holy Office about this matter..."\textsuperscript{100} Torture employed to force denunciation or confession would later become an issue in Mexico where people were denied access to the Church until they had presented themselves to the Inquisition. This clause also suggests that a certain amount of shame was associated with having an accused witch in the family. Communal pressure or physical threats against people within the community or family resulted in a certain number of confessions but also made these confessions unreliable and lacking integrity.

Panic and fear often followed in the wake of witchcraft trials and Salazar addresses a number of important steps to be taken by local officials to quell the fear and control the panic. The trial of Logroño started with the accusation of three individuals

\textsuperscript{99} Ibid., 485.
\textsuperscript{100} Ibid., 487.
and soon 2,000 witches were tried and some 5,000 others accused.\textsuperscript{101} Douglas Gifford suggests that the preacher played a significant role in spreading panic. He notes: “A lot of blame was laid on itinerant preachers who whipped up their congregations into frenzies of fear and excesses of lurid imagination.”\textsuperscript{102} The writers of the instructional document agreed with Gifford’s analysis and included a number of clauses that dealt with the role of a local preacher in controlling the alarm of a small community.

The preachers are charged with the task of ensuring their parish that the destruction of property and other crimes are caused by natural forces or sent by God. The instructions require: “...that the inquisitors advise the preachers themselves or through an intermediary commission [...] teach their parishioners that the loss of harvests and the other pains that came in the fruits are sent by God for our sins, or caused by the weather [...] there is no suspicion of witches [...]”\textsuperscript{103} Importantly, the preachers are asked to deny suspicion of witchcraft and remind the parishioners of the importance of God and his ability to punish people for their sins. In this clause \textit{La Suprema} changes the focus of the community from crimes of witches to acts of God.

\textsuperscript{102} Ibid., 13.
\textsuperscript{103} \textit{Las instrucciones dadas por el Conesjo para proceder en casos de brujeria.} 477.
“...que los inquisidores adviertan a los predicadores por sí o por medio de los comisarios que den a entender que el perderse los panes y otros daños que vienen en los frutos, envía Dios por nuestros pecados, o por la disposición del tiempo...no hay sospecha de brujas...
THE UNTOUCHABLE WITCHES OF MEXICO AND THEIR COLONIAL CLIENTS

Following the edict delivered by King Philip of Spain that forbid the Inquisition from attacking the indigenous populations of Mexico new witchcraft trials emerged punishing Spanish, mulata, and mestiza populations for interacting with indigenous witches. The witches of Mexico were typically men and women of the indigenous population who continued to practice a variety of pre-Hispanic rituals and religions. People of different cultures and races turned towards these indigenous witches for a variety of reasons. Romance and health became two of the most important reasons people felt compelled to visit these indigenous sorcerers. However, while the witches escaped persecution their clients faced the wrath of the Inquisition. In an effort to limit the influence of these pre-Catholic cultures the Inquisition tried people and made it clear that witchcraft would not be tolerated.

The trial of Cathalina\textsuperscript{104} de Miranda makes it clear that the Inquisition took the interaction between Spanish women and indigenous witches seriously. The trials of mulatta and slave women reveal the same important goal. The Inquisition wanted to control the influence of pre-Catholic religions, preventing them from spreading among the old Catholic Spanish population. These trials point to a clear agenda and the use of the Inquisition as a tool of policing cultural exchanges and maintaining the pure culture the Spanish desired in Mexico. The directions given by the King of Spain saved the witches of Mexico, as their indigenous status protected them from the attack of the Inquisition. However, their clients -- a mix of the other races that comprised colonial Mexican culture -- faced the full force of the Inquisitors.

\textsuperscript{104} This spelling of Cathalina is unusual however it appears in this style in the trial transcript and therefore will appear this way throughout the thesis.
Like the trials of the indigenous population under Zumárraga and the trials of the Basque population in Logroño the denunciations under the Mexican Inquisition had an important role in enforcing not only the Catholic faith but also Spanish cultural values. Don Diego and Martín Ocelotl refused to conform to Spanish norms. The first participated in sexual practices viewed as strange by colonizing Spaniards while the second continued to believe strongly in pre-Hispanic religions. The witches of Logroño had their own unique culture. The Basque Country continues to possess a unique identity and therefore people feared them. While the trials began as neighborly arguments they spread to cover a wide area in the unknown and oftentimes misunderstood region. In all cases witchcraft became a title that encompassed more than just crimes of magic or sorcery. Instead this criminal title often meant that people had acted outside of cultural norms and refused to conform to the Spanish dictated social values.

The reemergence or rather the continued practice of pre-Catholic beliefs played a significant role in the presence of supposed witchcraft and sorcery in Spain but more profoundly in Mexico. Many indigenous people had converted to Catholicism without turning their backs on their own religion: “Pitiless repression did not prevent the old beliefs and traditional rites from surviving and blending with the Christian religion, especially because indoctrination had been very rapid...”\(^{105}\) The sheer lack of people capable of instructing the indigenous populations in the religion of Catholicism left the native population of Mexico woefully under-educated. Some lapsed into their own religion from a lack of understanding rather than from attempts to undermine Spanish authority. Old beliefs persisted and survive in part due to the failures of the Spanish

\(^{105}\) Jacques Lafaye. *Quetzalcóalt and Guadalupe*. 23.
rather than solely because of the wants and desire of the Mexican people. However, retaining some aspect of their pre-Hispanic culture became an important part of the indigenous struggle under their Spanish conquerors.

Through a variety of acts members of the indigenous population of Mexico struggle to retain their own identity. According to Greenleaf: “…by the end of the sixteenth century and throughout the seventeenth century, paganism, idolatry, sorcery, religious syncretism, and native resistance to absorption into Spanish Catholic culture accentuated among many groups of Mesoamerican Indians.”\footnote{Richard E. Greenleaf. “The Mexican Inquisition and the Indians: Sources for the Ethnohistorian.” 316.} Incorporating idols and popular beliefs into their lifestyles allowed the indigenous people to retain a part of their unique identity. There were members of the population that actively fought against the Spanish by continuing to commit acts they knew violated the laws and practices of the Church. Therefore the reasons for the existence of these pre-Catholic beliefs varied widely. While some can be attributed to the failures of the Spanish others are a clear form of rebellion and resistance. Regardless, these beliefs did persist and many were considered to be acts of witchcraft or idolatry and therefore heretical and punishable by the Inquisition.

People in power and good standing in the community almost never feared being accused of witchcraft. The majority of witches were comprised of the people society thought to be trivial or blemishes upon the character of a community. According to Henningsen: “One group consisted of the weaker members of the community…The other group consisted of those who had rejected the moral order of society…”\footnote{Gustav Henningsen. The Witches Advocate. 12.} Due to
their social isolation these people were vulnerable and easy to target. Targeting the weak and vulnerable portions of society occurred in both Spain and Mexico. In Mexico witches and sorceresses typically came from indigenous or mestizo populations, both racial groups that held a lower place in society. In Spain’s most famous witchcraft trials the reputations of the people and the region in general played a role in the accusations.

According to Gifford

The Zugarramurdi confessions reveal the existence of village feelings and dislikes against malos vecinos or bad neighbors, themselves ideal material for such labeling...the character and reputation of the Basques themselves that added impetus to the authorities' suspicions; they speak their own language, they belong to a race which straddles both sides of the Pyrenees. 108

Fear of these people or even a strong dislike made it easier to believe them capable of the crimes typically associated with Spanish witchcraft. In both Mexico and the Basque Country the strange languages and customs of a foreign people frightened Spanish authorities. These populations possessed mysterious qualities that made them targets for crimes relating to witchcraft and sorcery.

In the Basque Country the definition of witchcraft came from above and barely resembled the popular beliefs held by the people of the region. However, the trials in Logroño made it clear that there existed an issue in the area and pre-Catholic beliefs strongly persisted. In Mexico witches and people associated with superstitions faced constant persecution: “The Inquisitors were zealous in their attack on sorcery and superstition during the first half of the seventeenth century.” 109 Clearly, the inquisitors feared, or possessed frustration about, the regular practice of customs and beliefs from

pre-Hispanic times. They disliked the popularity of these men and women because they represented weakness in the Catholic Church. Regardless, in both regions the inquisitors operated under a socially constructed definition of witchcraft, on created by scholars, political leaders, and important men in the church: "The witch is an incarnation of the 'other', a human being who has betrayed his or her natural allegiances to become an agent of evil...Witchcraft is therefore culturally constructed in a specific sense." 110 The witch created by these men represented evil which gave them the right to hunt and persecute these witches. To them the actions committed by these people threatened the stability of the Church, making witches targets of the Inquisition.

Cathalina de Miranda: A Spanish Client

The Inquisition of Mexico targeted woman of multiple races for their interaction with indigenous witches. The trial against the young Spanish woman Cathalina de Miranada reveals this concern. Like the trials of both the Basque region and the Indian Inquisition the transcript reveals a dependence on the testimony of witnesses and the accused. The lengthy transcript interviews members of all the different races. However, specific themes emerge including her reliance on peoples of other races for sorcery and witchcraft and her inappropriate interaction with males.

While Cathalina de Miranda never worshipped the devil or created new spells herself her involvement with indigenous populations and her use of their potions and creations drew notice and resulted in Inquisitional punishment. One of the initial crimes outlined in the lengthy trial conducted against Miranda is her reliance on a black woman

named Lucía for advice concerning a man. Her attempt to use witchcraft and witches to punish a woman who has angered her that also pushes the Inquisition to try her for heresy. Despite these multiple crimes what seems to anger the inquisitors the most is her simple disregard for the Catholic faith and her mixing of the sacred religion and heretic thoughts and phrases:

“...the abovementioned has committed many grievous crimes against our sacred Catholic faith and evangelical law and against what the Holy Mother Roman Catholic Church has, preaches and teaches, and having used sorcery, superstition and witchcraft, invoking the sacred name of God and of his saints, mixing the holy and sacred with the profane.”

Like many of the previously discussed trials Miranda frightens people most because she has no regard for religion. She does not fit into the mold created by Spanish society and that may be the greatest crime that she committed, more so than using magic or threatening another person.

Witchcraft, Romance and Sex

One of the most frequent demands made of witches in early Mexican culture came in the form of romantic aid. Women turned to indigenous witches for help in the realm of men, romance, and sex. The church and rigid Spanish society did little to help women better understand how to deal with these often pressing issues, and therefore women turned towards indigenous healers and witches for help. Early on in her trial Miranda is accused of having met with a known witch to seek her aid in a romantic issue.

...consta la susodicho haver cometido muchos y graves delictos contra nuestra sancta fee cathólica y ley evangélica y contra lo que tiene, predica y enseña la Sancta Madre Yglesia Cathólica Romana, y haver usado de sortilexios, supersticiones y hechizierias, ynvocando el Sancto Nombre de Dios y de sus sanctos, mesclando las cossas santas y sagradas con profanas.
According to the trial record: "...she wanted to call the black woman names Lucía for her vision, she said she wanted to see a man and wanted to know where he was and where he would come." The association with the known witch is a clear offense and one that appears frequently in Inquisitional trials. The fact that it related to a romantic issue is indicative of the common practice among women of Spanish and mixed races to depend on the less traditional indigenous culture for answers in the complicated emotional realm of romance. Cathalina’s trial raises the issue of whether or not the church abandoned women and forced them to turn to other sources of aid and support.

Clearly the Inquisition wanted to discourage people from turning to indigenous witches but it made no effort to create institutions that would aid people with the real concerns of romance and love.

Another issue seen in many trials in Spain, Mexico and the Indian Inquisition was that the accused often lived outside cultural norms. This proves to be true in the lengthy trial against Miranda. One of the witnesses against her makes claims that he knows that she had improper relations with a man: "Who, in defense of his conscious, says and denounces…that going through the streets of the abovementioned city he met a man with whom she had an illicit relationship…Miranda […] did not have his proper name." In saying that she did not have his proper name the witness suggests that Miranda had a relationship with this man without being his wife. Miranda’s relationship with this man

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112 Ibid., 47.

...quería llamar a una negra llamada la dicha Lucía por la bela, diciendo que avía visto una cabra i quería ver qué cabra era i por dónde avía entrado.

113 Ibid., 50.

La qual, por descargo de su consciencia, dize I denuncia que abrá sinco años, poco más o menos, que iendo por una calle de las de esta dicha ciudad, desconsolada por averla dejado un hombre con quien tenía amistad ilícita…la Miranda…que no save su nombre propia
probably made her a greater target. It meant that she did not live within the strict social bounds dictated by Spanish culture; she instead chose to have improper relationships with a man. This sexual or relationship deviance can be seen as a threat to Spanish culture and like her refusal to truly accept Catholic culture it represented a woman who turned her back on some of the most important parts of Hispanic life.

Miranda had a clear issue with a young woman named Inés Gonzales. There are several denunciations that attack Miranda for her relationship with Gonzales, making reference to her use of witches and witchcraft. One witness goes so far as to state that Miranda had always been a suspicious person and her actions concerning this woman had raised many eyebrows: “And the suspicion was always had of Cathalina Miranda, Spaniard, because one day she undressed the abovementioned child, Inés Gonzales, her mother, presents this denunciation, entering [into the record] that the abovementioned Inés Gonzales was saying that there were signs that his daughter had been attacked by witches.”

The reference to this behavior towards Inés points to a few specific issues. Firstly, there appears to be a suggestion of some improper relationship between Miranda and Inés. Clearly any relationship between two women beyond friendship would be outside the accepted social bounds.

Secondly, Miranda is never directly accused of being one of the witches that attack Inés. In fact in other testimonies it appears to be suggested that she sought out witches to help her in the quest to punish her enemy: “And the mother of the

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114 Ibid., 55.

I la sospecha se tuvo siempre de Cathalina Miranda, española, porque estando un día desnudando a la dicha niña, Inés Gonzales, su madre, presente ésta que denuncia, entró la dicha Inés Gonzales estaba diciendo que aquellas señales que tenía su hija eran de averla chupado bruxas.
abovementioned Inés Gonzales answered that it was quite bad, because they were sending witches to her daughter, who had greatly angered the abovementioned Cathalina de Miranda...”\textsuperscript{115} The insinuation that Miranda sent witches once again confirms that people were often brought before the Inquisition because of their interaction with witches. Furthermore, it also suggests that Miranda had significant relationships with people in the witchcraft community. Her Spanish status makes this slightly more unlikely unless her family had indigenous servants or workers. The fact that even a Spanish woman could have such significant interactions probably increased the fear felt by the inquisitors regarding the influence of pre-Hispanic culture over their Hispanic colonists.

The trial against Miranda addresses many of the issues that plagued the Mexican witchcraft trials. First this Spanish woman had interactions with indigenous culture that allowed her to have significant relationships with witchcraft and witches. The interaction between these cultures frustrated the inquisitors because it represented a weakness in the control of Spanish culture. Additionally the crimes that Miranda is accused of represent crimes frequently seen in witchcraft trials. The need for aid in the realm of romance and love became overwhelming and the indigenous witches willingly helped in a way that the church refused. These crimes were not unique to Spanish women. In fact they were perhaps more common among the mulatta, mestiza, and escalva communities that interacted with the indigenous populations on a regular basis.

The Mulatas, Mestizas, and Esclavas

\textsuperscript{115} Ibid., 46.

I la dicha Inés Gonzales la respondió que mui mal, porque la chupaban bruxas a su hija, de que se alteró I enojó mucho la dicha Cathalina de Miranda...
The indigenous populations of Mexico faced the Inquisition for only a brief and unsanctioned period of time. The mulata, mestiza and ezcalava populations, however, faced the pressure of the Inquisition for years and many had significant interactions with the indigenous people who practiced popular religion. While social categories in Mexico clearly separated along racial lines within certain realms these lines became blurred and cultures interacted frequently. Health and remedies became one such area, as did discussions of romantic problems among women.

If the Inquisition records are an indication, in the interchange of magical cures and remedies that took place in colonial Mexico, the social groups that juridically formed different castes interacted closely, sharing and spreading a complex repository of supernatural knowledge about marital and sexual relationships that the inquisitors simply called 'superstition' and 'witchcraft'.

Clearly these relationships became cause for some concern. To Inquisitors they represented a potential weakness in the religious training of the Spanish Catholics. Because the indigenous population could not be targeted the Inquisition had to control their influence in another way. Therefore these records reflect the attempt of the religious leaders to control the interactions between members of different cultures. The fear that pre-Catholic religions would spread or take hold plagued the new colonial power. Mexico had been thought of as a pure and religious colony and the idea that the influence of other religions had sway or power in the region frustrated many leaders.

Superstition and witchcraft became ultimate targets of the inquisition. Mulattos and mestizos received a significant amount of attention because of their oftentimes-close relationships with indigenous populations. Anyone with suspicious lineage or mixed heritage became untrustworthy because of their relationship with indigenous culture. As

Greenleaf notes: “The Inquisitors were zealous in their attack on sorcery and superstition during the first half of the seventeenth century. Especially in the provincial areas they directed their efforts against mestizos and others who could not actually prove Indian lineage.”¹¹⁷ Inquisitors feared the power of the indigenous culture and the un-Hispanic customs that it represented. Cathalina de Miranda was a Spanish woman of Catholic faith and Hispanic culture. Her interaction with indigenous culture and willingness to accept the values and rituals practiced by that social group revealed a weakness in Spanish culture.

The slave Juana Maria was tried by the Inquisition in the year 1752. Her trial reveals some of the complexities of witchcraft in the new Mexican culture. Ethnically Juana Maria identified as mulatta (meaning of mixed African-Spanish racial background). Additionally her position as a slave allowed for her to interact with both members of the elite Spanish class and members of the poor social classes. The people tried in Mexico under the official Inquisition never came from the indigenous population because of an edict delivered forbidding the Inquisition from attacking indigenous people. The young woman’s trial claims that her greatest offense may have been witchcraft. However, the interviews and testimony suggests that other lifestyle choices contributed to her victimization. Her relationship with a man identified as her lover is one such example.¹¹⁸ The man is certainly not her husband and at the time to have a lover was considered sinful but also deviant behavior. Furthermore the trial makes it clear that Juana Maria never actually performed an act of magic by herself but instead

¹¹⁸ Proceso de fe de Juana María. ES.28079.AHN, Inquisición, 1730, Exp. 28. p.3.
depended on indigenous witches to aid her.\footnote{Ibid., p. 1.} Her interaction with members of the indigenous community most likely represented her most significant crime, as it represented the manifestation of one of the great fears held by the Catholic Church. The pre-Catholic religions and pre-Hispanic cultures of the indigenous people were being introduced to Old Christians and non-indigenous members of the Spanish colony.

The transcript states that Juana Maria was tried: "For the crime of superstition. This began with the complicity in heresy and witchcraft..."\footnote{Proceso de fe de Juana María. ES.28079.AHN, Inquisición, 1730, Exp. 28. p. 1 Por el delito de superstición. Hubo principio esta causes con occasion de la complicidad de echizería y Brujería...} Significantly the word complicity suggests that Juana Maria herself did not prepare ceremonies or Polbos, instead she depended on other (likely indigenous) witches to aid her in certain quests. In the case of Juana Maria the majority of crimes revolve around an interaction between her and her lover Juan Jil. Her lover apparently died and the transcript suggests that Juana Maria purchased or gained possession of Polbos and other magical items that resulted in his death. While Juana Maria stated that she never intended for her lover to die her involvement with suspicious women and her open use of magical items made her a target of the Inquisition.

Many women depended on non-Hispanic rituals and practices to help them in the realm of love and romance. The church and strict Spanish culture left little room for aid in these areas and therefore people often turned to indigenous and pre-Hispanic rituals to help them in these greatly underserved but nonetheless important parts of their lives. In the trial of Juana Maria the majority of witnesses testify to her involvement in the death

\footnote{Ibid., p. 1.} \footnote{Proceso de fe de Juana María. ES.28079.AHN, Inquisición, 1730, Exp. 28. p. 1 Por el delito de superstición. Hubo principio esta causes con occasion de la complicidad de echizería y Brujería...}
of her lover as a result of magical items she received from witches. These witnesses discuss the death of her lover and its relation to these items

...because having been in his house, there he had fallen down in front of this lady, a bag of orange-coloured things and she held a bundle of Polbos of witchcraft and of several races and a decorative fastening...they went in search of this bag but it had been thrown in the fire and the denunciation revealed that she said she did not want to kill her lover...^121

The polbos discussed by the witnesses appear to be bags that contain a variety of items that combined have some magical value. While Juana Maria and many witnesses maintain that she did not purchase these items with malicious intent the resulting death of her lover raised suspicion and the fact that she did have magical items in her possession made her a target for the Inquisition.

Some witnesses suggested that Juana Maria actually purchased the items with the intention of aiding her lover: “In the house of her lover Juan Jil...the witness had confirmed that this lady was given some ingredients for Polbos and the root of yerba and other ...the witnesses state that she wanted to help her lover and not to kill him.”^122

However, on multiple occasions the inquisitors respond to witnesses by making it clear that the intentions of Juana Maria have no bearing on the trial. Simply the act of interacting with and being complicit to known acts of witchcraft make her guilty of crimes against the Catholic faith. The rigidity of the inquisitors on this subject makes

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^121 Ibid., 3.
^122 Ibid., 11.
clear the frustration that they possessed towards witchcraft and their unwillingness to accept any aspect of pre-Hispanic culture as a part of a new Mexican identity. In this way the Inquisition became almost a tool of controlling cultural influence rather than a tool of protecting the Catholic faith. In a land where the greatest challenges faced related to conversion and the assimilation of a large indigenous population, controlling cultural exchanges became almost more important that simply enforcing orthodox Catholicism.

Like the trials of Logroño and other Inquisitional trials the trial against Juana Maria attempted to use fear and pressure to convince her to name others who either performed witchcraft or, like her, utilized the expertise of others. At one point in the trial the transcript reveals that Juana Maria did indeed name others: “...in which she declared against other persons...”123 Importantly a reference is made to the Navarre region, an area in which a significant number of witchcraft trials took place under the Spanish Inquisition. Additionally the majority of people named by Juana Maria were indigenous, meaning they could not be tried under the inquisition. However, that the names appeared in the trial transcript suggests that a record was kept of known witches regardless of ethnicity. A knowledge of who witches were might have made it possible to observe who these women and men interacted with and it may have been useful for other surveillance purposes.

At one moment another witness is also asked to name known accomplices or witches. The witness names the women who he believes provided Juana Maria with witchcraft items. In doing so he not only makes it clear that Juana Maria associated with

123 Ibid., 5.
...en que havia declarado contra otras personas...
witches but accuses another woman of witchcraft in exchange for not being associated with any of these crimes.

He said that Antonia Flores is someone who turned out to be an accomplice and against whom there was an order of pressure, the district attorney in the consultation of November 22 (that he would not be executed for the events that had occurred) that he had given, to the Lady so that she could kill her love Juan Jil...  

This man most likely acted like many others did under the Inquisition and named not only Juana Maria but also her accomplices in an effort to protect himself from the wrath of the Inquisition. Fear can be a powerful motivator and the constant denunciations that followed in the wake of most witchcraft trials are evidence of the success of the Inquisition in using the emotions of people to gain information. Juana Maria and others name a significant number of witches and associates throughout the trial most likely as a way of protecting themselves but in doing so perpetuate the climate of the Inquisition.

The witches of the Mexican Inquisition received a variety of punishments. For the most part these trials allowed people to serve some amount of penance and return to their lives, restored to some level of social acceptance. The trial of Juana Maria reads that: “On December 9, 1752 this Lady was read her judgment in the room of the Tribunal presented by the Secretaries of Secrecy, and her crimes were weighed and studied y the inquisitor Luis de Barvena and Lufano: And on the 11 of the same month she was admitted to the Salbador Hospital to fulfill her penitence.”  

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124 Ibid., 41.

Dijo que Antonia Flores es una de las que resultaron complices y contra quien de libro mandamiento de presion, apedimento fiscal en la citada consulta de 22 de Noviembre (el que no se ha puesto en ejecucion por motivos que han ocurrido) de los havia dad, con el fin de que esta Senora matara a su amo Juan Jil ...

125 Ibid., 62.
Juana Maria could be considered harsh for the time period. Many women never received a sentence that confined them to a hospital or other location; instead they were released to their families and given penance. There are multiple reasons Juana Maria could have been treated differently. One possibility is that she was not from a wealthy background and there appeared to be little religious structure in her life. Secondly, her status as mixed race and poor meant that she would continue to have many interactions with indigenous populations. Nevertheless, Juana Maria did receive a harsh sentence for merely being complicit in acts of witchcraft.

En 9 de Diciembre de 1752 de le leyo a estasenora su sentencia un mexitos en la sala del Tribunal presentes los secretarios del secreto, y fue de hertida y apredida de sus Delitos por el inquisidor Luis de Barvena y Lufano: Y en 11 del mismo fue admitida al Hospital del Salvador, donde se alla cumpliendo su penetencia.
CONCLUSION

The individuals in this paper were tried under the crimes of witchcraft, idolatry, and heresy. However, in each case the inquisitors focused on aspects of the people’s lives that challenged religious norms but also, and perhaps more importantly, the societal values imposed by the new Spanish culture. The Inquisition became a tool used by neighbors, leaders, and the inquisitors themselves to control the influence of cultures defined as “other” on Spanish society, from the fourteenth century on defined increasingly in terms of an authoritarian and exclusionary type of Catholicism.

For example, Don Diego’s trial reveals a fascination with his sexual behavior. Cathalina de Miranda’s relationship with a man whose last name she does not share also catches the attentions of inquisitors. In the trials of Logroño the initial victims are a set of neighbors disliked and misunderstood by the community. They are accused because of their status as “malos vecinos” or bad neighbors. The community uses the Inquisition as a tool to remove what is perceived as a blight upon the society. In both the cases against the Basque region and the Indian Inquisition the people targeted can be characterized as the “other.” Because they spoke their own languages and had their own cultures they became easy targets for an Inquisition designed to protect not only the religion but also the greater culture.

In reading these trials a variety of important themes emerge that point to underlying reasons for the conduct of Inquisitional processes. For example, in all three trials the inquisitors certainly devote time to understanding the persons’ lifestyle choices. In many cases these questions do not relate to their crimes in any way. In the case of Juana Maria the presence of her lover Juan Jil is certainly significant, however,
discussing every facet of their relationship is meaningless, as it has no bearing on her crimes. For Martín Ocelotl, understanding his worldly possessions and the number of women in his life also has no direct relationship to his alleged crimes. However, the trial reveals that the inquisitors spent a significant amount of time discussing these matters. The Inquisition in Mexico became a tool used to prevent the culture and religion of the indigenous populations from taking hold among other ethnic populations and also to discriminate against those believed to be sexually or socially deviant in some way.

The Indian Inquisition targeted leaders of indigenous communities and people who held positions of influence in indigenous communities. In doing so and punishing these people they sent a message to the indigenous community that conversion was necessary and important. However, the focus of the Mexican Inquisition shifted following the instruction forbidding the trial of Indians. As Lewis Tambs articulated in his writings on the Mexican Inquisition the focus shifted to new populations: “Exclusion of the Indians from its jurisdiction meant that its proceedings would be directed only toward Europeans, mestizos, and Negroes, and these were the ones which should have been the best instructed in their faith…”126 In these trials people who associated with known indigenous witches were punished for their association as much as they were for the use of witchcraft. Inquisitors disliked the interaction between the uncontrollable indigenous community and Old Christians; they feared that the cultural influence of the indigenous population would affect the Spanish and other groups causing Catholicism and Spanish culture to loose power.

The trials of the Basque region used the Inquisition as a tool at both a local level and a broader state level. Accusations began because of neighborly arguments. In the case of Zugarramurdi, the small village that began the crisis of witches tried in Logroño, the trials began as accusations against a set of unpopular neighbors. Douglas Gifford argues that the strange behavior of this family and their ostracized position in society likely contributed to the accusations leveled against them. The village targeted them because they did not fit into the culture of their community, their odd behavior was unsettling and like the people of the indigenous community they interacted with others, potentially spreading their odd behavior to others.

The role of a local monastery in the Inquisitional trial of Logroño cannot be ignored. Most likely out of disgust or fear the monastery of San Martín de Urdax reported the strange behavior of the local villages to the Inquisition. While the intentions of the abbot of this monastery are not known it can be assumed that the religious men of the monastery rejected the “pagan” behavior of the villagers that surrounded them and wanted to see them punished. The trials of the Basque region do not reveal quite the same obsession with sexual deviancy that is seen in the trials of Mexico. However, what is seen is an attention to the interactions of the accused and the position of many of the initial accused in society. The initial wave of witches brought before the Inquisition came from specific sectors of society, disliked neighbors, strange foreigners, and people from “low” backgrounds.

128 Ibid., 14.
However, the race and culture of the accused may have played a role in both Spain and Mexico. Gifford argues that: "...it may have been the rather the character and reputation of the Basques themselves that added impetus to the authorities' suspicion: they speak their own language, they belong to a race which straddles both sides of the Pyrenees."129 The Basque people did not live their lives like the rest of Spain; instead they had a unique culture that sometimes clashed with the values of Spanish society. The indigenous populations of Mexico can be viewed in the same way. They too possessed a culture that did not resemble the Spanish view of society and therefore they threatened Spain. In both cases these cultural "abnormalities" most likely played a significant role in the trials. In the Basque region inquisitors gladly accepted that witchcraft occurred in small villages and took the opportunity to punish a large portion of the society. In Mexico the trials point to a desire to control the indigenous population by either forcing them to adhere to Catholic values or frightening other populations into avoidance. For both cultures the Inquisition acted as a tool, which limited their influence on other sectors of Spanish culture.

It can be argued that this attempt to limit or eliminate the cultural influence of the Basques and the indigenous people of Mexico failed. The Basque people continue to identity not as Spanish but as Basque, a unique population distinct from Spanish society. In Mexico the indigenous culture had and continues to have an impact on many levels of society. While both regions do continue to practice Catholicism it does not resemble the orthodox religion dictated by Spain. Instead it has evolved into a unique version of the religion that contains influences of both pre-Catholic religions and pre-Hispanic culture.

129 Ibid., 16.
The inquisitors of the Spanish and Mexican Inquisitions used trials as a way of eliminating “atypical” cultures. The Inquisition became a tool of cultural homogenization and church/state control. In Mexico the Inquisition tired to limit the effect indigenous people had on their Spanish neighbors. In the Basque region it became a tool used by neighbors, priests, and the larger state to try and eliminate a distinctive regional culture. In both cases, these efforts had an impact but ultimately failed as a hybrid religious culture emerged in Mexico and Basque identity remains vibrant in Spain. Even in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the reasons for trials are more complicated than what is suggested in the transcripts. Simple witchcraft and idolatry were not the only crimes of Cathalina de Miranda, Juana Maria, Martín de Ocelotl, Don Diego, and the many witches of the Basque Country. Instead, as Salazar discovered in his investigations the claims of witchcraft and sorcery were often fabricated but the disputes between neighbors and influences of culture proved to be the real issue.

In the end, these trial records and historical accounts demonstrate the significance of cultural and social practices in the Inquisition. While the Inquisition has long been regarded as a mean of controlling the religions orthodoxy of Spain its scope extended beyond Church practices. Denunciations became a means of eliminating cultural anomalies. Angry neighbors in Northern Spain used the Inquisition as a tool for removing abhorrent neighbors from their communities. Political leaders in Mexico used the Indian Inquisition as a means for demonstrating the importance of conversion and leaving behind pre-Hispanic customs. Later Mexican leaders and people would use Inquisition a means of limiting the interactions between indigenous peoples and the other races of the Mexican colony. In all cases the Inquisition served as a tool for controlling
the spread of dissident or “other” cultures perceived as threats to Spanish society. The scope of the Inquisition therefore grew and it became a means for controlling culture and society.
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