

## Ruth Behar

### Sexual Witchcraft, Colonialism, and Women's Powers: Views from the Mexican Inquisition

In 1774 José de Ugalde, a white (*español*) muleteer from a town near Querétaro, appeared before the Mexican Inquisition to lodge an accusation against his mestiza wife, who he claimed had used witchcraft to make him "stupid" (*atontado*) throughout the seventeen years of their marriage.<sup>1</sup> He had recently threatened to kill her if she did not admit what she had done to put him in this state; his wife then told him about the yellow, green, and black herbs which her sister had given her, advising that she serve them to him in water, the corn drink of atole, or food, "so that he would never forget her, or watch over her, or get back too early from his trips." He had learned that she was having an affair, and she shocked him when she went to confess and took communion as though nothing had happened. This so angered him that he tied her to a mesquite tree in order to beat her, reproaching her for having confessed and taken communion sacrilegiously, but "she had gotten loose without his knowing how." When he bound her to the tree a second time, she "called for help to all the saints in the heaven's court and he was not even able to give her a single beating." When for a third time he took her out to the countryside with the intention of beating her, he had no sooner accused her than "they made up and returned home together."

For José de Ugalde, the fact that his wife was misbehaving and that he could not give her the beating she properly deserved was only explainable as the effect of witchcraft. That she, rather than he, was shamelessly having an extramarital affair and that he could do nothing about it showed the extent of her supernatural powers. In bringing his case to the Inquisition he did not worry about admitting his intentions to beat his wife, because it was considered perfectly legitimate for a husband to physically punish his wife when she infringed

upon the norms of proper female behavior in marriage. What made him believe the Inquisition would take an interest in his case was his wife's use of food magic to stupefy him, and the larger threat to a patriarchal social structure that was implicit in this act: turning the world upside down by making husbands submissive to their wives.<sup>2</sup>

This brief but tantalizing narrative contains, in compact form, the major themes that animated women's magical power in colonial Mexico, a discourse that had roots in sixteenth-century Spain. This essay will focus on the different meanings given to this discourse by men and women, highlighting the particular characteristics of the Inquisition and of witchcraft in Spain and Mexico. I will concentrate on the specific genre of sexual witchcraft, epitomized in Spain by the literary image of the witch-procuress or *Celestina*; in Mexico it took on a further cultural elaboration, with uncanny power being ascribed to women of the marginal Indian and mixed castes. Three major themes from the example of José de Ugalde's bewitchment will orient this discussion of women's power. One theme is the image of the world in reverse; the aim of women in these cases, according both to the women themselves and to the men who accused them, was to reverse their subordination to men and gain some degree of control over their husbands or lovers. There was a local language in which this search for control was expressed: in Mexico, a man could be *atontado* or *asimplado* "stupefied" or "dummied," as happened to José de Ugalde; an especially abusive and violent husband might be subject to his wife's attempts to *amansar*, to "tame" or "domesticate," him; a man who dropped his mistress would perhaps find himself *ligado*, "tied" in such a way that he was rendered impotent; and finally, unnatural illnesses caused by *hechizo* or *maleficio*, sorcery or malefice could make a man waste away.

A second theme in these cases is the efficacy of women's witchcraft. As we see in José de Ugalde's reaction to his wife's use of herbs, the witchcraft powers of women were clearly not ones that women simply ascribed to themselves but were culturally viewed as inherent in their nature. These powers, however, usually needed to be awakened, and thus we find networks of women from all the castes and classes of colonial Mexico passing on stories about various "remedies" (*remedios*) that could be employed when a man was recalcitrant, violent, or unfaithful. José de Ugalde's wife, for example, claimed to have obtained the three magical herbs from her sister. Both in Mexico and in Spain, women who were professional healers

and often midwives as well were also consulted for advice and cures.

Typically, women made men "eat" their witchcraft, using their power over the domain of food preparation for subversive ends, a practice that was common in pre-Hispanic times as well as in sixteenth and seventeenth-century Castile.<sup>3</sup> From the number of cases in which food was the medium for witchcraft, it appears that ingestion was thought to be one of the most effective ways of passing on the polluting substances of witchcraft; in eating, the pollution was introduced directly and effectively into the body. Women frequently used menstrual blood or the water that had cleansed their "intimate parts" to make up the ensorcelled food or drink that they served to their husbands. The logic behind this was clearly that of the "metaphorical extension," by which the ingestion of a woman's bodily essences worked, by means of analogy, to subdue, tame, or attract the man who consumed them.<sup>4</sup> The belief that food could be used to harm rather than to nurture gave women a very specific and real power that could serve as an important defense against abusive male dominance. And perhaps, too, women's serving of ensorcelled food to men was another kind of reversal, sexual rather than social: a way for women to penetrate men's bodies.

A last, and crucial, theme of all these Inquisition cases is the mediating role of the church in domestic and sexual matters. Whether the discourse of sexual magic and witchcraft took place among women passing on "remedies" or between bewitched and bewitcher, the church was there to listen in. The church solicited such discourses by requiring confession and by making public the Edicts of Faith in which superstition, witchcraft, and magic were denounced as sins.<sup>5</sup> The church had also insinuated itself into the domain of the family and sexuality, by controlling the rites of marriage and by defining sexual and domestic sins.<sup>6</sup> So, it was natural for men and women to bring their confessions and their denunciations about these matters to the church, and especially to the Inquisition, translating their domestic conflicts and sexual ambivalence into a religious discourse. Thus, José de Ugalde thought that the Inquisition would be interested in his marriage and the fact that it had, in his view, gotten mysteriously out of control.

### Gender, Power, and Religion: From Spain to Mexico

What these three themes point to is an intersection of gender, power, and religion. I will consider this intersection from the various points of view of the actors involved in women's witchcraft: that of the religious elite, who in large part set the terms of the discourse; that of the men who felt themselves bewitched; and that of the women who attempted to gain power through witchcraft.

As Michelle Rosaldo and other feminist anthropologists have pointed out, in most societies women are denied culturally legitimate authority in the public sphere.<sup>7</sup> Thus, whatever power women do have is thought to be illegitimate, negative, and disruptive. Beliefs about women as polluters are one widespread example of the negative powers attributed to women, as in parts of New Guinea, where men will carry out their wives' wishes for fear that if a woman is angered she may pollute her husband by serving him food while she is menstruating.<sup>8</sup> This analogy is significant given the frequent use of menstrual blood by colonial Mexican women in preparing ensorcelled food for their husbands, a practice that has persisted in various parts to this day.<sup>9</sup> Beliefs about the witchcraft powers of women likewise attribute to women a negative, polluting influence. In viewing women's power as illegitimate, we have to ask a key question: in whose eyes is this power illegitimate? Clearly, in a male-dominated society, it is from the male point of view that women's power becomes defined as negative, as an inversion of the social/sexual order. Even from the female point of view, this power appears illegitimate to the degree that women internalize the values of the male-dominated symbolic order.

In northern Europe the illegitimacy of women's power was dealt with, in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, by carrying out witch-hunts, in which women were the main targets of persecution and extermination.<sup>10</sup> Women's witchcraft was taken seriously by the religious elite of northern Europe, but in the process of the hunt their powers were magnified and transformed from a simple power to heal or to harm on a one-to-one basis into a demonic conspiracy that threatened both God and the state. As Christina Lerner has pointed out in her study of witch-hunting in Scotland, an essential prerequisite for a witch-hunt was the existence of an elite with the zeal and the bureaucratic machinery to carry out the investigations, arrests, and punishments of those accused of witchcraft.<sup>11</sup> The pres-

ence of an élite convinced of the fact that witches did exist and did have dangerous powers is, in large part, what fueled witch-hunts, as opposed to witchcraft beliefs, in northern Europe.

Spain was different. Spain had true heretics to contend with: the *conversos* (converts) from Judaism and Islam, whose supposed insincere conversion threatened the purity of the faith. The Inquisition, after all, was instituted to deal with them.<sup>12</sup> Yet Spain was not completely devoid of small-scale witch panics; these involved only the local authorities and took place during the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries in the northern regions of Galicia, Cataluña, and the Basque Country, with the most famous being the witch panic of Zagarramurdi in Navarra.<sup>13</sup> By the 1620s these panics were mostly over, however, because they were put down by the Suprema, the Supreme Council of the Inquisition in Madrid, which took a decidedly skeptical attitude towards witchcraft. Epitomizing this attitude was the work of the inquisitor Alonso de Salazar Frías, whose close, legalistic examination of the confessions concerning sabbats and intercourse with devils in the Zagarramurdi witch panic led him to conclude that "I have not found the slightest evidence from which to infer that a single act of witchcraft has really occurred . . . I deduce the importance of silence and reserve from the experience that there were neither witches nor bewitched until they were talked and written about."<sup>14</sup>

The general view of the Spanish religious élite was that witchcraft was a sign of ignorance rather than heresy and could be dealt with through such religious means as Christian instruction, confession, and absolution.<sup>15</sup> Witches flying through the air and meeting in sabbats were delusions and fantasies, beyond the legal province of cause and effect and the rules of evidence. It is significant that the word for the witches' sabbat used in Spain is *aquelarre*, a Basque word. The idea of the sabbat apparently never really took hold in Castile and southern Spain, either on the popular or élite level. Instead, the kind of witchcraft one finds in Castile and southern Spain involved love magic and sexual bewitchment. Julio Caro Baroja has suggested that the witchcraft which flourished in northern Spanish communities was of a distinctly rural order, concerned with community tensions—like, I would add, the witchcraft that existed in northern Europe. On the other hand, the love magic and sexual witchcraft common in Castile and southern Spain (as well as in much of Italy) was decidedly urban, and more concerned, in the tra-

dition of the *Celestina*, with dyadic domestic and erotic relationships.<sup>16</sup> Unlike the northern European image of the witch as an old, ugly, and poor woman, the women involved with witchcraft in Castile were usually young unmarried women, widows, wives abandoned by their husbands, or women living in casual unions with men; they were maids and servants, sometimes prostitutes, and in southern Spain often *moriscas*, women of mixed Spanish and Moorish blood.<sup>17</sup>

To give a few examples of the discourse of sexual witchcraft employed by Spanish women, we can mention the sixteenth-century case of Catalina Gómez, who claimed to have used witchcraft to improve her relationship with her husband, who mistreated and beat her.<sup>18</sup> Leonor de Barzana, a conversa of Jewish descent from Toledo, claimed that many of her female neighbors had approached her for remedies to increase their husbands' love for them. Similarly, Juana Hernández, apparently a prostitute, claimed to have used techniques of divination "at the request of many women, who wanted to know the goings-on of their lovers and husbands, whether they took on other women." Significantly, she had learned about divination from a *morisca*. Isabel de la Higuera, from Daimiel, explained to a man that he had been rendered impotent by means of a magical ligature that had worked its way into his body through an orange, given to him by a woman, that was filled with "certain dirty things."<sup>19</sup> This Castilian tradition of sexual magic and witchcraft crossed the Atlantic and took hold in Mexico, flourishing in urban centers like Mexico City, as well as in the more open, racially mixed, and economically fluid mining, ranching, and hacienda areas farther orth.

The confessions and accusations of love magic and sexual witchcraft that people brought to the Inquisition, both in Spain and Mexico, were placed in the category of "superstition" and dealt with leniently, for the most part. The Spanish Inquisition and its colonial Mexican tribunal shared a common inquisitorial style, seeking to understand the motives of a person's beliefs or acts rather than being concerned with establishing legal responsibility for the deeds of witchcraft or magic, as were secular judges in northern Europe. Thus the outcome of a case hinged less on the question of whether a person was guilty or not guilty than on subtler distinctions between "repentant and unrepentant sinners, between accidental and deliberate sinners, between knaves and fools."<sup>20</sup> What mattered most to the inquisitors was that penitents have a sense of guilt and shame,

and display a willingness to confess all and be reintegrated into the church. And if the confessions touched on sex, all the better, since the lusts of the body, both in thought and in deed, were especially singled out for close inspection and castigation.<sup>21</sup>

While men like José de Ugalde in central Mexico went to the Inquisition with sincere complaints about the magical powers women wielded, the inquisitors tended not to take these accusations seriously. Unlike the secular judges of northern Europe, who viewed women's power as illegitimate in the sense that it threatened the state and society through the conspiracy of the "coven," the inquisitors of Spain and Mexico viewed women's power as illegitimate in the sense that it was a delusion and therefore not really a form of power at all.<sup>22</sup> By thus devaluing the discourse of women's magical power, not taking it altogether seriously, the Hispanic religious elite trivialized and denied what on the local level was viewed as a source of power for women.

### Sin, Guilt, and Confession: Women's Ambivalence

The attitude of the Inquisition had two contradictory effects on women in colonial Mexico. On the one hand, the leniency of the inquisitors made it possible for networks of women to pass the word on about magical alternatives to the church's mediation in domestic affairs; in some cases, women were even able to construct an alternative religious ideology, centering on devil pacts, that challenged the dominant religion. On the other hand, those women who internalized inquisitorial ideas about the delusion of believing in witchcraft found themselves devaluing their own efforts to gain magical power and becoming angry and disgusted with themselves for seeking to subvert the established order.

As an example from colonial Mexico of how women could internalize inquisitorial ideas, we have the case of Magdalena de la Mata, a woman over fifty years of age who appeared before the tribunal of San Juan del Rio in 1715.<sup>23</sup> She began her confession by recalling an incident of domestic violence: on one occasion, her husband, a mestizo like her and the owner of a drove of beasts of burden, had beaten her so badly that he had made her bleed. Seeing herself treated so wretchedly by her husband, upset and angry, Magdalena went to Beatris, an Indian woman, and asked her to give her an herb she could use on her husband so he would cease treating her so badly.

Beatris, admonishing her to keep the remedy a secret, explained to Magdalena how to go about producing a magical ligature or "tying" that would make her husband impotent. The remedy was to take an egg, pierce it with a straw, and in its place a few of her husband's hairs; then she was to bury the egg in the ground where her husband urinated. Following these steps, Beatris claimed, Magdalena's husband would be "tied."

Ligatures caused by witchcraft were the usual explanation for male impotence both in popular and learned European belief. Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, the German inquisitor-authors of the witch-hunting treatise known as "The Hammer of Witches," went so far as to suggest that witches collected the male organs of the men they made impotent, putting them in a "bird's nest, or shutting them up in a box, where they move themselves like living members, and eat oats and corn."<sup>24</sup> Or, at least, the devil made such illusions possible. From the Spanish Inquisition, a case is preserved from Puebla de Montalbán, stating that in 1758 the townspeople believed that Aunt Fruncida had a little pail in which she kept the members of men who had suffered magical ligatures; in Lillo, in 1780, rumor had it that La Gorrinera kept male members hung up on a clothesline.<sup>25</sup>

In Mexico, women both confessed to having attempted ligatures and were accused by men of having carried out ligatures—but this ultimate effort to strike at the central symbol and reality of male dominance by rendering the phallus powerless was for some women so radical that they often ended up censoring and repressing their own desires. Thus, Magdalena pierced the egg, filled it with her husband's hairs, and buried it, pouring some of his urine over the ground. But one day later, she confessed to the inquisitor and ran back to the site and unburied the egg, overcome with repentance for having carried out such a ludicrous act. Throwing the egg away, she exclaimed, "'To the devil with you!' And she had been crying ever since, begging God to have mercy on her, as she also begged of this Holy Tribunal."

Her local parish confessor, she said, had refused to absolve her until she confessed to the Inquisition. She admitted, she had been on the verge of keeping quiet about this sin altogether, but looking into her soul she had seen that she had to confess it. She cried as she spoke, and the inquisitor, "seeing her tears, and her repentance, and her demonstration of faith . . . told her to attend to the fact that she is

Christian, and that she should never be afraid to confess her sins to her confessor and that she should always confess what is most particular, and that which seemed the most shameful to her." So long as she confessed and truly repented, the inquisitor assured her, she would always be pardoned by the Holy Tribunal. With this, and a caution about not paying heed to superstitions and criticizing them whenever she came across them, she was absolved.

The notions propounded by the church about sin, guilt, and devotion, which women were taught to take especially seriously, often made it impossible for them to use the magical resources at their disposal for retaliating against husbands who exceeded the bounds of proper conjugal dominance.<sup>26</sup> What political and economic control lower-class women, especially married women, had was negligible, and they were frequently victims of a husband's aggression both in the countryside and in towns.<sup>27</sup>

Since women were left with few domains in which to assert themselves, they developed, in Mexico and elsewhere in Latin America, a rich symbolic language of beliefs and acts for resisting, punishing, and even controlling the men who dominated them. This was a language saturated with violence: just as men hit their wives, women retaliated with a more subtle form of violence. And because the Mexican Inquisition treated offenders in a lenient, paternal fashion, it participated in the dialogue about male/female conflict and sexual witchcraft. The details of that dialogue were of little interest to the inquisitors; what mattered most to them was that what was confessed be "that which seemed the most shameful" and that the confession be accompanied by the sinner's requisite "tears of contrition," so important to early modern Spanish religious devotion.<sup>28</sup>

The Inquisition did little to hinder the diffusion of sexual witchcraft among women of the various caste strata of colonial Mexico. Yet the position of women remained equivocal. Women, unable to reconcile the contradictions between the proper behavior expected of them as Catholics and the witchcraft they knew for taming and tying men, ended up by expressing disgust and self-hatred. They threw away the remedies they had used, became angry with themselves for the violent emotions they had given vent to, and ran tearfully to confess to the parish priest and the inquisitors, seeking absolution. It was as if an internalized Inquisition, an alternate discourse, sounded inside their heads, muting the discourse of women's magical power.



13. Representation of the devil in an inquisitorial investigation for heretical activities. Source: Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico City, Inquisición, vol. 1281, fol. 61 (1790).



life with her husband was difficult, that hers was a *mala vida*. Seeing what Francisca suffered at close range, Clara de Miranda had told her that if she wanted "to change her husband's behavior and turn him into a simpleton, she should take a few of the fat worms that drag themselves along the ground on their backs, that can be found under the earth, and once dried and turned into powder serve them to him in food and drink." On two occasions Clara de Miranda went to the trouble to bring these worms to Francisca, but she refused to take them.

Another time, Francisca's husband had just combed his hair when Clara de Miranda entered the room, saying, "Your husband is a fool. Why does he leave those fallen hairs lying around? They can do him harm." Francisca asked her how such a thing was possible. And Clara de Miranda told her, "If you take a frog and tie one of those hairs around its neck and take a thorn and run it from its head to its feet, your husband will waste away." Yet another time, she offered Francisca a different remedy to pacify her husband's behavior, telling her to place a swallow in a hole in the wall above their bed, saying the words, "Here I place you, Cristóbal" (*Aquí te meto, Cristóbal*). Clara de Miranda had told another woman that to make her husband care for her she should let a leech suck blood from her thigh and, after drying and grinding it, give it to him to drink; or she could prepare his chocolate with the water she had used to cleanse herself after having intercourse with him. Ana, an Indian woman who had been a friend of Clara's, also told Francisca that "to stupefy men and to tame them it was good to give them to drink the custom of women (*la costumbre de las mujeres*)." While Francisca had never seen Clara or Ana serve these things to men, just the mention of them in everyday conversation had made her sufficiently suspicious to go confess to a local priest who, in turn, sent her to the Inquisition for absolution.

For Marcelina, María Guadalupe, and Francisca, as for other colonial Mexican women, the discourse about the magical control of men, with its reversal of the social/sexual order and strange metaphoric practices and "cuisines," was simply diabolical, inspiring shock, fear, suspicion, and disgust. Such women seemed to think that if they had to choose between two evils—a *mala vida* with their husbands or doing devil's stuff—it was their obligation, as proper Christians, to choose the first.<sup>32</sup> Well Christianized by a church that taught the female sex to take its precepts especially seriously, these

women seemed to think it was better to have the clear conscience that came from the holy martyrdom of knowing that they were on the side of God than to provoke the devil by flirting with "his stuff." In confessing to their local priests and later to the inquisitors, they betrayed themselves as well as their female friends, neighbors, and relatives, thereby giving in to the structure of male domination and turning in those women who posed a threat to that structure. Such women were their own best inquisitors.

While some women internalized the Inquisition's devaluation of female supernatural power, thereby devaluing their own and other women's efforts at resisting male hegemony, many women also openly rejected Catholic ideology and embraced the devil. Viewing themselves as beyond salvation, these women purposely chose to be connected with the Evil One. They made pacts with the devil, who, by their own accounts, acted as a kinder, more loyal, and more interested companion than their true-life husbands. Thus, María Rosa, an Afro-Indian (or *loba*) in a Zacatecan hacienda, claimed in 1747 that she had a 20-year pact with the devil, which she had entered into after her husband had run off with another woman.<sup>33</sup> The devil appeared to her "in the figure of a dog that hung around her skirts and cajoled her and talked to her; it would affectionately scratch her if she didn't pay attention to him." Or, Juana de los Santos, a young creole (of Spanish descent) woman from Nayarit, claimed in 1736 that she had made a pact with the devil seven years before to be able to follow the goings-on of her mulatto husband in his affairs and to take vengeance on his mistresses.<sup>34</sup> For her, the devil was a handsome young mulatto, a kind and loving alter-ego of her husband, who would visit her every day and ask how she was doing and who, indeed, helped her catch her husband with a mistress. Both these women made their pacts with the devil on the advice of other women, who initiated them into the counterreligious world of evil—in María Rosa's case, by being led into a room where a little dog, whose posterior she kissed, promised "to help her in any way he could," and in Juana de los Santos' case, by being given a picture of the devil by another white woman who had, like herself, had a bad marriage with a mulatto.

### Interethnic Networks of Cures and Suspicious

One common feature of all of these cases involving women's use of sexual witchcraft and devil pacts is the existence of a network of women exchanging remedies and advice about marital and sexual relationships. This network was not only an interethnic one, but also an interclass one, and it included women of both the upper and lower social strata of colonial Mexico. Most typically, well-off white women, who were addressed as "doña" and lived comfortably with servants and coaches, had close contacts, even friendships, with Indian women, often cast in the role of magical specialists in the colony. The latter provided them with a cornucopia of indigenous powders and roots, as well as hummingbirds for use in love magic. In some cases, such elite white women would get Indian women to carry out sorcery for them.

Thus, in Guanajuato in 1725, doña Francisca de Parada, who lived in the house of an uncle who was a priest, asked Mathiana, an Indian woman, for help in "playing a joke" on a man who had betrayed her in a promise of marriage.<sup>35</sup> Mathiana was a healer who frequented the Parada household, both to provide cures and "to get something to eat of what they cooked." Out of the love she had for Francisca de Parada, Mathiana claimed that she had called upon the devil, with whose aid she would fly to the side of Francisca's ex-suitor; then she would carry him off to a deserted spot where she and another Indian woman would torture him and make him dance and kiss the devil-goat's posterior. This interesting relationship between Francisca de Parada and Mathiana, rooted in a mundane domestic reality in which an Indian woman exchanged her magical medical wares for her daily sustenance, points also to the exchange of mystical notions, so widespread in the colony, an exchange that forged a complex and hybrid religious culture. Indian women, as in this example, not only provided the paraphernalia for cures, but in the course of exchanging remedies with women of other caste and class groups acquired European ideas about the witches' sabbat and the powers of the devil. The exchanges moved in more than one direction, with creoles assimilating Indian remedies for carrying out love magic and sexual witchcraft.

Officially, the Mexican Inquisition was forbidden to prosecute Indians after its establishment in 1571, when it was decided that In-

dians, as neophytes, were too new to the faith to be responsible for inquisitions of their consciences.<sup>36</sup> Only Spanish creoles, mestizos, African slaves, and their mixed offspring were to be subject to the strictures of the Inquisition. Yet, Indians who were Hispanicized, or at least integrated into the larger community, often figured in the background of many cases and occasionally even provided testimony. When such Indians did appear, strong magical powers were attributed to them, in the general way in which those at the margins elsewhere in Spanish America were thought to hold dangerous powers.<sup>37</sup> Likewise, magical powers were attributed to mulatto healers in Mexico, and in southern Spain magical powers were ascribed to morisco healers.<sup>38</sup> Thus, women from the marginal groups in colonial society—Indians, mulattas, mestizas—who were involved in cases of sexual witchcraft had, from the point of view of men, a kind of double power: that inherent to their sex and that inherent to their caste, as the following example will show.

In 1740, Francisco Bibanco, a resident of an hacienda near Mexico City, wrote the Inquisition a letter in which he accused María Antonia de Caiseros, a mestiza, of having caused him to go blind suddenly because he had failed to marry her as he had promised.<sup>39</sup> Remarking "how widespread sorcery and its teachers are," especially among Indians, "who fear one another for their cunning," he explained that he had broken off with María Antonia because he had heard of her "evil deeds." Although he had provided her with a dowry, she had still taunted him, saying, "You can still see, blind one? Soon you won't." Then one day she spread flowers on the path ahead of him and immediately afterwards he went blind. Doctors could not cure him and the priest's exorcism had no effect, a clear sign that he was bewitched. He pleaded with the inquisitors to take his case seriously, because otherwise "more such evil works will be committed against our holy Catholic faith, for they have many vengeancees and would bewitch whomever they want to, making a display of it, with little fear of God."

As in the opening example involving José de Ugalde, we find a man sufficiently convinced of a woman's witchcraft powers to accuse her before the Inquisition. Like José de Ugalde, who wanted to beat this uncanny power out of his wife, Francisco Bibanco, too, considered this more direct means of undoing the spell María Antonia had placed on him. When a male friend suggested to him that he sim-

ply "give that evil woman a good round of lashes," he replied that he had not done so for fear that she would go to the priest and convince him that he had made her pregnant.

Francisco Bibanco's suspicion of María Antonia, a mestiza, had to do with his perception of her as "Indian"; she was, it seems, bicultural, speaking to him in Spanish and to her mother and neighbors in Nahuatl. Bibanco viewed her as linked to an Indian world of vengeance and witchcraft that threatened, in his own words, "our holy Catholic faith." Her power, for Francisco Bibanco, seemed to reside equally in her gender and in her cultural foreignness.

Accusations by creole Spanish men against women of Indian and mixed castes come up frequently in the Mexican Inquisition records, suggesting that the discourse of women's witchcraft power became enmeshed in the colonial ideology of caste hierarchy.<sup>40</sup> Similarly, in southern Spain, the apparent predominance of moriscos and gypsies in the commerce of magic points to a general pattern linking magic and power to peripheral groups. Paradoxically, the powerless and the conquered, whether Indians or Moors, were viewed as having dangerous occult powers. Thus, to the intersection of gender, power, and religion we must also add caste, so that inevitably we must go beyond an analysis of women to get at the sources of women's power.

### The Inscription of Sexual Witchcraft into Colonial Power

The effectiveness of sexual witchcraft, in part, grew out of a distinction between natural and unnatural illness that had roots both in pre-Hispanic and contemporaneous Castilian beliefs. This distinction was widely accepted by the general populace, as well as by priests, inquisitors, and the medical doctors of the period. Those illnesses that neither exorcism nor medicine could cure were the illnesses of evil (*maleficio*) and of witchcraft (*hechicería*). In such cases, only the person who had worked the harm could undo it. We have considered a few examples involving men who perceived that they had been made to suffer such unnatural illnesses at the hands of a woman, whether wife, rejected wife-to-be, or mistress. I have suggested that the efficacy of women's magical powers resided in the "otherness" of their sex and their race. Now, in my last example, I would like to bring together the diverse strands of gender, power, religion, race, and illness, to place sexual witchcraft in the widest pos-

sible social context—that of colonial relations of power and subordination.

In 1733 Fray Diego Núñez, prior of the monastery of Our Lady of the Assumption in Amecameca, not far from Mexico City, wrote a long letter of accusation to the Inquisition detailing how Manuela de Bocanegra, his mulatta slave, had bewitched him.<sup>41</sup> Manuela, he claimed, had without a doubt ensorcelled him with the help of the devil, and he had medical proof of various sorts to prove it. With this assertion he proceeded to tell the inquisitors in minute detail about the illnesses his slave had placed on him through her witchcraft.

At first his arms hurt so much that he could barely move them and no medicine could cure him, until by chance he was healed by the incense of the Agnus Dei candle. This was followed by an inability to urinate for eleven days, from which he finally recovered after another slave, a brother of Manuela, gave him a print of Saint Salvador Horta. Then he slept for six hours and upon waking expelled about "twenty or more normal measures." The worst of the illness was yet to come: the horrid aches in "the most humid and painful parts of the body" that had besieged him for eight months and made him expel more than two hundred stones in a single fortnight. Both urination and defecation had become horrendously painful, and the things his body expelled were strangely unnatural. His was not a natural illness affecting the humors of the body, Fray Diego felt certain, because his pain was continuous and vehement, and was especially awful on Sundays. What is more, with proper scientific style he had carried out experiments on the bizarre things that his body expelled and had deduced that his slave, Manuela, was at the root of them.

The stones, he explained, were all different: some were spongy, others porous, and while most were smooth and solid, they varied in color, such that they looked as if they had come not from his own body but from an anthole. And he asked: Is it natural to engender "from one and the other end: eyebrows, eyelashes, and every type of hair from my own body?" Extracted from his urine and excrement "and extremely carefully cleaned and examined they appear to be blond, thin, wavy, and a few of them greying, each of them mine according to their size, style, and arrangement as compared with those that at present are still attached to my body." Nor can the body produce, he went on, pieces of wool, a paintbrush such as those used in the art of painting, and the hair of cats, dogs, deer, and pigs com-

monly used to make the brushes employed for painting. Also unnatural was the shifting appearance of his excrement: at times it looked like tiny emeralds; at other times like the exact shape and style of foods he had once consumed voraciously and now hated; at times like olives from Seville; and still at other times like goat excrement that when heated would smoke and burst, giving all those present a nasty headache. These careful examinations and experiments with the products of his own body confirmed the fact that according to "medical knowledge this was diabolic maleficio." The very things expelled by his body, as Fray Diego put it, were "signs" that when read properly pointed to the person responsible for his illness: namely, his mulatta slave.

The signs inevitably pointed back, as well, to his slave's sexuality. Fray Diego was certain that the reason Manuela de Bocanegra had ensorcelled him was that he had caught her once in the sexual act, "in flagranti delicto," with a young painter who lived in the room next to hers in the monastery. At the time he scolded both of them severely, and this scolding provoked in his slave the desire for vengeance. What better way to take revenge on him than by diabolically introducing into his body the tools of her lover's craft! Thus, she had made him consume her lover's paintbrushes and the hair of which brushes were made. Since it was only from her hands that he received food and drink and had his clothes tended to, she had the advantage of being in control of the whole of his domestic life. With great cunning she had used this intimacy to gather his own hair and other of his bodily substances in order to reintroduce them into his body and thereby make him "engender" them again in wretched pain. In a later addition to his testimony Fray Diego noted that Manuela de Bocanegra had once induced her brother, also his slave, to sprinkle love powders (*polvos de buen querer*) in his chocolate, so that he would "come to love said mulatto and mulatta."

This accusation may appear to be nothing more than the ravings of a gravely ill and solipsistic priest. But placed within the context of our earlier discussion of sexual witchcraft, it becomes both comprehensible and illuminating. Indeed, Fray Diego was not the first to see an implicit parallel between the attempts of women to attract, tame, and harm men through sexual witchcraft and the magical or, in his terms, diabolical efforts of slaves to control their masters. As early as 1614 a slave owner, Leonor de Hinojosa, reported to the Inquisition that her black slave, Agustina, had in her possession a root named

*pumoyate*, which was used both to attract and repel members of the opposite sex.<sup>42</sup> The slaveholder had made this discovery while beating her slave, who admitted that she had acquired the root, interestingly, from a Spanish healer, who told her to serve it to her master in cocoa in order to "tame" her (again, we see that the networks of magical exchange flowed in various directions). The word *amansar*, meaning to tame or domesticate, was used here as in the cases of sexual witchcraft, suggesting an explicit metaphorical connection between both the oppressive condition of being a woman and a slave and the desire to soften and "culture" the natural brutality of their husbands and masters, in what was a key reversal of the ethos linking "woman," "nature," and "slave" as wild and in need of conquest.

The relation between Fray Diego and his slave Manuela was a domestic relation, almost like that of husband and wife. She prepared his food and his clothes, and all would have been well except that her master caught her in the act of "adultery." Fray Diego's accusation against Manuela de Bocanegra is reminiscent of those accusations we encountered earlier involving men who felt they had been bewitched by women with whom they had had an intimate relationship. As in those cases, the unnatural illness Fray Diego suffered was clearly seen by him as resulting from witchcraft, and particularly from witchcraft transmitted through the medium of food. His excessively elaborated discourse about his illness, a thick Rabelaisian description of his ingestion and digestion, takes us back to our earlier discussion of how women made men "eat" their witchcraft. He highlighted not only the process of eating but also that of expelling the ensorcelled objects from the body, which became a kind of "evidence" in Fray Diego's case against his slave.

For Fray Diego, Manuela de Bocanegra's powers seemed to reside not just in her sex and in her caste but also in her position as a slave. Their relationship was made up of a series of dyads of domination: man and woman, priest and lay person, white and mulatta, and master and slave. It was as a woman, a mulatta, and especially as a slave, the most marginal and oppressed position in colonial society, that Manuela threatened Fray Diego. Hers was a supreme example of the power of the powerless, and she threatened him—as did the women who used sexual witchcraft menaced their victims—by inverting the social order and putting the dominated on top. Significantly, Fray Diego even claimed in his testimony that his slave had radically feminized his body, for in the course of his illness a wound had sud-

denly appeared along the length of his bottom, in the form of piles that had "transmuted the lower posterior to look like that of the female sex." His slave's witchcraft had declassed him, turning him into a kind of slave; it had re-gendered him as a woman.

Clearly for Fray Diego to have been able to fashion this accusation against his slave he had to have been familiar with the discourse of sexual witchcraft, as he most certainly was, for he explicitly said that Manuela de Bocanegra had even tried to put love powders in his cocoa. His participation in the popular beliefs of his time went further than the witchcraft accusation against his slave, however. Believing himself to be bewitched, he had taken the advice of a female neighbor, doña Josefa de Acosta, and sought out the services of a *curandera*, or healer (who was also a midwife), a mulatta by the name of Gertrudis.<sup>43</sup>

Gertrudis gave him an herb to drink in water and had him immerse himself in a *temascal*, or hot bath. This produced a wound in his backside that later healed with the application of a pink oil. Later she gave him two different mixtures to drink that increased his pains, and when he complained to her she told him that he would have to be patient about seeking a cure because what he had was hechizo, ensorcellment. Gertrudis then told him that Manuela was the one who had him that way, that she had in her possession a doll of him, and that she had known that he was the one who had ordered that she be beaten and sent to work in a sweatshop (*obraje*), where she had vowed to take revenge on him. Indeed, Fray Diego had sent Manuela away after becoming ill and deducing that she was at the root of his illness. The beating he ordered she be given was as routine a part of master/slave relations as it was of husband/wife relations; interestingly, Fray Diego recovered somewhat when his slave was away in the sweatshop—in her proper, subjugated position in the social structure, in other words—and he became seriously ill again when she was released. So desperate was he, in fact, that he begged Gertrudis to get the doll from Manuela, to whom he promised her liberty in exchange.

But his dealings with Gertrudis came suddenly to a halt when he discovered that she was not simply a healer and a midwife but also a sorceress and a dealer in sexual witchcraft. He made this discovery, interestingly enough, when a young Spanish woman, María Rodríguez, went to him for confession and disclosed that Gertrudis had offered her green, yellow, and white powders as well as a green porce-

lain "little head with little horns" so that she would have "lots of money and men would run after her." During the few days she carried around these powders and the little head, María Rodríguez said that men who had previously treated her "honestly" wanted suddenly "by force to engage in dishonest acts" and offered her lots of money; so she threw it all away and things went back to normal immediately. Hearing this, Fray Diego realized that Gertrudis was more than just a healer and that rather than curing him she was harming him further, possibly in agreement with his slave Manuela. He had found a hole in one of his shirts, as if someone had taken scissors and cut into the cloth, and ever since Gertrudis had given him the last mixture to drink he had been expelling rags and rotten hairs through his urine. Thus, Fray Diego ended up suspecting that this mulatta healer, together with his mulatta slave, were at the root of his strangely unnatural illness.

The records provide no clue as to what became of Fray Diego, or how the Inquisition reacted to his case. While Fray Diego's case is somewhat extraordinary because of the degree of his involvement in witchcraft, it does show that members of the religious elite shared in this popular discourse and could themselves participate actively in using it when illness and other misfortunes required explanation. Like the men who accused the women they had been in relationships with, Fray Diego ended up accusing his mulatta slave of having brought about his strange illness because he could find no other interpretation for his loss of control over his own body. In other words, like the French peasants who claim not to believe in witchcraft today until a series of misfortunes comes along to make them lose all sense of control, he was "caught."<sup>44</sup> Once "caught," only his slave's witchcraft could account for his utter powerlessness, in the same way that José de Ugalde could accuse his wife of having turned him into a fool. And again, only the church, through the Holy Office, seemed to offer the proper solace, cure, and interlocutor in these cases in which women of the marginal social classes dangerously overturned the social/sexual order.

### Conclusions: The Paradox of Women's Witchcraft Powers

It is well known that women tend to exercise power in the private rather than the public domain, and in this essay we have seen how female power operated on the most private level of all, that of sexual

relationships. While we tend to think of power as having to do with the control of material resources or the activities and movements of large groups of people, women's power is usually of a different, more muted, less obviously recognizable sort. As this material on women's witchcraft powers shows, control within the symbolic domain is also a form of power. While placing herbs and powders in the food they served to their husbands, or burying eggs to carry out a ligature, may seem to be trivial means of exercising power, in fact the real stakes were political, given that women's ultimate aim was to control and change the behavior of the men who dominated them. Even beyond anything women actually attempted to carry out, the cultural assignment of mystic powers to women served as a check on the excesses of male dominance.<sup>45</sup> Yet what was given with one hand was taken away with the other: the church's interpretation of witchcraft as superstition at once trivialized women's power and turned it into a shameful, if minor, sin.

These cases involving sexual witchcraft, which formed part of a larger corpus of "superstitions" regarded as trivial by the late colonial Inquisition because they involved the marginal social classes, were part of the everyday stuff of Inquisition proceedings.<sup>46</sup> The inquisitors tended to dismiss them lightly, concentrating instead, until the midseventeenth century, on the more serious religious crimes of heresy and blasphemy and, in the late colonial period, on anti-royalist clerics and other intellectual dissenters of the colonial regime. Historians, too, have tended to dismiss these cases, the inquisitorial minutiae, as not being spectacular enough to warrant investigation.

In comparing aspects of women's supernatural powers first between northern Europe and Spain, then between northern Spain and Castile, and finally between Castile and central Mexico, I have sought to shed some light on the various ways in which witchcraft was treated by the religious elite and how this affected the exercise of female power. In particular, I tried to give a sense of how an urban Spanish understanding of female power, focusing on love magic and ligature, got transferred to the New World and there became linked to the caste system and to, apparently, very violent domestic relations between men and women of different racial backgrounds.

In conclusion I want to point out the paradox of women's supernatural power, a paradox that exists in any power exercised by women. While women's witchcraft powers were thought effective on

the local level, especially by men who feared they had lost the upper hand in sexual relationships, it is clear that women exercised these powers within a male-dominated system, and thus their resistance was at best limited and piecemeal, as women's own devaluation of their power showed. Even allowing for this paradox, the discourse of women's magical power made it possible for them to put into question and challenge, if unsuccessfully, the structures of inequality—the very structures that made it necessary for them to use symbolic weapons to combat real domination and oppression.

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### Notes

1. Archivo General de la Nación, Mexico City, Ramo Inquisición (hereafter cited as AGN, Inquisición), 894:53–54v.

2. Here I will be elaborating on ideas concerning the potential subversion of order in gender relations that appear in Natalie Z. Davis, "Women on Top," in her *Society and Culture in Early Modern France* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1975), pp. 124–51; Steven Ozment, *When Fathers Ruled: Family Life in Reformation Europe* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1983), pp. 52–53, 71, 76–77.

3. On food magic, see Bernadino de Sahagún, *Historia general de las cosas de Nueva España*, 4 vols., ed. Angel M. Garibay K. (Mexico City: Editorial Porrúa, 1981), 2:150–51. A survey of indigenous “superstitions,” incantations, and witchcraft practices in seventeenth-century New Spain is available in Hernando Ruiz de Alarcón, *Treatise on the Heathen Superstitions That Today Live among the Indians Native to this New Spain, 1629*, trans. and ed. J. Richard Andrews and Ross Hassig (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1984); Noemí Quezada, *Amor y magia amorosa entre los aztecas* (Mexico City: Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, 1975); Sebastián Cirac Estopañán, *Los procesos de hechicherías en la Inquisición de Castilla la Nueva (Tribunales de Toledo y Cuenca)* (Madrid: csic, 1942), pp. 81–83. For a study of a witchcraft process among the Chichimecs, see, Ruth Behar, “The Visions of a Guachichil Witch in 1599: A Window on the Subjugation of Mexico’s Hunter-Gatherers,” *Ethnohistory* 34:2 (Spring 1987), 115–38.

4. On metaphor theory, see James W. Fernández, *Persuasions and Performances: The Play of Tropes in Culture* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1986), pp. 28–70.

5. On the ways in which the Edicts of Faith inspired confessions, see Patricia Aufderheide, “True Confessions: The Inquisition and Social Attitudes in Brazil at the Turn of the XVII Century,” *Luso-Brazilian Review* 10 (1973): 208–40.

6. On the role of the church in setting rules for domestic and sexual behavior, see Lavrin’s essay in this volume.

7. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo, “Woman, Culture, and Society: A Theoretical Overview,” in *Woman, Culture, and Society*, ed. Michelle Zimbalist Rosaldo and Louise Lamphere (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1974), pp. 17–42; Sherry B. Ortner, “Is Female to Male as Nature Is to Culture?” in *Woman, Culture, and Society*, ed. Rosaldo and Lamphere, pp. 67–87; Sherry B. Ortner and Harriet Whitehead, “Introduction: Accounting for Sexual Meanings,” in *Sexual Meanings: The Cultural Construction of Gender and Sexuality*, ed. Sherry B. Ortner and Harriet Whitehead (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1981), pp. 1–27; Jill Dubisch, “Introduction,” in *Gender and Power in Rural Greece*, ed. Jill Dubisch (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1986), pp. 3–41.

8. On pollution beliefs and the dangerous powers of women’s sexuality, see Mary Douglas, *Purity and Danger: An Analysis of the Concepts of Pollution and Taboo* (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1966). On pollution beliefs in New Guinea, see Shirley Lindenbaum, “A Wife is the Hand of Man,” in *Man and Woman in the New Guinea Highlands*, ed. Paula Brown and

Georgeda Buchbinder (Washington, D.C.: American Anthropological Association, 1976), pp. 54–62; Raymond C. Kelly, “Witchcraft and Sexual Relations,” in *Man and Woman*, ed. Brown and Buchbinder, pp. 36–53; Elizabeth Faithorn, “The Concept of Pollution among the Kafe of the Papua New Guinea Highlands,” in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna R. Reiter (New York: Monthly Review Press, 1975), pp. 127–40.

9. On contemporary cases of food magic involving the use of menstrual blood and pubic hair (likewise part of a woman’s bodily essences), see Lois Paul, “The Mastery of Work and the Mystery of Sex in a Guatemalan Village,” in *Woman, Culture, and Society*, ed. Rosaldo and Lamphere, pp. 281–99. On page 198, she notes that “women know that menstrual blood is one of their own ultimate weapons against intractable husbands,” citing the following informant remark: “Many men have eaten their beans with the blood of their wives and didn’t know it.” See also Anna Rubbo, “The Spread of Capitalism in Rural Colombia: Effects on Poor Women,” in *Toward an Anthropology of Women*, ed. Rayna R. Reiter, pp. 333–57.

10. On the European witch-hunt, see E. William Monter, *Witchcraft in France and Switzerland: The Borderlands during the Reformation* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1976); H. C. Erik Midelfort, *Witch-Hunting in Southwestern Germany, 1562–1684: The Social and Intellectual Foundations* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1972); Keith Thomas, *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (New York: Charles Scribner’s Sons, 1971); Joseph Klaits, *Servants of Satan: The Age of the Witch-Hunts* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985).

11. Christina Lerner, *Enemies of God: The Witch-Hunt in Scotland* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1981).

12. See Henry Kamen, *Inquisition and Society in Spain in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985).

13. On the Zagarramurdi witch panic, see Gustav Hennigsen, *The Witches’ Advocate: Basque Witchcraft and the Spanish Inquisition (1609–1614)* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1980). For a good discussion of the small-scale witch panics in northern Spain, see Carmelo Lisón Tolosana, *Brujería, estructura social y simbolismo en Galicia* (Madrid: Akal Editor, 1979), pp. 9–51.

14. Kamen, *Inquisition*, pp. 212–13.

15. Henry Kamen, “Notas sobre brujería y sexualidad y la Inquisición,” in *Inquisición española Mentalidad: inquisitorial*, ed. Angel Alcalá (Barcelona: Editorial Ariel, 1984), pp. 226–36; E. William Monter, *Ritual, Myth and Magic in Early Modern Europe* (Athens: Ohio University Press, 1983), p. 102.

16. On the contrast between northern Spanish witchcraft and southern Spanish urban witchcraft, see Julio Caro Baroja, *Las brujas y su mundo* (Madrid: Alianza Editorial, 1966). For urban love magic in Italy, see Mary O'Neil, "Magical Healing, Love Magic and the Inquisition in Late Sixteenth-Century Modena," in *Inquisition and Society in Early Modern Europe*, ed. Stephen Haliczer (London: Croom Helm, 1987), pp. 88–114.
17. On the type of women involved in Spanish cases of love magic, see Cirac Estopañán, *Los procesos*, p. 215.
18. Information on Leonor de Barzana, Juana Hernández, and Catalina Gómez are found in Cirac Estopañán, *Los procesos*, pp. 210–11.
19. Cirac Estopañán, *Los procesos*, p. 81.
20. Monter, *Ritual, Myth and Magic*, p. 72.
21. On confession and sexuality, see Gruzinski's essay in this volume; Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1: *Introduction* (New York: Vintage Books, 1980).
22. On the devaluation of women's powers by the Spanish Inquisition, see Claire Guilhem, "La Inquisición y la devaluación del verbo femenino," in *Inquisición española: Poder político y control social*, ed. Bartolomé Bennassar (Barcelona: Editorial Crítica, 1981), pp. 171–207. On the Mexican Inquisition, see Richard D. Greenleaf, *The Mexican Inquisition of the Sixteenth Century* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 1969), and "The Inquisition in Eighteenth-Century New Mexico," *New Mexico Historical Review* 60, no. 1 (Spring 1985): 29–60; Gonzalo Aguirre Beltrán, *Medicina y magia: El proceso de aculturación en la estructura colonial* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional Indigenista, 1980); Solange Behocaray Alberro, *La actividad del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición en Nueva España, 1571–1700* (Mexico City: Instituto Nacional de Antropología e Historia, 1981).
23. The account of Magdalena de la Mata is taken from AGN Inquisición, 878:314–16.
24. Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger, *The Malleus Maleficarum of Heinrich Kramer and James Sprenger*, trans. Montague Summers (New York: Dover, 1971 [1486]), p. 121.
25. Cirac Estopañán, *Los procesos*, p. 81.
26. Asunción Lavrin, "Women and Religion in Spanish America," in *Women and Religion in America*, vol. 2: *The Colonial and Revolutionary Periods*, ed. Rosemary Radford Ruether and Rosemary Skinner Keller (San Francisco: Harper & Row, 1983), p. 45.
27. William B. Taylor, *Drinking, Homicide and Rebellion in Colonial Mexican Villages* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1979), p. 95; Silvia M.

- Arrom, *The Women of Mexico City, 1790–1857* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1985), p. 232.
28. William A. Christian, Jr., "Provoked Religious Weeping in Early Modern Spain," in *Religious Organization and Religious Experience*, ed. J. Davis (London: Academic Press, 1982), p. 107.
29. AGN, Inquisición, 878:389. In this case the role of the mulatto uncle, who was clearly a healer, is significant. Like Indian men and women, mulatto men and women frequently appear in the late-colonial Inquisition cases as providers of cures and remedies for healing, magic, and sexual witchcraft.
30. AGN, Inquisición, 998, exp. 5.
31. The account of Francisca de los Angeles is taken from AGN, Inquisición, 685, exp. 10.
32. For the concept of marriage and mala vida see Boyer's essay in this volume.
33. AGN, Inquisición, 911:334–76.
34. AGN, Inquisición, 812, exp. 19. Both this and the previous case involving women's devil pacts are treated in more detail in Ruth Behar, "Sex and Sin, Witchcraft and the Devil in Late Colonial Mexico," *American Ethnologist* 14 (1987): 35–55.
35. AGN, Inquisición, 1029, exp. 9.
36. Richard D. Greenleaf, "The Inquisition and the Indians of New Spain: A Study in Jurisdictional Confusion," *The Americas* 22 (October 1965): 138–66.
37. On the shamanic power of those at the margins, see Michael Taussig, "Folk Healing and the Structure of Conquest in Southwest Colombia," *Journal of Latin American Lore* 6 (1980): 217–78; Frank Salomon, "Shamanism and Politics in Late Colonial Ecuador," *American Ethnologist* 10 (1983), pp. 413–28.
38. Richard L. Kagan, "Eleno-Elena: Annals of Androgyny in Sixteenth-Century Spain," manuscript, p. 23, notes that many popular healers were moriscos.
39. The account of Francisco Bibanco is taken from AGN, Inquisición, 929, exp. 10.
40. Examples of such denunciations abound in the records of the Mexican Inquisition. See, for instance, the case of José de Ugalde, above, and the denunciation by Lorenzo Martínez, a white farrier, against his former mistress, a mestiza, in 1709 (AGN, Inq., vol. 765, exp. 9). See also, AGN, Inquisición, 953, exp. 25 (1748). Here, a white baker from Querétaro accused his mulatta mistress of having served him ensorcelled milk that had left a ball of lead in his

stomach; the doctors who treated him could offer no cure, and one of them told him that "it didn't appear to be a natural illness but rather something they had been placed on him." Even before the mulatta ensorcelled him, however, one particular incident had made him suspicious. She had once entered the room when he had been sleeping. Having lifted her on top of him, he told her to be quiet; she had said to him, "You be quiet, because with that pig jaw of yours I could strangle you." These words, he said, had made him suspect what he later found out: that she was, indeed, a witch, because only a witch would have dared utter words as harsh as those to a man. A proper Christian woman—a proper Christian white woman?—it appears, would not have been so disobedient, so bold, or so utterly disrespectful of the order of social/sexual relations.

41. The account of Fr. Diego Muñoz is taken from AGN, Inquisición, 765, exp. 15.

42. As early as 1614 a slave owner, Leonor de Hinojosa, reported to the Inquisition that her black slave, Agustina, had in her possession a root named *puyomate*, which was used in colonial times both to attract and repel members of the opposite sex. She made this discovery while beating her slave, who admitted that she had acquired the root from a Spanish healer, who told her to serve it to her master in cocoa in order to "tame" her. This case is cited in Solange Alberro, "Inquisición y proceso de cambio social: Delitos de hechicería en Celaya, 1614," *Revista de dialectología y tradiciones populares* 30 (1974): 346–47. For the use of *puyomate* in colonial Mexico, see Aguirre Beltrán, *Medicina y Magia*, p. 17; Noemi Quezada, *Amor y magia amorosa entre los aztecas*, p. 96.

43. AGN, Inquisición, 765, exp. 19.

44. On the notion of how people get "caught" in witchcraft beliefs, see Jeanne Favret-Saada, *Deadly Words: Witchcraft in the Bocage* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980).

45. For an elaboration of this idea in a contemporary account of sexual witchcraft, see Lois Paul, "Mastery of Work," pp. 281–99.

46. On the development of class ideas among the late colonial inquisitors, see Behar, "Sex and Sin," pp. 48–51.

## Part II: Marriage