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PREGNANCY, MAGIC, AND MEDICINE: THE MANY ROLES OF MIDWIVES IN EIGHTEENTH CENTURY MEXICO

A THESIS APPROVED FOR THE
DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

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ABSTRACT

Despite the vast research by historians of 18th-century Mexico on women's and gender history, New World medical cultures, and witchcraft, little is known about the lives and practices of late colonial *parteras* (midwives). From this literature, *parteras* often marginally appear as superstitious and dangerous, or as bystanders in larger historical processes. Their practices are often dismissed as popular folk medicine. *Parteras* important relationships to community and the broader colonial world is often overlooked, contributing to a lack of analysis into their arts and identity. This study improves our understanding of midwives in 18th-century Mexico through qualitative archival research and analysis of five Mexican Inquisition cases where *parteras* appear on trial, in the cities of Zacatecas, Veracruz, Tecomatlan, Merida, and Mexico City. An examination of these cases yields crucial insight into *parteras* belief systems and healing traditions while complicating three assumptions about *parteras* power and experiences in late colonial Mexican society: 1) that they were ignorant; 2) that their main practice was assistance in childbirth; and 3) that they were treated leniently by the Inquisition. These stories of midwives, while revealing their importance, add nuance to our knowledge of how women participated in the public sphere of 18th century colonial Mexico, as *parteras* occupied a liminal position in society. Both respected and feared, representing a variety of social classes, races, and ethnicities, *parteras* performed multiple roles in their community, while simultaneously circulating and protecting women's sacred knowledge. This study is part of a growing body of research on reproductive history in Latin America. By entreating Inquisition cases of midwives with critical race analysis and decolonial theory this project reveals alternative dynamics of power and knowledge and aids in the understanding of the development of modernity.

INTRODUCTION

In late August of 1787, in the developing colony of Hallowell, Maine, a white, literate, married midwife named Martha Ballard, harvested herbal remedies from her own home garden in the company of daughters and servants. Martha was one of the best midwives in her town and kept a diary, later much celebrated, recording her daily life and practices. Over the course of her long career she delivered 814 babies in all.[1] Ballard incorporated plant medicine into her midwifery repertoire, and used it successfully throughout her many years of practice. Her community, neighbors, and other medical professionals trusted her. As a white settler in New England, Martha triumphed in her assistance to the economic and physical growth of the colony, and later the nascent republic. As she navigated across dangerous rivers, through driving snow, and over wild landscapes, she thanked God: "Wonder full [sic] is the Goodness of providence."[2]

In 1798, and three thousand miles away, in the mining city of Zacatecas, Mexico, a *mestiza* midwife named Lorenza (she had no known surname) was also utilizing her knowledge of herbal medicine to assist pregnant women. Much like Martha Ballard, Lorenza was known as the best *partera* in town. When a pregnant woman newly arrived in Zacatecas asked her neighbors who she should hire as a midwife, Lorenza's name was the first and only one to come up.[3] Lorenza gave the woman herbs to ease the pains of childbirth, just as Martha Ballard relied on her homemade tinctures and salves. Both women offered these remedies as healing and comfort in the crucial

[1] Laurel Thatcher Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale: The Life of Martha Ballard, Based on Her Diary 1785-1812* (New York: Random House), 33.
[2] Ibid, 7.
[3] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1313, exp. 12, fs. 1-4.

time of childbearing. Additionally, the two midwives had relationships with medical professionals. The *boticarios* (pharmacists) and surgeons of Zacatecas knew Lorenza and acknowledged her remedies. She sometimes purchased prescriptions from the *boticarios* and worked with surgeons in emergency births where extraction of a lost fetus was necessary.

Similarly, Martha Ballard called on surgeons and doctors to assist her in dangerous births. At other times, doctors reached out to her. Both women also had moments of contention with medical professionals. In the development of obstetrical science, traditional midwives and male doctors found many points of disagreement in approach and treatment. Martha Ballard disliked the profuse employment of blood-letting on infants and pregnant women by male doctors and wrote about her distaste for the doctors who overused this treatment. *Boticarios* took issue as to the types of herbs Lorenza administered, especially if they were unknown to the colonial pharmacists.[4]

The history of midwifery in North America is well documented and includes works on multiple social groups of midwives, from working-class women, pioneer settlers such as Martha Ballard, and enslaved African midwives. In many ways, this thesis looks to Laurel Thatcher Ulrich's work, *A Midwife's Tale*, as a framework and point of comparison among midwives in the 18th century. Ulrich's study examines the diary of an 18th-century midwife, Martha Ballard. Ulrich's methodology and analysis surrounding the diary illuminate fascinating histories of women's work and social medicine through relating what is often dismissed as "trivial domestic concerns"[5] to

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[4] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1313, exp. 12, fs. 1-4.
[5] Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*, 49.

broader questions in social history. This approach to uncovering the roots of social change, political and economic transformation, and fluctuating ideas surrounding sexuality and gender roles has applications across the world.[6] Sandra Harding argues for a similar approach in her work *Sciences from Below,* where she shows that one must start with a serious analysis of the household and women in order to understand modernity.[7] Like Harding and Ulrich, this thesis focuses on the intimate lives of midwives and pregnant women to illuminate larger patterns in society. Ulrich restores a lost subculture of women's local economy and social medicine through careful research and analysis of the Ballard diaries. Similarly, Mexican Inquisition cases reveal lost subcultures of pregnancy, *parteras,* late colonial midwifery, and the complicated social structures of Bourbon Mexico.

Mexican midwives were herbalists, *curanderas,* diviners, experts in love magic, and critical actors in the baptism and naming of babies. Yet these practices, described in Inquisitorial trial records, portray a troublesome group of women, who were imprisoned, tortured, fined, put into confinement, sentenced to forced labor, and banished from their towns and churches. The portrait of Mexican midwives that emerges from these records is sharply different from the one that Ulrich paints of Martha Ballard. Like Ballard, the midwives of 18th-century New Spain were multidimensional and performed many social roles. But to a greater degree than Ballard ever did, these women unsettled traditional authority figures. They were often scrutinized by the Inquisition, and this scrutiny, in turn, reveals much about the

[6] Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*, 50.
[7] Sandra Harding, *Sciences From Below: Feminisms, Postcolonialities, and Modernities* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2008), 225-226.

Inquisitors and the world they shared with their victims. The central oddity of these cases is that the Inquisition and the Enlightenment shared surprising commonalities, their propensity for classification of race and healing practices. They also erode the case made many recent scholars that the Inquisition was "lenient" with women and midwives under investigation for witchcraft. Lorenza was imprisoned during her trial. This kind of religious and legal ordeal placed great hardships on her and other similar women who were already marginalized, poor, and seen as suspicious by their communities.

A further contrast with Ballard lies in the distrust many people expressed about healing capabilities and uses of Lorenza's native pharmacopeia. Lorenza was brought under investigation by clients, neighbors, and the Holy Office of the Mexican Inquisition for her use of herbal medicine. Lorenza was an esteemed midwife, but her role as an herbalist working in the shadowy foliage of women's healing and native medicine, complicated the Church's work in the cultivation of New Spain's spiritual garden.[8] Martha Ballard employed English botanical medicine and stayed away from the native remedies. Nor did she work with any African or indigenous healers. She grew most of her own herbs in her home garden. So far as we know, Martha was never questioned, imprisoned, or punished for her use of herbal medicines. She was never seen as suspicious or dangerous. This is because she worked within the parameters of English botanical medicine.[9] Although Ulrich uncovers assorted American herbs named in Martha's diary, they were few and far between. Martha also did not connect her use of wild herbs to any pre-colonial healing traditions, nor did she betray any desire to

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[8] Jorge Cañizares-Esguerra, *Puritan Conquistadors: Iberianizing the Atlantic, 1550-1700* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006), see "Colonization as Spiritual Gardening," 178-205.
[9] Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale*, 49.

know about them. In contrast, Midwives in 18th-century Mexico, although employing herbal medicine as Martha Ballard did, also drew from a diaspora of healing plant knowledge. African, indigenous, and European information on how to heal the body and aid women in birth mingled in the minds of most all midwives in New Spain.

Despite the devastation wrought on native societies by the Spanish conquest, native knowledge systems were alive and well in late 18th-century Mexico. Native medical wisdom was ubiquitous, and deeply troubling to Inquisitors tasked with the extirpation of heresy. Mexico held a distinctive place in European consciousness. Some saw it as a garden of Eden, where the natives lived in prelapsarian innocence, awaiting their salvation in paradise. Others saw Mexico as a barren land, overrun with demons, dry and empty, thirsting for spiritual cultivation, and offering the possibility of a rich harvest of souls. In reality, this dangerous Eden and thirsty wasteland was home to centuries-old relationships between plants and people. Anything that grew from it would necessitate cleansing, filtration and approval by the colonizing authorities, whether it was Church, Crown, or Spanish settlers. Yet this desire for restrictions presented problems. There were few hospitals or medical professionals established in the vast territories of the Spanish Empire, and medicine was hard to regulate. *Curanderas*, healers, and midwives cultivated their knowledge of medicine, although at times in secret, some traditional practices benefitted and remained intact due to the lack of professionalized medicine. For example, *Cihuapatli*, “the woman’s medicine,” is named after Aztec mother goddess *Cihuacoatl*.[10] This was more than likely the

[10] Aguirre Beltrán, *Obra antropológica, VIII. Medicina y magia: el proceso de aculturación en la estructura colonial.* (Xalapa: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992), 121-122.

dangerous and forbidden herb that Lorenza was using and that got her into trouble with the Inquisition. Even as late as the 19th century, the plant was regarded with suspicion among medical doctors. Martha Ballard, by contrast, did not have to deal with any punishment for her plant knowledge. She worked within the parameters of her social class, race, and maintained her safe feminine status in pioneering Hallowell.

A second major difference between the lives and practices of New England midwives and Mexican ones lies in the realm of magic. This is where the multi-dimensionality of Mexican midwives is most easily perceived. Martha Ballard made extra money by spinning flax. But she did not perform anything that was perceived as superstition, magic, or witchcraft. Mexican midwives, in addition to supporting pregnant women, practiced various forms of magic in order to supplement their income and strengthen their relationships within their community. These were, at times, dangerous practices for midwives to engage in, for they often found themselves under persecution by the very communities they were trying to serve. Divining, love magic, fortune-telling, and the use of magical dolls, are some of the techniques that Mexican midwives incorporated into their healing repertoire. It is more than likely that some North American midwives dabbled in the supernatural. Yet the secondary literature on midwifery in the United States does not make this evident. Due to gender and religious ideologies, many women across the Atlantic world came under the suspicion of witchcraft, yet mixed race women, and non-Christian women were even more vulnerable to condemnation. Enslaved African Healers in the colonies and plantations of North America and Native American women, would have been the main social groups working with "supernatural" practices and would be treated with suspicion. Race

is important for understanding the practices of colonial midwives. The midwives of 18th-century Mexico came from multiple diasporas and the African, Indigenous, and European traditional beliefs and medicines followed. These chapters explore how race and cultural background shaped midwives orientation to magical practices outside the sanctioned domains of healing, while also demonstrating how systemic hierarchies of race were becoming increasingly unmanageable for the authorities and institutions of power.

Approach and Methodology

I first came to this research in order to understand the history of childbirth practices in Mexico. This history was very important to me on a personal level, as a mother, Mexican-American, and student. This history that I wanted to know, understand, and recover, was also sparsely incorporated into the various historical works that I had studied. Over the course of two summers, I visited numerous archives in Mexico City, looking for anything that had to do with midwifery, pregnancy, and childbirth in order to flesh out these missing stories. I began to narrow my focus to the social group and practices of midwifery due to their strong presence in the Inquisition archives located in the Archivo General de la Nación.[11] Female ritual practitioners were the largest social group prosecuted throughout the entire duration of the Mexican Inquisition (It was puzzling as to why, women who were in service of their community, aiding women in the crucial times such as childbirth would be so heavily condemned).[12]

[11] Practices of 18th century midwives rarely appear in places other than the Inquisition Archives. Although there are some midwives in the archives of the Protomedicato and other colonial archives, such as criminal records. Midwives appear in the archives more in 19th century with the development of obstetrical science and professionalization of midwifery.
[12] Susan Migden Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 155.

This is a mixed blessing, at best; what is good for historians was extremely bad for midwives. Linda Tuhiwai Smith's work *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (2012) helps us navigate the treacherous moral terrain of using the archives of colonial oppression to write the history of the oppressed. Smith calls for the decolonization of methodologies and research, but also explains that "decolonization does not mean a total rejection of all theory or research or Western knowledge. Rather, it is about centering our concerns and world views and then coming to know and understand theory and research from our own perspectives and for our own purposes."[13] As a Mexican-American scholar, my identity consists of multiple diasporas created in the processes and consequences of colonization. I approach research and analysis into the archives of the Inquisition from a decolonial perspective. I foreground my own concerns for my own purposes, such as wanting to know how my female Nahua ancestors may have contributed to their communities in the realm of childbirth and healing and how the succeeding multi-racial generations also navigated these realms, in the increasingly contested sites of knowledge and science during the Enlightenment era. In thinking through these documents, I've had several questions in the back of my mind: why did my Mexican grandmother carry me in a *rebozo* (shawl) while many other relatives did not? Why was it customary to give birth in a hospital when I knew many women had not?

This thesis deals with an important archive of the West, the Inquisition, to address these concerns. Where colonized peoples' beliefs, practices, medicines, and

[13] Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London: Zed Books, 2012), 41.

lifeways were not only persecuted but classified, recorded, documented, and painstakingly preserved. In the mission of labeling and commodifying dissent, the sacred non-Christian ways would, the Inquisitors hoped, lose some of their power. Naming, labeling and surveilling are attempts at control. Inquisitors aspired to spiritual and social order. The development of the Enlightenment in the 18th-century Spain and New Spain can be partially attributed to the quantitative fetishes of the Catholic Church. Although Enlightenment thinkers were among the harshest critics of the Inquisition, as an enemy of human freedom, and an insult to the ideals of liberty and democracy that they espoused, the Inquisition was much more compatible with Enlightened thinking than many people realize. Eventually we see the Enlightenment dominating philosophies of science and gender, and in it a suppression or disregard of the magical and unclassifiable. This is why to date few works have taken seriously what has been disregarded as "quackery," "superstition," and "folklore."

Martha Few's recent book *For All of Humanity: Mesoamerican and Colonial Medicine in Enlightenment Guatamala* details the history of colonial medicine in Guatamala. Few's focus on indigenous and mixed race communities' adaptions and contributions to the Enlightenment era's science is crucial to this thesis. Few claims this is a vastly understudied topic that has usually been dismissed as primitive practices or folk medicine in the historiography of science in colonial Latin America, and that her study takes seriously indigenous knowledges and epistemologies in histories of science.[14] She shows that native peoples had agency in the medical field, and that the

[14] Martha Few, *For All of Humanity: Mesoamerican and Colonial Medicine in Enlightenment Guatemala* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2015), 13.

New World medical cultures influenced Enlightenment science—a finding my research confirms.

This thesis focuses on five Inquisition cases from the middle to the late 18th century,[15] where midwives of multiple racial heritages came under suspicion of heresy or witchcraft. The cases cover multiple regions of Mexico, they include: Lorenza from Zacatecas, Agustina Carrasco from Veracruz, Maria Guadalupe Sánchez from Mexico City, Pasquala de los Reyes from Tecomatlan, and Marcela from Merida. The distances separating these women speak commonalities among these midwives, and variation in beliefs and practices rooted in each midwife's home town. While there have been successful studies on just one Inquisition case, this thesis takes into account five midwives, their stories and their practices, in order to demonstrate how this group acquired authority, and attracted both respect and fear within their communities and in their relationships with the Catholic Church and Spanish Crown.

The careers of Mexican midwives reveal alternative dynamics of power and knowledge. Midwives elaborated an alternative system of ritual and ceremony to that of the Catholic Church. My analysis of ritual and ceremony is informed by historians of colonial witchcraft, such as Laura de Mello e Souza and Laura Lewis, both of whom set out frameworks for interpreting the colonial world and its relationship to magic. Lewis's theory of "sanctioned" and "unsanctioned"[16] domains is useful in exploring the meaning of race and persecuted practices in 18th-century midwifery Inquisition cases.

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[15] The dates for the cases are: 1753, 1754, 1774, 1792, and 1798.

[16] Laura Lewis, *A Hall of Mirrors: Power, Witchcraft, and Caste in Colonial Mexico* (Duke: University Press, 2003), 6. (sanctioned domain=upheld *Spanishness* and sought to marginalize Indians, and with it, black people and mestizos. Unsanctioned domain=witchcraft and a term that describes moral violations.)

She argues that mixed-race populations were the mediators of Spanish authority between these two domains. In this thesis we will see how midwives often constituted an intermediary position to authority and community through their dynamic characteristics, practices, and identities. In *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross: Witchcraft, Slavery, and Popular Religion in Colonial Brazil* (1986), Laura de Mello e Souza developed a framework for understanding the relationship between magic, authority, and the economy in colonial Brazil, what she calls, "the divinization of the economic universe."[17] Her work serves as an important point of reference in untangling why certain practices were seen as illicit, while others were condemned.

Historians Susan Socolow and three others argue that the Inquisition was lenient in trials of witchcraft.[18] These cases I examine undermine that claim. The women in these trials experienced great difficulties and hardships. Being tried by the Inquisition was an ordeal. Some women, while languishing in prison, were tortured or threatened with torture. Many women were openly humiliated by being whipped in public street processions during their *autos de fe*. Some of these women were forced into insane asylums and had all of their property confiscated. It is plausible that midwives under investigation by the Inquisition had their home lives turned upside down. The domestic and communal consequences of being absent from their homes, children, and family, and shunned by their communities would have been severe for poor, mixed-race, and indigenous midwives. The notion that Inquisitorial leniency allowed practices to

[17] Laura de Mello e Souza, *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross: Witchcraft, Slavery, and Popular Religion in Colonial Brazil* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 84-85.
[18] Susan Migden Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 157. Ruth Behar, "Sex and Sin: Witchcraft and the Devil in late-colonial Mexico *American Ethnologist* 14, no.1 (1987), 34-36. Martin Austin Nesvig, *Ideology and Inquisition: The World of the Censors in Early Mexico* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 182-186.

flourish also belittles the resiliency and resourcefulness of late colonial Mexican midwives.

Secondary Literature

Martha Ballard and Lorenza had qualities and experiences in common that typified the careers of midwives across the Atlantic world. The secondary literature on the topic reveals even more. Historians of childbirth and midwifery in the United States often look at changing dynamics of power surrounding reproduction. The transition from midwife-assisted home births to physician-led hospital births is often a common focus for historians of this topic. Yet these historians delve deeper than simply an "us-against-them" narrative pitting female midwives against male doctors. The cultural histories of midwifery and childbirth in the United States demonstrate the agency of midwives and women in relation to doctors. Race, class and explorations of traditional folk medicine and herbal remedies also factor in to the ways these relationships and perspectives have been formed.

Judith Walzer Leavitt's *Brought to Bed: Child-Bearing in America 1750-1950* highlights women banding together in rituals of childbirth and thus acquiring power. Leavitt calls this "a feminist impulse embedded within women's traditional experiences."[19] This group identity and sense of community surrounding reproduction was shared among midwives, mothers, and neighbors across the Atlantic world. For example, Martha Ballard and Lorenza both relied on community networks to grow their practices and relationships. Martha Ballard had an extensive web of friends, relatives,

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[19] Judith Walzer Leavitt, *Brought to Bed: Childbearing in America 1750-1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 4.

and associates, all participating in one way or another in the local economy, supporting each other through trade, barter, and services, in the fragile yet ever growing society of early New England. Similarly, Mexican midwives belonged to various villages, towns, and cities. When multiple friends and neighbors testified against midwives in the Inquisition, they revealed an entire community network. Community was enormously important to midwives in both New England and New Spain. Their relationships depended on the continuation of their practices; and their communities, in turn, depended on midwives for their biological propagation and the deepening of connections among friends, neighbors, and family members.

Leavitt also finds that women played an active role in expressing their needs for a safe and healthy birthing experience, often seeking out physicians and experimenting with new developing obstetrical methods.[20] Lorenza and Martha were often sought out by women in their respective communities. Lorenza offered her remedies that women believed would provide them a safer birth, just as Martha Ballard provided birthing women with various prescriptions that could make them more comfortable. Women in Mexico and the United States demonstrated autonomy in childbirth through the participation of midwives and their expertise. Women and midwives were also willing to work with physicians, carefully submitting to the advances of obstetrical medicine. Martha Ballard worked with medical professionals and as we will see in further chapters, Mexican midwives did the same.

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[20] Leavitt, *Brought to Bed,* 87.

Charlotte Borst's, *Catching Babies: The Professionalization of Childbirth, 1870-1920* expanded the study of the history of midwifery to include an analysis of race and class in understanding how communities and midwives related to changes in reproductive practices. Borst argues that community relationships and socio-cultural commonalities impacted the transition from midwife to physician more than women's beliefs in the authority of medicalized childbirth.[21] Race and class dynamics were more important than whether or not women and midwives embraced or rejected medical professionals, according to Borst's findings. Lorenza and Martha can attest to this. The two midwives inhabited worlds of colonization and empire, where multiple diasporas influenced the shape and scope of their practices and knowledge bases. Martha Ballard as a white settler had relationships with the medicalization of childbirth specific to her social status and identity. For example, the physicians of Hallowell invited her to attend autopsies.[22] Martha remained insulated within the settler community, attending to families of her similar position, class, and race. On the other hand, Lorenza's practices and relationships with doctors and *boticarios* were shaped by her race, class, and status within the larger community. In Lorenza's case, not coming from a dominant class, she was more hesitant in working with medical professionals and employing the new sciences of obstetrics in her practice.

Marie Jenkins Schwartz's *Birthing a Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South* delves deeply into midwifery practices and maternity experiences of marginalized and oppressed people through her study of slavery and reproduction. This

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[21] Charlotte G. Borst, *Catching Babies: The Professionalization of Childbirth, 1870-1920* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), 67.
[22] Ulrich, *A Midwife's Tale,* 248-50.

work unifies the experiences of Martha and Lorenza, due to Schwartz's rich discussion of the practices of herbal medicine employed by enslaved midwives. Much like Martha and Lorenza, enslaved African midwives relied on their traditional knowledge base to assist women in birth. African midwives used plant medicine within their enslaved communities and Schwartz argues that the effectiveness of black traditional medicine in the south gave some healers and midwives a certain level of status and authority.[23] Martha Ballard used herbal practices that came from English botanical medicine to serve her free community. Lorenza incorporated her medicine from multiple diasporas. Taking into account Martha and Lorenza, Schwartz's study then demonstrates that midwives across multiple racial and socioeconomic backgrounds, free or enslaved, relied on plant medicine, which often garnered them status in their communities.

Although the literature dealing specifically with midwifery and childbirth in late colonial Mexico is limited, there is scholarship concerning midwifery on the time periods before and after the 18th century. Literature on Meso-American and indigenous midwifery in Aztec culture informs historical context and background for the 18th-century midwives of this thesis. The *Temixhuitiana* (Nahuatl for midwife) and their many practices are documented in various indigenous codices, such as the Florentine Codex which lent to the production of rich secondary literature on Aztec midwifery. Additionally, studies on later midwives in the 19th and 20th centuries in Mexico, discuss certification of practitioners, and competition between midwives and doctors as the medicalization of childbirth increased.

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[23] Marie Jenkins Schwartz, *Birthing a Slave: Motherhood and Medicine in the Antebellum South* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2006), 57.

The historiography of pre-Hispanic midwifery includes fascinating and distinguished works. Due to an enormous catalogue of indigenous codices, historians have been able to glimpse into practices of Nahua midwives in the valley of Mexico. Noemi Quezada, a Mexican scholar addresses pre-Hispanic midwifery in her work, *Creencias tradicionales sobre embarazo y parto.* Quezada argues that the indigenous medical practitioners, of which midwifery constituted a branch, were more 'highly evolved in its experimental aspects' and therefore certain practices were adopted and assimilated by the Spanish, such as manual methods to deliver breech babies. A central issue addressed by Quezada, concerns the ways in which the midwife navigated both physical therapeutic healing and also magical and supernatural methods. This thesis builds off of Quezada's work, demonstrating that midwives in the 18th century, although oriented in various ways towards indigeneity (Aztec/Mexica culture), also navigated the worlds of physical healing and magical mediation.[24]

Maria J. Rodriguez, a Mexican scholar of Aztec women, explores the history of women's experiences with a Marxist feminist analysis of the social roles and behaviors of Aztec women prior to conquest. While she sees Aztec women as experiencing oppression and subordination because of their supposed magical powers and reproductive capabilities, Rodriguez makes clear that although women were subordinate to men in Aztec society there remained an avenue for women to gain authority and power.[25] This opening to authority was through a woman being a midwife. Rodriguez's analysis of gender, sex, and power in Aztec society is difficult to agree with, for it is

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[24] Noemi Quezada, "Creencias tradicionales sobre embarazo y parto," *Anales de antropología* (Mexico), 1976, 307-326.
[25] Maria J. Rodriguez, *La Mujer Azteca* (México: Universidad Autónoma del Estado de México, 1991), 121.

problematic to ascribe westernized conceptions and definitions of gender and sex to indigenous pre-conquest peoples. However, her study is useful in that it asserts the power and status that Aztec midwives had in their society as well as the eventual decline as Spanish colonization marked sacred female knowledge and healing powers as attributes of demonic relationships. The 18th-century Mexican midwives also experienced condemnation due to their so called relationships with questionable powers.

Indigenous midwifery is further explored in Patrisia Gonzales's book *Red Medicine: Traditional Indigenous Rites of Birthing and Healing* and expanded to include contemporary issues concerning indigenous healing practices. Most pertinent to this thesis is Gonzales's analysis and discussion of the ways indigenous knowledge continues across various identities and labels, such as Nahua, Chicana, and Mexican-American. She argues that these groups "signal a certain historical situation or a dislocation from indigeneity."[26] The question of indigeneity and identity in relation to midwifery practices is central to this thesis. Gonzales does not explore in great detail the experiences and identities of 18th-century Mexican midwives, yet her questioning of who gets to decide what and who is indigenous will be furthered explored in the Inquisition cases under review here. Midwives in Mexico experienced deindiginization so that they could be tried in the Inquisitorial courts, as the Catholic Church had laws set in place to "protect" indigenous peoples from persecution and investigation from the Inquisition. Therefore, determining a *parteras* race, and status through genealogical

[26] Patrisia Gonzales, *Red Medicine: Traditional Indigenous Rites of Birthing and Healing* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2012), xxv.

investigation was crucial first step for many of the Inquisitorial trials to proceed. Gonzales's proposal that indigenous knowledge continues to function across varying labels of identity is a central concern for this thesis in addressing both how Spanish authorities labeled multiracial midwives and their practices, as well as how the midwives situated themselves within the diaspora of indigenous, African and European traditions and identities. Creating parameters of identity and practices of midwives in order to sustain social control and spiritual harmony evolved into the 19th and 20th centuries, as midwifery practices became closely examined by the new regulators of body and belief, the philosophers, scientists, and medical professionals of the early Enlightenment era.

Most history of midwifery certification and professionalization in Mexico begins in the 19th century. Historians, Ana Maria Carrillo and Lee Penyak both focus on the time period of institutionalized secularization, examining midwifery certification. Yet the two scholars put forth opposing arguments as to the nature and effects of certification on the practice of midwifery. Carrillo, in *Nacimiento y muerte de una profesión* (1999), argues that the career of professional midwifery was created in the 19th century by medical professionals to exclude and eradicate traditional midwives and that they were eventually eliminated from the field of healthcare professionals in 20th century. Much like the midwives of 18th-century Mexico, the 19th-century practitioners experienced a liminal and tenuous position in relation to tradition and developing science and its authorities. Carrillo sees this as a "double character" of midwives and their training as their activities remained necessary to the medical profession but also required subordination to the developing science of obstetrics. Midwives have always

been simultaneously celebrated and denounced. Carrillo provides the example of indigenous midwives introducing a manual maneuver of breech babies to medical professionals during one of the midwifery training sessions.[27]

Historian Lee Penyak views the development of obstetrical science as beneficial to women in his article "Obstetrics and the Emergence of Women in Mexico's Medical Establishment" (2003). Contrary to Carrillo, Penyak argues that "midwifery survived and thrived in the late 19th century while offering women an avenue into other medical professions."[28] In Penyak's view, midwives in the medical profession were highly respected and well paid. His example of Porfirian modernization programs as proof of women being more included in medicine and authority is valid but at the same time problematic depending on one's perspective of inclusivity. Carrillo argued that traditional midwifery practices, especially indigenous midwives, experienced increasing levels of regulation and surveillance, and many traditional midwives did not want to be licensed and have their competency questioned and ridiculed. Yet Penyak's argument implies that these restrictions on traditional women's knowledge by healthcare authorities were beneficial because they gave women an opportunity to behave and legitimize their careers by becoming modern, leaving the old ways behind. Again, one's view on whether or not professionalization was beneficial to midwives, depends on one's view of modernity and inclusivity. Keep in mind that illiteracy was widespread in Mexico and many indigenous midwives did not even begin to meet the requirements for enrollment or had the ability to finance entry into the various schools of midwifery.

[27] Ana María Carrillo, "Nacimiento y muerte de una profesión. Las parteras tituladas en México." *Dynamis: Acta Hispanica Ad Medicinae Historiam Illustrandam* 19, (1999), 174.
[28] Lee Penyak, "Obstetrics and the Emergence of Women in Mexico's Medical Establishment" *The Americas* 60, no. 1. (July 2003), 60.

Female healers, of which midwives constituted, in 18th-century Mexico experienced regulation and persecution by the Inquisition more so than any other female social group.[29] Their practices were not, for the majority, regulated in a medical or scientific sense, but in a spiritual and religious way. However, as early as 1750 the Royal *Protomedicato* (the regulatory body for health professionals in Spain and its territories) ordered the mandatory licensing and monitoring of midwives (the regulatory agency only granted two licenses from the mandate up until the agencies closure in 1831).[30] Both Carrillo and Penyak focus on the professionalization of midwifery in the 19th and 20th centuries yet there remains room for analysis in the earlier stages of this development, such as with the Protomedicato early certification mandate. The exploration of contentious midwifery practices in relation to the Catholic Church presented in this thesis, fills this gap in the historiography of midwifery licensure. The transition of spiritual to medical regulation of midwives is demonstrated through an analysis of the practices of 18th-century midwives discussed in the following chapters.

The policing of their practices and identities was integral to the process of establishing and shaping philosophies of Enlightenment science and changing views of the body, and even economic structure (the Inquisition's obsession with documentation and race denotes a proclivity to classification). Sylvia Federici in, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, The Body and Primitive Accumulation* (2004) explains how Mechanical philosophies and secularization made a capitalist economic structure more possible, "In Mechanical Philosophy we perceive a new bourgeois spirit that calculates, classifies,

[29] Susan Migden Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 155.
[30] Ana María Carrillo, "Nacimiento y muerte de una profesión. Las parteras tituladas en México." *Dynamis: Acta Hispanica Ad Medicinae Historiam Illustrandam* 19, (1999), 168.

makes distinctions, and degrades the body only in order to rationalize its faculties, aiming not just at intensifying its subjection but at maximizing its social utility."[31] An Analysis of midwives in relation to authority (religion and science) gives far reaching insight and understanding to broader themes in history, such as the development of capitalism and biomedicine.

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[31] Sylvia Federici, *Caliban and the Witch: Women, the Body, and Primitive Accumulation* (Brooklyn, NY: Autonomedia Press, 2004), 139.

LORENZA:

Parteras, Herbal Medicine and Competition of Medical Knowledge:

"Just as they have their remedies, we also have ours"

The Inquisition trial of midwife Lorenza is all of four pages long, but it has a tremendous amount to teach us about, gender, class, New World medical cultures, and the ambigous social roles of midwives. The case is brief because it was dismissed after an initial investigation. Since the Inquisitors were unable to know Lorenza's last name, her file was put into the *despreciadas* (rejected cases). Not knowing her last name prevented the Inquisitors from executing a *recorrección de registros*. The *recorrección de registros* was part of the Inquisition's procedural system, which required new data to proceed with cases by talking to other Inquisitorial courts of nearby areas in order to know if there were further allegations against the defendant.[32]

Maria Barbara Comales, a married Spanish woman and legitimate daughter of Jose Antonio Cañales and Dona Josefa de Mendoza, appeared before the Holy Office of the Mexican Inquisition in February of 1798 to denounce midwife Lorenza for a "suspicious use of herbs."[33] Comales related to the court that she had recently arrived in Zacatecas during the last month of her pregnancy. Upon her arrival she sought out the assistance of a *partera* and called on the community for a recommendation. Comales was told "the best midwife is the old lady called Lorenza, very well known in all of this city, but with only one known name."[34] Comales immediately contacted Lorenza, who promptly directed her to "take these herbs that are used to induce labor without pain and

[32] Maria Jesus Torquemada, *La Inquisición y El Diablo, Supersticiones en el Siglo XVIII* (Sevilla: Universidad de Sevilla Secretariado de Publicaciones, 2000), 83.
[33] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1313 exp. 12, fs. 1-4 (1798).
[34] Ibid.

without a *tenedora* (birth assistant).[35] Lorenza showed the expectant mother the herbs which were wrapped in paper, which she had never seen before and doubted wether or not she should take them, so she asked Lorenza what the name of the herbs were.[36] Lorenza simply responded that they are only known in the boticas and with that, Comales sent the *partera* away.[37]

Community relationships and neighborhood gossip between childbearing women contributed to Comales's increasing fear and suspicion of the old midwife and her mysterious plants. Apparently after Comales's initial and uncomfortable encounter with midwife Lorenza, she saught out advice and second opinions from her network of female friends on the midwife's reputation. Comales added in her testimony that according to "the woman of Mariano Torres," Lorenza had previously stood in court and was imprisoned in Zacatecas for not revealing the types of herbs she used in her midwifery practice.[38] Even after a judicial order was sent out for Lorenza to be examined by "the surgeon Moreno" and "the *boticario* Espinosa," she never revealed what types of herbs she used. The medical professionals reckoned that "just as 'they' have their remedies, we also have ours."[39] However, Comales did not know who was the judge in this case or when the trial had occurred or how many other people Lorenza had prescribed herbs to.

Additional rumors were incorporated into the testimony of Comales, when she said that she had heard from the wife of a tailor named Andres Villegas, that Lorenza

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[35] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1313 exp. 12, fs. 1-4 (1798).
[36] Ibid.
[37] Ibid.
[38] Ibid.
[39] Ibid.

had murdered various pregnant women with her herbal concoctions.[40] At the end of her testimony, Comales was asked if she knew what type of life Lorenza led, what were her conducts and procedures, but Comales said she had no idea because she was just a newcomer to the city.[41] Comales testimony was mostly based on rumors and neighborhood gossip. Although she had one interaction with Lorenza, nothing explicitly damaging had occurred, but the newcomer must have been frightened enough to report the encounter and rumors of Lorenza's evil ways to the Holy Office.

The case of Lorenza, although brief, reveals that midwives were important members of their community and sought after by elite Spanish women who were proactive in their birthing experience. The fact that the Spanish woman Maria Barbara Comales, newly arrived in Zacatecas, sought out a midwife instead of a physician or surgeon, shows that midwives were still held in high esteem in colonial Spanish society. Comales, who could afford a licensed medical practitioner, preferred a local *partera,* but her hesitancy to trust Lorenza and her herbal medicines betrays a growing prejudice and suspicion toward traditional Mexican midwives. The precautionary actions Comales took in asking Lorenza what the herbs where and Comales' consulting with other women of their community substantiates historian Judith Walzer Leavitt's findings that women were active participants in planning their births.[42] The case of Lorenza extends the finding to include women in 18th-century late colonial Mexico.

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[40] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1313 exp. 12, fs. 1-4 (1798)
[41] Ibid.
[42] Judith Walzer Leavitt, *Brought to Bed: Childbearing in America 1750-1950* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1986), 87.

Lorenza was infamous. Her arts were respected, sought after, and well known. Yet at the same time she was gossiped about and surveilled by the community and its medical authorities. Lorenza walked a very fine line and could be praised and condemned in the same day. This paradoxical postition shows deeper societal complexities of how authorities such as the Church, licensed medical professionals, and Spanish elite interacted and related to midwives and their knowledge of reproductive practices. Lorenza's identity and role in the community embodied the intersection of many tenuous and conflicting positions. Lorenza was referred to Comales, as the best midwife in the area, so she must have been well known. But at the same time, no one knew her last name, or her race, or what type of lifes she led and healing practices she performed. This ambiguity led to suspicion and produced the negative gossip about Lorenza's medicine. Seen as a highly competent and skilled midwife as well as its opposite, that of a dangerous murderess employing suspicious remedies and killing many expectant mothers, Lorenza's reputation in her community was an ambivalent one, and this fact was probably rooted in the complicated social position she occupied. In the hierarchy of race, class and gender in 18th-century Zacatecas, female healers fell outside most accepted social categories.

Scholars such as Few, Sáenz, and Gonzales agree that indigenous and mixed race women were persecuted due to their ritual, medicinal, and sacred knowledge, while midwives were at the forefront, "maintaining spaces of power and largely ignoring attempts at regulation."[43] In *Red Medicine*, Gonzales discusses hidden and encoded knowledge in creation and birth ceremonies: "ceremonies may contain hidden

[43] Patrisia Gonzales, *Red Medicine: Traditional Indigenous Rites of Birthing and Healing* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2012), 71.

knowledge so that the knowledge may be protected from appropriation or inappropriate use."[44] Gonzales goes on to argue that the authoritative knowledge of midwives led to their risk of prosecution. We can see that in the case of the *partera* Lorenza, that although her skills were well known, she was vulnerable to prosecution by the Spanish authorities and to damaging rumors of local Spanish elites. Lorenza kept her sacred knowledge of herbal medicine "hidden" or "encoded," refusing to give up the knowledge even under imprisonment and examination by the Inquisition and medical professionals. Lorenza was defiant to authorities and perhaps protective of her relationship to her plant medicines. She knew their power and wanted to guard them from misuse. Gonzales claims that protecting "hidden knowledge" is a way that many traditions have survived into contemporary times.[45]

It seems that the surgeon and boticario were at this time still building their authority and clientele. The extent of the native pharmacopeia known by the pharmacists in Zacatecan boticas is unknown, but it is likely that there were many plants and remedies that had still not been incorporated into the Spanish pharmacopeia. However, throughout the history of colonial medicine in Mexico, there are various texts of Spanish colonizers, scientists, and expeditioners, compiling information about the exotic flora and fauna of the New World, such as the *Codex de la Cruz Badiano*, Gregorio Lopez's *Tesoro de Medicinas,* Fransisco Hernandez's *Historia Natural,* and Bernardino de Sahagun's *Historia de las Cosas de la Nueva España.* Scientists and medical professionals were constantly searching for new plants and herbal remedies to understand, practice with and sell in their stores. Historian Luz María Hernández Sáenz

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[44] Gonzales, *Red Medicine,* 45-46.
[45] Ibid.

argues that in *boticarios* and *boticas* was the branch of medicine that colonial Mexico made its most important contributions because of the rapid adoption of indigenous medicinal knowledge into the growing Spanish medical sciences.[46] Sáenz sees the colonial *botica* as a reflection of the "gradual and uneven synthesis of the two different systems of beliefs that form the mixed heritage of Mexico."[47] The case of Lorenza offers a glimpse of the slow synthesis of native and European systems of understanding herbal medicine.

Everyone involved had their own interests in regard to Lorenza's practices. The women of the community wanted to ensure that "the best midwife in town," lived up to her reputation and consulted with each other when they heard dangerous stories about the midwife. The Inquisitors were interested in these stories and attempted to discover more about Lorenza's practices and way of life. In their role as spiritual monitors they needed to know if Lorenza was practicing harmful magic or not. The pharmacists and surgeons also wanted to know more of Lorenza's plant knowledge in order to expand their own healing skills. But their reaction to Lorenza's refusal to give up her wisdom, when they said "just as we have our remedies, she has hers," betrays the ambiguous relationship of midwives to the broader colonial world, simultaneously legitimizing "their" practices while reasserting the "otherness" of Mexican midwives.

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[46] Luz María Hernández Saenz, *Learning to Heal: The Medical Profession in Colonial Mexico, 1767-1831* (New York: Peter Lang, 1997), 129.
[47] Ibid.

AGUSTINA CARRASCO

Art, Money, and Pain: Conjuring power and identity through ritual practice

The Inquisition case of Agustina Carrasco, further illustrates the liminal position of *parteras* in colonial Mexican society. This case is three pages long but contains fascinating information regarding ritual items owned by the *mulata* midwife Agustina which shows how midwives incorporated ritual and healing traditions from multiple diasporas. This case also demonstrates that midwives could sometimes be feared for to their practices, especially if the chilbirth of their client went poorly, or in this case, where the child died. Agustina was accused of *maleficia*- the practice of harmful magic.

Agustina advertised her services as *partera* in a most forceful way: she threatened a pregnant woman with a curse: "you are pregnant but I must be your midwife, if not, you will give birth when the frog grows hairs."[48] The art of street hustle was part of a *partera's* skill set and these words were an intimidation tactic on the part of Agustina. Midwives were believed to have powerful knowledge of creation, birth, reproduction, and death. Their words could indeed wield influence and fear over women and families from any social rank or belief system. *Parteras* knew this and used it to their advantage. In order to break Agustina's curse, the pregnant Francisca had to hire her. Historian of colonial Brazilian witchcraft, Laura de Souza e Mello, calls this "the divinization of the economic universe," where the European obsession with demonic relationships penetrated its American colonies, effecting a demonization of everyday life, in which the colonial economic system offered the only way out.[49] As remedy to this fearful quotidian hex, *parteras* engaged as intermediaries, offering their magic and

[48] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1378 exp. 10, fs. 193-196 (1792).
[49] Laura de Mello e Souza. *The Devil and the Land of the Holy Cross: Witchcraft, Slavery, and Popular Religion in Colonial Brazil,* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2003), 84-86.

healing at a cost. *Parteras* such as Agustina benefitted from the local anxiety over witchcraft and demons by simultaneously healing wounds while creating new ones (curses). This game safeguarded their liminal existence and secured demand for their services.

There is only one testimony in Augustina's case file and we do not know if it went to trial. The very last document in the folio is a mandate for a *recorrecion de registros*.[50] The one testimony belongs to the husband of Franscisca Xaviera (the pregnant woman), who did not give his name in the testimony. In front of the commisioner of the Holy Office, he began by saying that his wife had experienced "ingratitude" from Agustina Carrasco. The husband testified that his wife had spoken with Agustina the midwife and she had squeezed the pregnant woman's belly to announce her pregnancy, and after that his wife heard the words: "*pero yo debe ser su partera y en contrario caso parirá cuando la rana críe pelos.*"[51] As it turned out, Agustina's words came true. Francisca suffered through six full days of labor. The midwife had to insert a cooking pepper (chile) into Francisca's birth canal in an attempt to stimulate contractions. When at last the baby was born, it was dead. The husband said that the baby showed "strange signs" that caused a great stir from all of the bystanders, a hole in its forehead and a strange mark on its neck.[52] Francisca's husband said that he had spoken with Agustina's aunt, Arnica, who had also attended the delivery. Arnica told him that his wife became sick because of Agustina. She began to share with him

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[50] *Reccorrecion de registros*- sometimes in order for a full trial to proceed the Inquisition sent out notices to nearby territories asking authorities and other Inquisitors if the accused had previous allegations.
[51] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1378 exp. 10, fs. 193-196 (1792).
[52] Ibid.

information of what her husband (Agustina's uncle) had found in the midwife's living quarters.

Agustina's aunt and uncle had given her a room in their house at the Hacienda de Cortijo, "because of her helpless state."[53] One day, her uncle had gone to sweep the room and discovered a pot with a dead monkey hidden inside. The monkey was wrapped with hair, riddled with cactus spines, its hands crossed over its heart holding a grain of corn, and tied up with a guitar string. On seeing it, the uncle shattered it, saying "who knows what poor person is suffering!"[54] Agustina's uncle also unearthed an effigy of Saint Ramón Nonato, which was face down in the same place with a piece of wax in its mouth.[55] Fransisca's husband continued his testimony saying that he had heard of another pregnant woman who had suffered nine days in labor, "to such extremes as to make her into a maiden" (*en tanto extremo hasta combertirla en donsella*), meaning that this woman could not have children again.

Fransisca and her husband brought Agustina to the attention of the Inquisition because it seemed that her curse came true. The discovery of Agustina's ritual items and her Aunt Arnica's stories of the additional suffering of pregnant women under Agustina's care indicated that she practiced harmful magic. The monkey effigy hidden in a pot, discovered by Francisca's uncle certainly contributed to the accusations of harmful magic (*maleficia*). Understanding what these items meant to Agustina and how they might have been used sheds light on ritual practices and belief systems of *parteras*

[53] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1378 exp. 10, fs. 193-196 (1792).
[54] Ibid.
[55] Ibid.

in 18th-century Mexico. Interpreting Agustina's relationship with her ritual practices requires some unraveling of the heterogeneity of culture, identity, and place.

Although Francisca is a *mulata partera* we cannot trace her ritual practices to an exact African origin. For the social/ethnic/racial landscape of 18th-century Veracruz was multilayered with multiple mixed-race and cultural identities and practices. According to historian of colonial Veracruz, Patrick J. Carroll, by 1750 Black Africans were racially absorbed and ethnically assimilated in central Veracruz,[56] although he does contend that witchcraft was one of the few African traditions that persisted.[57] In addition to the survival of African magical practices, the cultural and ethnic variation of Indigenous peoples was greater than Africans and Europeans in colonial Veracruz.[58] Therefore, Francisca, as a working poor, *mulata* midwife drew from these matrices of cultural and magical traditions in the amalgamtion of the Spanish, African, and Indigenous domains of healing and power.

An examination of the ritual material of the monkey effigy reflects a combination of multiple belief systems and practices as well as midwives relationships to these layered systems. As Spanish, African, and Indigenous knowledge surrounding the use of animals in ritual and magical practices harbor important distinctions. For example, Indigenous peoples related animals to the belief in *nagualismo* where as Europeans often connected the employment of animals in magical practices to pacts with the devil and demonology, while African traditions oriented ritual use of animals

[56] Patrick J. Carroll, *Blacks in Colonial Veracruz, Race, Ethnicity, and Regional Development* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1991), 120.
[57] Ibid, 104.
[58] Ibid, 101.

towards spirit possession.[59] Joan Cameron Bristol, makes use of a case from the famous runaway slave community in Veracruz to illustrate the various uses of animals in Afro-Mexican magic and their relationship to particular cultural traditions. She argues that the ritual practitioner Domingo Cimarrón used dolls and snakes to communicate witch ancestors and other spirits.[60] Much like Agustina, Domingo drew from African and Indigenous ideas about magical mediums. Bristol explains that *nagualismo* is a Nahua belief where humans are appointed spirit guardians (Beltran also discusses this in detail in *Medicina y Magia*) and often took animal form, while European ideas saw animals as "familiars", sculptures/effigies that enabled the practitioner to communicate with the devil.[61] Yet Bristol sees Domingo's use of snakes in doll form as deriving from African ritual practices. So then, this can be similar to Agustina's employment of a monkey effigy in displaying a connection to African ideas of spirit possession and ancestor worship. Although it may be difficult to ascribe an exact origin in the use of a monkey figure, (because there were monkeys in Veracruz and Africa just as there were snakes in both Africa and Mexico) and which magical frameworks Agustina employed in her work with animal representation, there is a ritual practice that ties African, European, and indigenous cultures together.

The widespread use of dolls in *hechizo a distancia* (magic at a distance) was a practice shared by all racial groups in the Mexican colony.[62] We know that Agustina's ritual item is a doll for magic because it was wrapped in hair and riddled with cactus

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[59] Joan Cameron Bristol, *Christians, Blasphemers, and Witches: Afro-Mexican Ritual Practice in the Seventeenth Century* (Albuquerque: University of New Mexico Press, 2007), 153-155.
[60] Ibid.
[61] Ibid.
[62] Aguirre Beltran, *Obra antropológica, VIII. Medicina y magia: el proceso de aculturación en la estructura colonial* (Xalapa, Mexico: Fondo de Cultura Económica, 1992), 214.

spines. In order for the harm to be inflicted from a distance, practitioners needed a personal item to tie the doll to the person.[63] Agustina used human hair in the wrapping of the doll which belonged to the person she intended to experience her magic. It is probable that the intended people were the pregnant women and this is what Agustina's relatives and Fransisca's husband believed.

If we look at ritual practitioners as artists, producing and representing conceptual knowledge through their creations/making of ritual items, we can see how Francisca perhaps drew from particular elements of the various cultural and ethnic belief systems in her own creative way and dolls constitute a canvas for this colonial concotion of multiple belief systems. Since Africans were becoming more assimilated during this time, many of the African cultural traditions that Agustina could draw from seemed very remote, her perception of her relationship with her ancestors blurring with this cultural distance. Yet Agustina occupied an indigenous world as well, one where cultural practices, although transforming, did not experience this distance, and this midwife reinforced her arts, blurring ancestral knowledge with them as evidenced in the use of corn in the dolls hands. In addition the Saint Ramón statue discovered with the monkey shows her relationship to European/Spanish beliefs in the healing powers of Saints. St. Ramón, whose mother died in childbirth, was a patron saint of midwives and childbirth.

Furthermore, studies of psychology and art assist in this understanding of practices and identity. For example, in *Art and Illusion:A Study in the Psychology of*

[63] Beltran, *Medicina y Magia*, 214.

Pictorial Representation, E.H. Gombrich anlayzes the conditions of illusion and how we read messages in artistic representations. His study is useful in contributing to the analysis of how we read Agustina's ritual objects and even how she read them and created them herself. Gombrich explains, "We retranslate what we see into the context of action which gave rise to the image; we realize it is the record of various attempts, and we read it accordingly. We understand that certain lines are not to be interpreted strictly as representations but are intended as notes of the artist's intentions."[64] Indigenous groups made dolls from corn mean while the Spanish used wax to fashion their dolls which are most often in human form.[65] The widespread use of dolls in magic by all racial and ethnic groups and variations in colonial Mexico represents an artistic medium, where these records of various attempts are contained. Dolls are a convenient avenue for the expression of multiple belief systems, where practitioners could blend various cultural elements of magical traditions into one powerful ritual object. Interpreting Agustina's relationship to her African ancestors as a fading image due to the cultural distance produced by colonization and slavery, the use of dolls provides an oppurtinity to redefine and reclaim the blurring image in the distance by making a new one. The blurring image is also reconstituted through the artistic and imaginative incorporation of indigenous knowledge since she is on indigeous land. Agustina masterfully incorporates various belief systems to make her work and identity stronger.

Agustina's use of the doll to inflict harmful magic may seem surprising since she is a midwife and we expect her primary role to be one of assistance and healing.

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[64] E.H. Gombrich, *Art and Illusion: A Study in the Psychology of Pictorial Representation* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1956), 232.
[65] Beltran, *Medicina y magia,* 214.

However, it is beneficial to examine these midwives on their own terms beyond moralistic ascriptions. Midwives used curses along with dolls to generate power, ensure their survival and need of their practices in this tenuous colonial society, where your position to family and kin constantly shifted. As a poor woman of a low mixed caste, her power came from ritual knowledge, creativity, and her ability to inflict harm and/or heal. The curses, the saints, and the dolls constituted her only social and economic capital. Providing her methods to survive, relate, and erase. Fear was power and Agustina could mobilize her ritual arts in order to dissent her marginalized status in the colonial hierarchies of race, class, gender, and ethnicity. Inflicting harm through dolls and curses demonstrates her power over life and death, certainly a desired characteristic of a midwife.

MARIA GUADALUPE SANCHEZ

Dangers of a Community Midwife: "*In grave ruin of her soul*"

A smooth wooden cross hanging from a rosary of beaded string fell around her neck. She had dark hair, dark skin and dark eyes. A mole above her right eye and a dimple on her chin marked her face. Her nails were blue from mistreatment, her petticoat tattered and her shoes spoiled. Maria Guadalupe Sánchez was a prisoner of the Holy Office of the Mexican Inquisition for 10 months, from July 19th, 1775 to March 24th, 1776. She was excommunicated from the Catholic Church for ten years and reclused into the women's insane asylum, *Divino Salvador,* in Mexico City. The men of the Inquisition gave her one hundred lashes then had her paraded throughout the streets of Mexico City, riding a donkey, holding a candle, naked from the waist up, with a rope around her neck and wearing a *coroza* (pointed hat made out of paper mache[66]) in order to humiliate her.[67] Posters were broadcast throughout the city instructing the community that her property now belonged to the Inquisition.[68] These were the spiritual remedies prescribed to Sánchez for her grave sin and heresy. Sánchez was a 38 year-old married mestiza, and a mother of three children aged 15, 12, and 4. She did not know how to read or write and made a living the best she could as a washerwoman and midwife. Her crime was baptizing a baby twice.

The Inquisition case of María Guadalupe Sánchez is the longest and most complex case discussed in this thesis. Her trial and investigation contain multiple testimonies from her friends and neighbors, church priests, her defense attorneys'

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[66] John F. Chuchiak, *The Inquisition in New Spain, 1536-1820: A Documentary History,* (for a detailed description of a *coroza*), 347.
[67] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 66r.
[68] Ibid, f. 21r.

arguments, and the prosecution's full sentencing orders. Through analysis and narrative of this rich data, the heartbreaking story of the midwife Sanchez uncovers many deeply personal, political, and spiritual points of contention in the relationship and perceptions of midwives to their neighbors and Spanish authorities. Theological debates regarding gender and class, and developing "enlightened," views of women in relations to religion are illuminated in Sánchez's trial.

This trial also demonstrates culture and community surrounding baptismal customs and the grave importance of baptism in 18th-century Mexico. Osvaldo Pardo in his work, *The Origins of Mexican Catholicism: Nahua Rituals and Christian Sacraments* explains, "baptism was called to play a significant role in the complex reality that grew out of the first contacts between Europeans and Mexicans, as well as in the interpretations of that reality that were soon put into writing, because its ritual, packed with rich, powerful, yet malleable symbolism, was able to effect manifold transformations at both the individual and social levels."[69] This trial demonstrates how baptismal ritual impacted entire communities while having dire consequences for particular members of the community, such as the midwife María Guadalupe Sánchez.

Increasing expectations and regulations were placed upon midwives and their knowledge at this time. It was expected that Sanchez should have known the proper rituals of baptism because of her position as a midwife. Sanchez would indeed be prosecuted because she was a midwife, while all others involved were not, demonstrating that midwives were regarded with suspicion, and were particularly

[69] Osvaldo Pardo, *The Origins of Mexican Catholicism: Nahua Rituals and Christian Sacraments*, (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2006), 25.

vulnerable to Inquisitorial punishment and investigation. This Inquisition case of double baptism did not begin with the condemnation of Maria Guadalupe Sánchez, it began after her neighbors and friends testified and confessed to the Inquisition in order to clear their consciences of their participation in a double baptism. None of the witnesses "turned her in." Yet the Inquisitors wove the various stories together in a way that placed blame on Sanchez. A full examination of this trial uncovers the reasons why Sanchez was convicted while others were not, thus demonstrating the tenuous position midwives held in 18th-century Mexico.

The case began with testimonies of the mother and father of the doubly baptized infant. They were both wracked with guilt, afraid that what they had done was wrong and needing to clear their conscience before the Mexican Inquisition. These parents felt the pressure and fear of the Inquisition on a daily basis. Isabel and Antonio shared the same neighborhood with the spiritual police, residing less than five blocks away from the headquarters of the Holy Office and secret prison, Mexico City's Plaza Santo Domingo. They probably witnessed numerous public humiliations, hearing of the torture, imprisonment, and punishments meted out by their Inquisitorial neighbors, creating an intimate and fearful familiarity. Certainly hushed murmurs leaked out of the numerous dungeons of the Holy Office, despite the formal oath of secrecy that everyone who appeared before the tribunal had to swear.

The first to come forward was Isabel Ortíz, the mother of the re-baptized infant, who appeared before the Inquisitor Don Manuel Ruiz de Vallejo on May 5th, 1775.[70] She described herself as *castiza*, married to Antonio López a *latonero* (sheet metal

[70] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 2r.

worker), and living on Donceles Street in Mexico City.[71] Ortíz testified that she had given birth a year before to a baby boy and that she did not give birth at home and instead went to a house on Tacuba street, called *La casa de Higuera* for her childbirth.[72] Ortíz bragged that many different people had offered to be the godparents of her newborn, but she told them all that she had given her word to the *casera* (landlady), Agustina Maldonado, and that she was to be the godmother.[73] Things did not go as Ortíz had planned. She related that before the Godmother had a chance to baptize the baby, a friend of Ortíz's husband named Joseph Antonio Mecate showed up at her house.[74] Mecate and her husband were celebrating the birth of the baby, and Ortíz revealed that Mecate proceeded to get very drunk on Tepache and then he demanded that he be the Godfather of the baby.[75] Ortíz said that she declined his offer, telling him she had given her word to the *casera* Agustina.[76] Nonetheless, he ignored her, even after she pleaded with him to not take the baby to be baptized.

Ortíz testified that Mecate and her husband went with the midwife named María Guadalupe Sánchez to baptize the baby at the Chapel Sagrario and that they named the baby Joseph Mariano Trinidad.[77] Ortíz confessed that when the party returned to her house she was very upset, not knowing if it would be okay with *casera*.[78] She worried if the baptism went well or not, saying, *"por el charco por haverse bautizado a la*

[71] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 2r.
[72] Ibid, f. 4r.
[73] Ibid.
[74] Ibid.
[75] Ibid.
[76] Ibid, f. 4v.
[77] Ibid.
[78] Ibid.

criatura sin asistencia[79] (for the puddle they baptized the baby in without assistence),*"* since her husband and his friend were so drunk. The returning baptism party had an additional member, Santiago, and Indian man (servant) who lived with the infant's parents. Ortíz testified that she did not know his last name or where he actually lived. Here she tried to distance herself from this Indian man who had a major role in the double baptism. Ortíz said that Santiago tried to comfort her, saying that they could baptize the baby again, that they could give it a different name, and that the re-baptism would not be discovered.[80] He said they could perform the baptism properly and have the baby "smell the holy smells," offering to take the baby himself.[81] Ortíz confessed that she agreed to Santiago's plan, and added that her husband resisted, saying the baby had already been baptized.[82]

Ortíz said that, on the evening of the same day as the first baptism, Santiago, the midwife Sánchez, and the *casera* took the baby to the Church to rebaptize it, giving it the name Joseph Ignacio Trinidad.[83] When they returned, the father was very upset that the baby had been baptized twice. The Inquisitors then asked Ortíz if the *madrina* gave her anything, to which she replied that she gave her two pesos and gave the midwife four.[84] The Inquisitors asked Ortíz if she knew that it was against church doctrine to baptize a baby twice. She responded that she knew it was not a church practice and had resisted, but that she also had doubts as to whether the first baptism had been valid or

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[79] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 4v.
[80] Ibid, f. 5r.
[81] Ibid.
[82] Ibid.
[83] Ibid, f. 5v.
[84] Ibid.

not.[85] When Ortíz was asked why she did not denounce this rebaptism earlier, she confessed that she did not know if it was a denounceable case or not.[86] She then proceeded to lay blame on the *indio* Santiago. Ortíz said she asked Santiago if he thought it was ok to double baptize and he told her that it was and not to worry.[87] Santiago convinced Ortíz that although it was a serious sin, it was not denounceable to the Holy Office, and he then persuaded her to go confess to the Church Father.[88] This priest of the church of the Incarnation told Isabel to reveal her misdeed to the Inquisition and to find the *indio* and the midwife.[89]

From Isabel's first testimony we can see that she attempted to distance herself from the *indio* Santiago, not revealing that they lived in the same structure (*vecinidad*) appearing as if she didn't really know him.[90] But we can see that she relied on him for advice. It was he who came up with the plan to baptize the baby again in order to avoid upsetting the *casera*. They would have wanted to keep their word with the *casera* Agustina, for she was their landlady and they didn't want to annoy her. In addition, it is remarkable that Isabel left out of her testimony the details of the way the *Casera* responded when she found out the baby had already been baptized, down-playing the *casera's* involvement. The *casera* also insisted on taking the baby to be baptized again. Ortíz tried to protect her landlady and place most of the blame on Santiago. It also is true that Ortíz does not blame the midwife for any persuasion in the double baptism, for Sánchez plays a minimal role in the testimony of Ortíz. Sánchez seems just to have

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[85] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 5v.
[86] Ibid, f. 6r.
[87] Ibid.
[88] Ibid.
[89] Ibid.
[90] Additional testimonies say the Santiago lived with the mother and father of the baby.

appeared at certain times and did not have as much of a say in the arrangement as did Santiago and the *casera* Agustina. Ortíz presented as a helpless bystander, the baby being taken both times against her will to be baptized. Since she had just given birth, this is quite possible that she was exhausted and vulnerable. It is clear however, that once she had her wits about her, she brought a story to the Inquisition that would protect her, her husband and her landlady, by laying blame on the Indian and eventually the midwife.

The Inquisition's next move was to verify the double baptism with the priests. They petitioned for the book of baptism certifications of the Sagrario. In it, the Inquisitors found that it was true: there were two baptismal certifications on the same day indicating the names of the parents Joseph Antonio López and Isabel Ortíz.[91] The report revealed who actually baptized the baby each time. The first baptism performed by Br. D. Joseph Mariano Viedma, giving the baby the name Mariano de la Santissima Trnidad with Joseph Antonio Mecate serving as *padrino*.[92] The second baptism was performed by Don Ignacio Garmera, in the same church. But this time the baby was given the name Joseph Ignacio de la Santissima Trinidad and the godmother was Maria Agustina.[93] If Viedma and Garmera baptized the baby, why was the midwife the one accused? The Inquisition must have reasoned that Garmera knew nothing of the first baptism and had been tricked into performing the second one. With this information the Inquisition now had the evidence of double baptism in church records to proceed with

[91] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 6v.
[92] Ibid.
[93] Ibid.

the investigation and begin calling people forward to testify. They began with the husband.

On the 28th of March, 1775, Joseph Antonio López, Ortíz's husband, was called by the tribunal to testify in the investigation of double baptism. He said he was a *castizo*, married, living on Donceles Street, 33 years old, and a *latonero* (sheet metal worker).[94] When asked if he knew why he was called, he said he did not. But when he was asked if he knew that baptizing a baby twice was a sin, his confession began. His testimony was similar to Ortíz's but he gave more information on the midwife. He stated that María Guadalupe Sánchez was at the birth of the baby.[95] López confessed that his son was baptized twice and that the baby had first been baptized at three in the afternoon by a priest whose name he did not know and the *padrino*, was Antonio (Mecate) (he says he did not know his last name, indicating that López may be protecting his friend).[96] He said that Antonio had made an effort to baptize the baby. López said an *indio* named Santiago who lived with him, and the midwife Sánchez, as well as the *casera* petitioned him to take his baby to be baptized again, and that he refused, but that they did it anyway, adding that he was frightened and sad that this had happened.[97] When asked what the reason was for the double baptism, López said that Santiago arranged the second baptism and he told them it was okay, that it would be like the baby having "two christianities."[98] Apparently the Inquisition attached great meaning to the fact of the *madrina* Agustina giving money and/or gifts. They asked

[94] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 7r.
[95] Ibid, f. 7v.
[96] Ibid.
[97] Ibid.
[98] Ibid, f. 8r.

López if she had "gratified the mother of the baby, the midwife, or the indian."[99] Lopez said he had no idea. He also didn't know what name the second baptism party had given to the baby, nor the name of the priest who performed it.[100]

The Inquisition then zeroed in on who was to blame. They asked López if he knew where the *indio* and *partera* lived and if he knew of their *calidad.* Lopez did. He knew where Sánchez the midwife lived because he had gone to her house to alert her of his wife's labor, asking for her assistance.[101] Sánchez lived in a hall attached to a larger house belonging to the *casera* Doña Agustina Maldonado and her husband Manuel.[102] Finally, López testified to the Tribunal that Sánchez was of the *calidad india.*[103] On learning this, the Holy Office began a rapid investigation to verify the *calidad* of the midwife Sánchez. For if the tribunal wanted to convict or try Sánchez, it was essential that she not be an *india*. This is because Indians were exempt from Inquisitorial prosecutions, having various other courts to monitor them.[104] Historian Roberto Moreno de los Arcos elaborates on alternate systems of surveillance and policing Indians outside of the Inquisition. He argues that, "throughout the entire colonial period and well into the nineteenth century, there existed an institution expressly dedicated to punishing the Indians' religious offenses, identified by various names: Office of Provisor of Natives,

[99] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 8r.
[100] Ibid.
[101] Ibid.
[102] Ibid.
[103] Ibid.
[104] Roberto Moreno de los Arcos in *Cultural Encounters: The Impact of the Inquisition in Spain and the New World* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991), 23.

Tribunal of the Faith of Indians, Secular Inquisition, Vicarage of the Indians, and Natives' Court."[105] The last tribunal of the faith lasted up until 1820.

The methods the Holy Office used to seek out information about the *calidad* of the midwife Sánchez are vague in the documents. There was a letter that seems to be a general call asking people to verify the race of Sánchez.[106] They even knew exactly what room she lived in in the attached hall of the house. There was a reply to the announcement, and the letter writer revealed that Sánchez had lived in the hall attached to the house of Maldonado from the beginning of 1774 up until the time of her trial and the writing of the letter, May 18th, 1775.[107] This anonymous writer said that he could not tell exactly what *calidad* she was, but that she looked like a *mulata* and that she is a midwife.[108] A second letter expressed the prejudices of the time, saying that Sánchez was described as Spanish on her marriage license, but that "her color resists the honor of this appreciated *calidad*, and she actually looks *mestiza*."[109] Sánchez was racially ambiguous, but her skin color, profession, and residency indicated poverty and perhaps belonging to a lower *casta.*

The tribunal then dealt with the other Indian, Santiago. On June 1775, Joseph Santiago del Castillo was called before the Inquisitors to testify on the double baptism. He described himself as a single *mestizo* from Orizaba, and a 27 years old butcher, living below the entrance of a house on Tacuba Street.[110] When asked if he knew why

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105 AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 8r.
106 Ibid, f. 9r.
107 Ibid.
108 Ibid.
109 Ibid, f. 9v.
110 Ibid, f. 11r.

he was called, he replied that he presumed it was because he took a baby to be baptized, because the father wasn't there.[111] Santiago said he only found out the baby had already been baptized afterward. He confirmed the previous testimonies saying that the second baptism party consisted of himself, Agustina Maldonado and the midwife. He added that the midwife looked like a *mulata blanca*.[112] Santiago offered few details in his testimony, mostly confessing that he had no idea who the midwife really was, nor who the priest was who baptized the baby, nor the day or month that it happened. He made it clear that it wasn't he who performed the baptism.

However, Santiago did reveal that he knew why the baby was baptized twice. He said it was due to the *padrino* being drunk at the first baptism, and he doubted if it was legitimately baptized.[113] Interestingly enough, he says that the first baptism was attended by the *padrino* Mecate and the father of the baby, but he omits the attendance of the midwife, which was contrary to the testimonies of the infant's parents. Furthermore, he did agree with the mother Ortíz, in not wanting to upset the *casera* Agustina, saying they did not want to "snub the lady upstairs,"[114] because she was the intended godmother. Santiago then further revealed that he actually lived with the parents of the baby, but only slept there at night.[115] In his testimony there was an important addition at the end of the document, where Santiago asked if he could add just one more thing. He said that although he was a "natural" of Orizaba since he was raised there with his older brother, that he was born in Tepeaca, Puebla and he did not

[111] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 11r.
[112] Ibid, f. 11v.
[113] Ibid, fs. 11v-12r.
[114] Ibid, f. 12r.
[115] Ibid.

know the *calidad* of his parents because they died when he was very young.[116] Here Santiago implied that he could be Indian, perhaps in order to protect himself from further investigation, or at least the ambiguity could make it more difficult for him to fit into any of the spiritual courts as noted previously.

Up to this point in the investigation, it still appeared that the midwife was not very guilty, especially after Santiago's vague testimony. We see the midwife's involvement diminishing and now with the fact that Santiago was perhaps an Indian which agreed with Isabel and López's testimonies, he was out of the running for conviction. This despite the fact that, according to the parents' testimonies, he seems to have been the one most responsible for the double baptism. So then, the Inquisition needed more information and testimonies, and so they called forth Agustina Maldonado, the godmother, and her maid Anastasia, hoping to get more information and an actual criminal case going in order to put to rest this heresy of double baptism.

On June 22nd, 1775, Agustina Maldonado was called before the tribunal. Of all of the witnesses, Agustina was the most elite because she owned property, a huge house inhabited by several families, and had servants. She was a Spanish woman, thirty years old and married to Don Manuel Joseph Maldonado, surely an important family of the time and of the neighborhood. In her brief testimony, Agustina confirmed that she attended a baptism as the godmother of a baby whose mother was Isabel Ortíz who lived in the *cobacha* of her house with her husband the *latonero* (she didn't know his name).[117] She also corroborated the testimonies of the parents as to the attendees of the

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[116] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 12r.
[117] Ibid, f. 12v.

baptism party: herself, a man named Santiago who lived with the infants' parents, and a woman, who she thought might be the midwife and whose name she did not know.[118] Agustina must be protecting Sánchez, because as her landlady, she must have known the midwife's name (Sánchez lived in a hall of Agustina's house). Agustina said that they did not have a priest present, and that she gave the baby the name Joseph and last name Trinidad at the mother's request, but it was the Indian Santiago who gave the name and the *calidad* of the parents.[119] She was then asked if she gave the mother or anyone else a gift, and she replied that she gave the mother two pesos and the midwife four.[120]

In his testimony, Santiago had revealed that words had been spoken in front of Agustina's cook, Anastasia Berrio. So the Tribunal called her to testify on June 23rd, 1775. The 37-year-old mestiza and servant of Agustina Maldonado said that she knew a baby had been born in the *vecinidad* of her mistress's house because her mistress was the godmother, but didn't know who all attended besides her mistress, only that it was at the Cathedral during the nightly prayers.[121] Typical of the Inquisition attempting to retrieve house gossip or whispers from servants, they asked her if she heard anything mentioned about the baptism, to which she replied that she had only spoken with the mother because her mistress had sent her down to take the new mother some broth. Anastasia testified that Ortíz requested that she ask her mistress Agustina if she would be the godmother in the baptism, to which Agustina obliged out of charity.[122] The maid

[118] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 13r.
[119] Ibid, f. 13v.
[120] Ibid.
[121] Ibid, fs. 15v.-16r.
[122] Ibid, f. 16r.

knew that the baby had been taken to be baptized in the morning by the father and that the mother did not approve. But Anastasia could say no more because she never returned to Isabel's room after the return of the second baptism.[123] Anastasia also never mentions the presence of Sanchez at either of the two baptisms.

All of the previous testimonies have additional ratifications, in which witnesses were called again and read their testimony and then swore that it was the truth and asked whether or not they had anything to add. Most of them added nothing, but the mother Isabel added that eight days after giving birth, she had gone to bathe in the *Baño de las Animas* with her husband, and they came across the midwife Sánchez and the Indian Santiago.[124] Inside of the busy bath house, her husband, Antonio, was telling the group that he was unable to sleep at night and that he couldn't calm his heart when he thought of the night of the double baptism.[125] Ortíz introduced more suspicion of the midwife when she added that Sánchez persuaded them to keep the double baptism a secret. Ortíz testified that Sánchez told her that she had gone to talk to a priest about it, telling him the mother was "in need" and that the priest told her to keep the double baptism a secret, "just like a torta that you eat and it stays inside of you."[126] In this addition to her testimony, Isabel Ortíz begins to lay blame on the midwife, relaying that Sánchez persuaded them to not go before the tribunal of the Holy Office, saying that Sánchez warned the bath house party to keep the double baptisms a secret. Ortíz claims this is why she didn't come forth earlier. Ortíz also asked Sánchez if she had talked to her husband Manuel Aduna about the double baptisms and what he thought about this

[123] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 17r.
[124] Ibid, f. 18v.
[125] Ibid.
[126] Ibid, fs.18v-19r.

ordeal.[127] Since he was a literate Spaniard, the parents of the doubly baptized baby were very interested in his advice and opinion. She said she didn't talk to her husband about it out of respect for the baby, but when Manuel Aduna visited the parents' house one day, the parents asked him if he thought a double baptism was a case for the Inquisition.[128] The midwife's husband said that you couldn't baptize a baby twice and that he had seen people being taken out into the street with the *robulos* of baptism.[129] There was argument and worry amongst this social network, all living under the shadow of the Catholic Church and its Inquisition.

From here the investigation is concluded and the criminal proceedings against María Guadalupe Sánchez began. After reviewing the *proceso* (the trial proceedings) they decided to make a case against the midwife for the heresy of double baptism.[130] On July 19th, 1775, the mandate for her imprisonment was printed and sent out, instructing anyone who saw her to apprehend her and that all of her belongings were to be confiscated by the Holy Office.[131] She was to be taken immediately to the *carceles secretas*[132], the secret jails of the Inquisition and from there she could plead her case. On placing Sánchez in the secret prison a *cala y cata* was performed, which is a list of her possessions and physical and personal genealogical description.[133] Sánchez appeared before the judges in a tattered state with worn-out clothing, rotting shoes, and

[127] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 19r.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Ibid.
[130] Ibid, f. 20r.
[131] Ibid, f. 21r.
[132] *carceles secretas*- "The secret prisons were used by the Inquisition for holding accused heretics incommunicado during the duration of their trial. A prisoner in these secret cells was not allowed to have communication with anyone." From the glossary in Chuchiak, *The Inquisition of New Spain,* 346.
[133] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 22r.

battered hands. Her few personal belongings were confiscated. Her family tree consisted of her husband, her sister, and her three children. In each *audiencias de oficio* she was asked to search her conscience and reveal the whole truth, not holding anything back. She swore to tell the truth and keep the secret of the Holy Office. They asked her if she knew why she was there and she said she had no idea.[134] The judges replied that it was not custom of the Inquisition to apprehend people without a great deal of information against them.[135] And they asked her if she had anything to confess. She said no. The judges urged her to run through her memory and confess the truth of anything that she feels guilty of or any knowledge she has of other people who may have gone against the Church, to save her soul. Again, the midwife said she had nothing troubling her conscious and with that, the first *audiencia* was completed. Sánchez was returned to her jail cell, number 10. Sanchez was demonstrating serious defiance, but after a week languishing in jail, she was called again and "remembered" some details.

Summoned from her cell for the second audiencia on July 24th, in front of Don Manuel Ruiz de Vallejo, she said that it had occurred in her memory that she had been called to a house on Tacuba Street to take a baby to be baptized at the nightly prayers and she did not know if it had been baptized or not because she had not been at the birth and had no reason to know.[136] This seems to have infuriated the judge. She was still not confessing. They then told her that she already knew from the first *audiencia* that she was admonished by God and the mother our Lady the Virgin Mary to run through her memories and unload her conscious and to tell the entire truth of everything she had

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[134] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 24r.
[135] Ibid, fs. 24r-24v.
[136] Ibid, f. 25r.

done, said, or seen or of others that appeared to be an offense against God.[137] They began to threaten her saying there are more places where she can be used for charity than in the Holy Office, *"havrá mas lugares de usar con ella de la Misericordia que en el Santo Oficio le acostumbra con los bienes."*[138] She replied again that she heard the monitions but nevertheless, she had nothing to change in her confession.[139] As tension rose, an additional prosecutor named Don Nicolás Saavedra came into the room. Saavedra, Fiscal Inquisitor of the Holy Office, brought a new sworn *acusación* formed against Maria Guadalupe Sánchez, and he said that in it relayed information that what she did was not of *malicia*.[140] This is an interesting addition and mysterious document because it did not say who testified this, but it defended Sánchez. The anonymous testimony recounted the events of the day and night of the double baptism, summarizing that Sánchez did not have a part in the baptisms besides being paid four pesos and that she was ignorant of it being a sin and that the Indian Santiago was the one responsible for the baptisms.[141]

But this was of no help to Sánchez. On August 3rd, 1775 the prosecutor, Don Nicolás Galante y Saavedra read the accusation made up of 12 articles (*capítulos*).[142] This was a detailed summary of testimonies and events, weaving them together to make Sánchez appear more guilty. But oddly, the accusations still did not explicitly indicate that Sánchez performed both baptisms. Her guilt seems to have stemmed from her being a midwife. In the accusation, they condemned her for not upholding her office of

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[137] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, fs. 25r-25v.
[138] Ibid, f. 25v.
[139] Ibid.
[140] Ibid.
[141] Ibid, f. 28r.
[142] Ibid.

partera, saying "didn't she know the sacred duties of midwives and the proper ways to offer the sacraments and that she should have known that a baby cannot be baptized twice."[143] They called her a heretic, an anabaptista, and a marcionista.[144] The Inquisitors were indignant at her failures as a midwife: she should have stopped whatever was happening, she had been obligated to do so, in her job as a midwife. She should have known better. At the end of the accusation, Saavedra puts forth ideas for her punishment and condemnation. "*Hechora de los delitos de que le llevo acusada, condenandola por ellos en las penas en ha incurrido y se hallan impuestos por comun, Bullas, Decretos, y constituciones y cartas acordadas de este Santo Oficio, mandandolas executan y que se executen en su persona para su condigno castigo exemplo y excarmiento de los demas.*"[145] He then added, "In case my intention is not well proven: it has to be served that this prisoner is put to the *cuestión de tormento* (torture), where it will be repeated on her body however many times is needed and that here there will be justice."[146]

After having been read the formal charges against her for the first time, María Guadalupe Sánchez responded to them one by one. She began by saying that she had already confessed to taking the baby twice to be administered the baptisms in the Church of the Sagrario and she proceeded without thinking or reflection because she was called by the Indian Santiago to do it.[147] Later, at the house of the parents they urged her to take the baby because it was going to rain and again she had no say or liberty to answer or understand or intention of knowing it was a heresy. Sánchez added

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[143] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, fs. 29r-33r.
[144] Ibid, f. 29r.
[145] Ibid, f. 33r.
[146] Ibid.
[147] Ibid, f. 33v.

that her comadre María de la Luz had notified her of another birth and baptism also on Tacuba Street, and that she had to attend it in little time, she had no idea if in the administration of the baptism if there was any error.[148]

Her response to the first article indicates some of her beliefs about being a midwife. She said that she was aware of the benefits/blessings that she had received of *la mano liberal de Dios*, (the free hand of God-a mandate given to midwives to be able to baptize).[149] But that she did not know the circumstances and standards that are required in baptisms for her to be able to give a valid baptism, because she was not a *partera examinada* (licensed midwife).[150] As early as 1750 the Protomedicato (regulatory agency of health and medicine) mandated that midwives be licensed and monitored.[151] The condemnations and admonitions of the Inquisitors to Sánchez's' lack of instruction demonstrates that expectations of midwives complying with regulatory bodies was increasing. It had been 24 years after the initial decree of the Protomedicato that midwives be licensed yet very few midwives complied with the order.[152] Poor and illiterate women like Sánchez who could not afford the license, nor read or write were unable to enroll in the midwifery training.[153] The Inquisition was aware of this and their harsh treatment and high expectations of Sanchez demonstrate that they were also punishing her for not complying with the licensure mandate. If the Protomedicato did not have the power to ensure regulatory protocol of midwives, then, the Inquisition

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[148] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 34r.
[149] Ibid.
[150] Ibid.
[151] Ana María Carrillo, "Nacimiento y muerte de una profesión. Las parteras tituladas en México." *Dynamis: Acta Hispanica Ad Medicinae Hisotriam Illustrandam* 19, (1999), 168.
[152] Only two midwives received licenses, from the time of the decree up to the closure of the Protomedicato in 1831 with the wave of secularization.
[153] see Ana María Castillo and Lee Penyak's work on the licensing of midwives.

could step in to supplement control and surveillance of this frequently problematic group (midwives). Sánchez attempted to distance herself from the social group and identity of a midwife and with it the standards of the job. She continued that her main employment was that of a washerwoman and denied that she had any part or arranged in the infant being baptized for the second time and she also did not know that it was a sin baptize the same child twice.

She proceeded to respond to each article agreeing with some of it but standing her ground that she was innocent. She admitted that her only mistake was not telling the godmother Agustina that the baby had already been baptized, but that she went to the re baptism out of love and care for Isabel Ortíz, and that it is true that she received four pesos from the godmother but she did not attend the baptism for that reason.[154] She concluded her responses with a plea, begging the prosecutors to not make her poor family suffer and see her taken out into the streets, and to look at her with piety and mercy and that if they torture her she will not be able to say another thing because she has said everything in truth under the oath.[155]

With that, an interesting turn of events took place, and Maria Guadalupe Sánchez was pleased to hear that two *letrados* appeared to defend her. Such men were usually given to prisoners that have cases in the Holy Office. One was named Don Manuela Joseph de Azpertia and the other, Don Torres. She was allowed to select which one she wanted, and she picked Azpertia. With that she was returned to her jail cell.[156] Maria met with her defender and discussed her case, swearing to him to tell the truth.

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[154] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 34r.
[155] Ibid, f. 36v.
[156] Ibid, f. 37r.

Transcriptions of this meeting showed that the Inquisition surveilled the prisoner's interactions and communications with her lawyer, before the formal defense proceedings began.[157]

The defense of María Guadalupe Sánchez carried out by the *letrado* Azpertia had a different tone and language than all of the other documents and testimonies in this case. He began by acknowledging the sacredness of baptism and flaunted his knowledge of theology in order to impress the judges of the Holy Office, yet quite possibly mostly offended them. Azpertia argued that the double baptism Sánchez was involved with, was not an act of heresy but only a natural and mortal sin. The *letrado* implicated the priest to whom Sánchez had turned to for advice, saying that "she had a spiritual sickness and needed a doctor and when she went to the priest for her remedy, she was told to keep her sickness (double baptism) a secret."[158] Azpertia continued pleading her case, saying that since she was of the low classes and uneducated, that she could not be held accountable to have knowledge of such "arcane scripture." He also used her gender in order to persuade them of her innocence and intellectual error. Azpertia argued that women were comparable to demented people who had no control over their bodies or actions and were easily prone to error.[159] Azpertia elaborated and defended his position, stating that his views were backed by philosophers and doctors of the early Enlightenment period and that women lacked the ability to be instructed and were susceptible to ignorance.[160] Sánchez's defense was not successful. It's probable that Azpertia angered the Inquisitors with his theological arguments and interpretations,

[157] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, fs. 37r-38r.
[158] Ibid.
[159] Ibid.
[160] Ibid.

his flaunting of gendered scientific beliefs of the time, and especially his claim that this case of double baptism was not heretical, due to the perpetrator's ignorance. It also seems that Azpertia's main interest may not have been to defend Sánchez due to his bold and reckless arguments against the church while in the face of the church. He seemed more invested in relishing in the opportunity to confront the Inquisitors with his own knowledge and theories of science, gender, sin, and heresy. He had nothing to lose, and more than likely saw this as an excellent experience to flaunt his intellect and challenge the old ways of the Catholic Church, as *letrados* enjoyed doing. Sánchez, although afforded a lawyer, was found guilty and sentenced.

Her official sentencing was read to her with the details of her public humiliation, corporal punishment (100 lashes in the streets), banishments and forced reclusion in the insane Asylum for women, *Divino Salvador*.[161] It is striking that Sánchez is put into the women's insane asylum, almost as if the Church is responding to the *letrados* claim that women are like demented people and have no control over their actions. Sanchez's *Auto de Fe particular*,[162] was scheduled for the 24th of March 1776 in the church of the convent of Santo Domingo. Authorities of the church, her family, friends, and many other people were in attendance when they gave her the lit candle, the *coroza* to wear, and read her a statement where she promised not to be bad.[163] After this humiliating and abusive event, they returned her to her cell and questioned her yet again, asking if she had anything to confess. She said no. They told her to keep everything that had

[161] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 66r.
[162] Chuchiak: "auto particular de fé was a smaller auto-de fé in which only a few prisoners had their sentences read in public, also usually held in a church. Most often only the officials of the inquisition were in attendance, without the pomp and ceremony involved in larger general auto-de-fé", 344.
[163] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 1157, exp. 1, f. 66r.

happened in her case a secret and to also not tell anyone in jail about what she had gone through.

There was nothing lenient about the sentencing of María Guadalupe Sánchez. Her life was turned upside down. Although there were many other actors in the double baptism, who could have been seen as guilty or even more guilty than Sánchez, the midwife, in the end, was the only one to receive punishment from the Holy Office. Why? First of all, the Inquisition was less likely to persecute the *casera* Agustina because she was a high ranking Spanish propertied woman. She was also the *madrina*, and took care of many lower class people and families, letting them live in small rooms around her large estate and giving them jobs. If the Inquisition put her away, many more people might pay the consequence of her absence, and would have caused disorder in the neighborhood of Santo Domingo. The parents of the baby maintained their innocence because they came forth with the story. The mother of course did not attend either baptism while the father said he had nothing to do with the second baptism and all other testimonies corroborated his testimony. The Indian, Santiago, who seemed the most guilty and responsible for the double baptism, stayed free due to his *calidad* as *indio*. The Inquisition could not punish him. The racially ambiguous female healer, Sánchez, however, met all the requirements for suspicion and condemnation. Her identity was confusing to people, some said she was Indian, others that she was a *mulata blanca*, and to some she was a *mestiza*. Sánchez was illiterate and supposedly poor, yet she was married to a literate Spanish man. When the Inquisitors looked into the marriage records of Manuel Aduna and María Guadalupe Sánchez, there were suspicions brought up as to whether or not the marriage was a legitimate one. Yet more

condemning then her ambiguous status within her community among lines of race and marriage, was her social position as a midwife. Expectations and regulations of midwives during the late 18th century were increasing as scientific and government intrusion on the traditionally female profession gained momentum. Sánchez also had the temerity to maintain her innocence, repeatedly denying that she was the one who baptized the baby twice, which surely aggravated the Inquisitors.

Midwives were perceived as reckless, suspicious and in need of regulation and spiritual order by the Church fathers. In contrast, Sánchez was a well-known midwife in her community of Santo Domingo, she attended many births, taking babies to be baptized and even naming them sometimes. Her network of friends and neighbors counted on her in their times of need, as the father of the doubly baptized baby called on her when his wife Isabel Ortíz went into labor. The responsibilities and roles of midwives were important, complex, and powerful. This power unsettled the traditional authority figures of the Spanish elite and Catholic Church who sought increasing surveillance of midwives and their practices in the 18th century. Midwives acted during the crucial time of birth and were expected to administer the proper rituals of baptism. The spiritual and physical reproduction of the colony fell on the shoulders of the everyday midwife. The Protomedicato and the Inquisition were threatened by their unsanctioned authority and worked together to create ways to regulate them. The manner in which those in power reacted and related to midwives in the 18th century aids in understanding how modernity developed. The foreshadow of scientific classification lied in the quantification of their sacred techniques.

PASQUALA DE LOS REYES

Divining a Mestiza: Identity, place, and the complexities of punishment

Indigenous midwife Pasquala de los Reyes chanted Nahuatl prayers and Spanish orations under the shadows of the hills of the valley of Malinalco in 1754.[164] Gazing into a water filled gourd, Pasquala twisted and cast petals of the ceremonial flower *cempoalxochitl* into the reflecting surface of the divinatory mirror.[165] She offered this service of divination as one of her multiple skills in her job as midwife. The case of Pasquala de los Reyes reveals cultural continuations of divination over time. The valley in which she practiced was the legendary home of the most powerful sorceress and diviner, Malinalxochitl, the sister of Huitzilopochtli. Here, ritual and place are explicitly tied, where Pasquala inherited the gift of sorcery and divination through her ritual connection to the land.[166] The trials of Pasquala de los Reyes also demonstrate the way in which her gender, race, and status were bound together and experienced varying degrees of control and surveillance, depending on who is doing the unraveling. Juridical competition and confusion reigned as certain authorities became more lenient in the unsanctioned domains of popular divination, while other social groups and authorities wanted her punished.[167] Pasquala's case file reveals that midwives in mid 18th-century Mexico performed more roles than that of chilbirth assistant. For although she was indeed a midwife, Pasquala was known in her community in her role as a diviner. Midwives were multidimensional and their knowledge base often included multiple

[164] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 992, exp. 10, f. 211r.-211v.
[165] Ibid.
[166] Jeanette Favrot Peterson, *The Paradise Garden Murals of Malinalco: Utopia and Empire in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993),
[167] Laura A. Lewis, *Hall of Mirrors: Power, Witchcraft, and Caste in Colonial Mexico* (Duke University Press, 2003) 6-13 (in depth discussion of sanctioned vs. unsanctioned domains of the judiciary and witchcraft).

skill sets that expanded beyond assisting pregnant women. Pasquala's story builds off of previous cases in this thesis in that she also constituted an ambigous position within her community. Within her community, the intersections of her race, practices, beliefs, gender, and ethnicity marked her as an outsider.

Pasquala de los Reyes's trial began on the 10th of April, 1754. Before the Ecclesiastical judge Leonardo Jose Terralla, in Tenancingo (one of the pueblos in the Doctrinas of Malinalco) appeared Juan Chírlin, neighbor of Malinalco, fifty years of age and a *mestizo*.[168] Chirlín denounced an *India Ladina* and said that he did not know her name but that she was from the pueblo of Tecomatlan and she lived below the store of Don Ambrosio and was a midwife.[169] Chírlin claimed that upon finding out that he had lost a donkey, the midwife begged him to let her divine its whereabouts saying that since she had foregone many risks for him, but he refused, saying it would smart his honor and credit, but that if she kept it secret, he would do it.[170] The midwife promised to secrecy, and then proceeded to divine the whereabouts of the lost donkey.

Pasquala de los Reyes began the divination ritual instructing Chírlin to follow her lead. First she lit two candles, placing them in front of a portrait of Our Lady Guadalupe, she then poured water into a *xicara* (gourd) and placed it alongside the candles and Guadalupe. Reyes began to kiss the creed and said Ave Maria's in the castillian language.[171] Chírlin added that Reyes also said prayers in Nahuatl but he did not undertand them nor do them.[172] Reyes then brought a *cempoalxochitl* flower,

[168] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 992, exp. 10, fs. 211r.-211v.
[169] Ibid.
[170] Ibid.
[171] Ibid.
[172] Ibid.

commonly known as marigold, she pulled one petal from the flower placing it in the water and said “this is the donkey.” She asked Chirlin if he knew of anyone who had malice with him and who may have stolen his donkey, to which he replied, Juan Quinto. Then Reyes pulled off another petal and said “this is Juan Quinto” and put it in the *xicara* of water. After seeing how the flowers appeared in the water, Reyes divined that Juan Quinto had not stolen the donkey.[173] Determined to provide an answer, Reyes took the flower petals out of the water, to start anew. Pulling petals from the flower she said “this is *el cerrito*” and put it into the water, and then said “this is the donkey” with another petal, placing it in the water as well.[174] She added two more generalized “thieves” and placed them into the water as flower petals. Looking into the water and observing how the various petals moved from one another, Reyes declared that the marigold petal designated “el cerrito” is where he would find his donkey and that his donkey was not stolen.[175] Upon this revelation, Chírlin head to the *cerrito* to look for his donkey.

The valley of Malinalco is cradeled by a range of hills that inclines to the highest point in the north and the lowest in the south, volcanic and basaltic rock form numerous *cerros* (cliffs) with the smallest one being the cerro del Picacho.[176] There are more than 18 cerros surrounding the valley. Some of these, like the *cerro de los Idolos* are home to prehispanic temples while others are said to house spirits of snakes that need to be fed and who prey on children and livestock, like the *cerro de la Vibora*. The

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[173] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 992, exp. 10, fs. 211r-211v.
[174] Ibid, f. 212r.
[175] Ibid.
[176] Silva Alvarez Aurora Selene, “Continuidad del Pensamiento Prehispánico: La Pintura Mural del Convento Agustino de Malinalco,” (Xalapa: Thesis for the University of Veracruz, 2015), 31.

cerrito described in this trial and divining ritual indicates one of the smaller *cerros* that marked the topography of the Valley of Malinalco. Reyes was continuing divnitation traditions in contacting deities and/or spirits said to reside in the *cerros*, in order to find the lost donkey. Or perhaps she knew that livestock were frequently drawn to certain areas or particular *cerros* and put forth a good guess based on her knowledge of the landbase and community service of her finding previously lost goods and animals. Whichever the case, Chírlin searched for two days in the *cerrito* and did not find his donkey.[177]

After his big let down, he decided to complain to his friend Andrea Ximenez, also from Malinalco, who shared with him that her father in law had previously saught assistance from the Indian midwife in finding his own lost donkey, but when he asked her, she replied that it was already too late for the donkey to be found, and that if they would have asked her earlier it would not be lost.[178] The Ecclesisastical judge after hearing this testimony asked Chírlin if there are others besides Ximenez that know of such superstitions similar to the ones practiced by the *India* or if anything similar has ever happened to him before. They asked him for names and residences of possible suspects. To no avail to the investigators, Chírlin knew nothing more beyond what he declared.[179] The judge Terralla then sent a dispatch to the Preist of Malinalco requesting that he have Andrea Ximenez come before the court without a single delay.[180]

On the 15th of May 1754, Andrea Ximenez appeared in court, an Indian widow with no specific job, ignorant of her age, and who lived in the *barrio* of Santa Monica

[177] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 992, exp. 10, f. 212r.
[178] Ibid, f. 212v.
[179] Ibid, f. 213r.
[180] Ibid.

de la Doctrina de Malinalco.[181] The Judge asked her if she knew both Juan Chírlin and a midwife who lived in Tecomatlan. She said that she knew both of them. Next, the judge asked Ximenez if she said anything to Chírlin about a midwife and if she knew the midwife's name. Ximenez confessed that she knew the midwife's name (Pasquala) and that she had spoken with Chírlin about a lost donkey in which he had consulted Pasquala and she "gave him ways to find it."[182] Then the judge asked Ximenez how she knew that Pasquala was a diviner, to which she responded with the story of Pasquala helping her father-in-law. Pasquala, said the witness Ximenez, told him it was too late, it had already been six months, too much time had passed for her to divine. And this is how Ximenez knew that Pasquala de los Reyes was a diviner.[183] With that, she signed and swore and ended her testimony before the Ecclesiastical judge Terrallo. Now the tribunal felt it had sufficient evidence to proceed with a formal investigation of Pasquala de los Reyes and so the judge sent the senior prosecutor (*fiscal mayor*) to her pueblo of Tecomatlan to bring her to court so that she could verify her version of events and compare them to the declarations against her.[184]

Upon retrieving her from her village, Pasquala came before the court in the pueblo of Tenancingo on May 16th, 1754, the very next day of Ximenez's testimony.[185] After having been read the charges against her, Pasquala was asked of her *calidad*. She replied that she was a daughter of an *India* and *Mestizo*. With this new information, the Ecclesiastical judge referred this case to the *Provisor y Vicario Generalmente de Indios*

[181] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 992, exp. 10, f. 213v.
[182] Ibid.
[183] Ibid, f. 214r.
[184] Ibid, f. 214v.
[185] Ibid.

so that he could determine and seek agreement in this matter. Judge Terralla added that he had, "in his own right" safeguarded the "deposit" (meaning Pasquala) until the house in which the deposit is in is verified. After the house was verified, the *notario* of the ecclesiastical court declared that he was putting Pasquala into *depósito* (reclusion) in the house of Captain Don Joseph de Alcoser, designating him as her authority, guard, and custodian.[186] This dispatch was also sent to the Senior *Provisor Generalmente* and Inquisitor of the Indians.

Putting women into *depósito* was a gendered form of punishment in colonial Mexico. Since Pasquala had no known relatives or husband, the Judge kept her in his own house until he could find another stranger for Pasquala to stay with. In *The Women of Mexico City, 1790-1857*, Siliva Marina Arrom discusses the historical significance and context of women being put into deposit. She explains that the *depósito* was created as a way for husbands to maintain control over their wives during divorce proceedings. If a woman wanted a divorce from her husband, then she would be "put into deposit." This meant being kept under lock and key in a friend or relatives house until the divorce was finalized and in order to protect the husband's honor (in case that the wife saught out other men). Pasquala was kept in a house of a complete stranger. Arrom explains why, "it was primarily the poorer litigants, whose friends could not easily accommodate additional members in their households, or women with numerous children who were placed with strangers. In these instances the court appointed the *depósitario*, often a respected widow, or if no one else could be found a notary, or other official."[187]

[186] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 992, exp. 10, f. 215r.
[187] Silvia Marina Arrom, *The Women of Mexico City, 1790-1857* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1992).

Pasquala, although not at risk in dishonoring a husband, was seen as enough of a threat to require her reclusion. This was because she was single, divining, and an outsider racially ambigous midwife. These various elements to her identity positioned her as a danger to the colonial order.

The authorities wanted to find out all they could about this mysterious woman practicing sorcery in their territories. The prosecutor of the Archibishop, having seen the charges against Pasquala the midwife, stated that since Pasquala was the daughter of an *india* and *mestizo*, the Ecclesistical judge should suspend the procedures and further investigate Pasquala's *calidad* and customs and way of life.[188] On the 29th of May, judge Terralla after seeing the Archbisops letter, ordered the notary to go to the house where Pasquala was in reculsion, and under oath, have her say where she was baptized and what year, the names of her parents and of her *patria* (heritage) and other people with known knowledge of them.[189] The notary went to the house of Captain Don Joseph de Alcoser where Pasquala was reclused and had her swear to tell the truth. Pasquala said she was baptized in Mexico City and from what her mother had told her, the Preist was Don Juan de Borques, she did not remember what year she was baptized, and her parents were Baltazar de los Reyes and Inés María and that her father was born and lived in Tecomatlan while her mother was from the Pueblo of Poquicingo de la Doctrina de Tenango. She testified that there was no one that could testify to having known her parents because it had been many years since they had died and that they left her when she was three years old. Pasquala told the notary that she did not know how old she was but maybe past 60 years old. The notary then told her to declare her grandparents and

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[188] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 992, exp. 10, f. 215v.
[189] Ibid, f. 216r.

parents of her parents, wich, surprisingly, she knew: Gazpar de los Reyes and Veronica. How she knew who her grandparents were when her parents died when she was three is something of a a mystery. Pasquala never revealed her *calidad*: she never said if she was *india* or *mestiza*. The notary failed at his job and so did Terralla in his instructions. Terralla saw that her *calidad* was not identified explicitly in the previous correspondence, but said that they could look into baptismal records for her parents. Terralla also ordered the notary to find two or three witnesses to examine in Tecomatlan and that they didn't have to know Pasquala individually but only of her fame, common opinion, and estimation of her *calidad*.

The notary acceptted these orders and found residents of Tecomatlan to participate. They all testified on the same day, June 6th, 1754. The first, Marselo Pedro, a married, 50 year old indian, said that Pasquala was a midwife who had lived in the Pueblo for many years. Pedro testified that in town, Pasquala was commonly thought to be a *mestiza*, but that he could not say for sure because he didn't know her parents nor had he ever met them.[190] The second participant into the investigation of Pasquala's race was Simon de la Cruz, who was 70 years old and said that he knew her and that she had lived in Tecomatlan since before the epidemic, adding that she was already a woman when she came. On her race, Cruz stated that Pasquala always dressed like a *mestiza* and spoke Spanish, but that he didn't know what *calidad* she was, nor that of her parents or wether or not they were *mestizos* because he had never met them.[191] The third participant who sounded suspiciously similar to the second, was named Martin Pedro, an Indian, married and more than 70 years old. He claimed to know Pasquala de

[190] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 992, exp. 10, f. 217r.
[191] Ibid, f. 218r.

los Reyes and that she came to live in the Pueblo of Tecomatlan before the epidemic passed. He did not know her origins or anything of her *calidad*, however, he stated that, in the pueblo they generally considered her a "person of reason" and not an Indian. Martin Pedro also claimed that he did not know her parents or where they were from.

Although people know of Pasquala, she was an outsider. No one knew her family and no one really knew her. They knew of her through her services and work as a divining midwife, which was how Pasquala created social bonds and made a living. It is also noteworthy that Pasquala had come to the Pueblo before an epidemic struck and she and the other old Indian men all survived and knew each other. Perhaps Pasquala had helped them and the town through the hardships of disease by employing her curing knowledge as a multifaceted midwife. It is also interesting that the Indian men seem to deindigenize Pasquala due to her outsider status. They were Indian and had always lived in the Pueblo. She, however, came to town before the epidemic and dressed differently and spoke Spanish. This is because, Pasquala was an orphan from Mexico City, and would have adopted *mestizo* attributes such as language and dress, surviving in Spanish households as a servant or in orphanges, but that does not necessarily mean that she is not Indian either. For Pasquala's father Baltazar de los Reyes was born in Tecomatlan, as she had testified. Why didn't anyone remember her father or his family, besides the fact that they were living in Mexico City when Pasquala was born and died three years later? It seems that a small Indian village would know her father, unless he was an outsider as well. Pasquala returned to her father's homeland many years after he had died, once she was already a woman, therefore she must have either returned in search of relatives or saught to revisit warm embraces by established familiars. Either way,

from the testimonies of the three village elders that were chosen to speak on her status and background, it seems that Pasquala's return to the village of her father, was not entirely welcome because no one would claim her or could say who she really was. In addition, the village elders chosen to speak on her status wanted to distance themselves from any close ties with a known sorceress midwife.

On June 11th, the findings of the baptismal record search of Pasquala's parents and grandparents were sent to Terralla. The Bishop Sotomayor informed the investigation that he had carefully looked over all of the books of Baptisms of the parish from the beginning to the end, and in one book were three baptism parties, he said that "although they had different things among them, as the Indians usually confused their names, its possible that it could be one of them."[192] The following document lists the three questionable entries that the Bishop has found in the book of baptisms from the Parish of Malinalco. The first baptism party, on the 11th of February of 1619, baptized Baltasar, son of Mateo Xorres and Augustina Monica, the madrina was Agustina Maria. The second party, on the 16th of December of 1619, Baltazar was baptized, the son of Matheo Eospser and Juana Agustina, the madrina was Augustina Maria. The third, from the 15th of July 1628, Baltazar the son of Blas Hernandes and Monica Augustina, neighbors of Tecomatlan was baptised. The madrina was Juana Enconima.[193] These records put forth from the Parish seem highly questionable for if Pasquala is in her 70's in 1754, then her father Baltazar born in 1619 or 1628 whould have been in his late 50's late 60's when he had her. Nonetheless, the Ecclesiastical courts still did not have concrete evidence as to the race and status of Pasquala de los Reyes.

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[192] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 992, exp. 10, f. 220r.
[193] Ibid, f. 221r.

Then on the 14th of June, Ecclesiastical judge Terralla, having read the three testimonies and viewed the baptism findings, ordered that everything on Pasquala be sent to the *Provisor Vicario Generalmente de Indios* so that they could determine how to proceed. But first the *Promotor fiscal* of the Archbishop Don Pereda (from the Ecc. Courts) had now seen charges against Pasquala, and stated, "that in her neighborhood they have her for *mestiza* and not *india*"[194] and that for this reason, this case had to be sent to the Holy Office of the Inquisition and not to the Ecclesiastical Judge. Pereda is backed up by Doctor Don Francisco Ximenez, *Juez, Provisor, Vicario Generalmente* and Inquisitor of the Indians of this Archbishop and of the Phillipine Islands, who related that these autos be sent to the Tribunal of the Holy Office of the Inquisition.[195] From here we see the Ecclesiastical courts and judges in agreement with the Provisor of the Indians, they have scoured the village for testimonies and unearthed baptismal archives for any clue that Pasquala de los Reyes might not be Indian. They divined her into a *mestiza* and now she could be sent to the Inquisition.

Why did they go to such lengths to make her into a *mestiza* when they could have proceeeded against her in one of the two courts able to prosecute Indians, the Ecclesiastical Court and the Provisor of Indians? There are a few probabilities as to why they insisted on establishing her calidad as *mestiza* and sending her off to the Holy Office. For one, Pasquala was seen as an outsider in a very close knit rural Indigenous valley, she was a midwife practicing divination, she was old, female, racially ambigous and culturally confusing, they wanted to get rid of her and cast her out of las Doctrinas de Malinalco. Second, the preists, bishops, and Indian Inquisitors who were supposed to

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[194] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 992, exp. 10, f. 221v.
[195] Ibid, f. 222r.

have a reasonable handle on their population when it came to concerns of superstition, witchcraft, and divination, did not want to admit that one of their well disciplined Indians would be capable of doing such a thing, therefore, she must be one of those suspicious intermediary hybrid *mestizas*. For the Doctrinas de Malinalco had an ever fading legacy of a once glorious mendicant past. The Augustinians had established a beautiful monastery covered in exquisite indian paintings of medicinal plants, to instruct and evangelize the Indians of Malinalco, the Spanish church and crown shared a vision of Malinalco as a new world and garden of eden.[196] All of this had already come to waste nearly two hundred years before Pasquala de los Reyes found herself in trouble with all of the various institutions of punishments and certainly the air of salvation had tightened from the humanist instructors to the spiritual police of the increasingly paranoid and fragmented conventions of the Catholic Church.

When the Inquisitors of the Holy Office in Mexico City saw the auttos and various documents, and testimonies of Pasquala's case file they laughed in the face of both Ecclesiastical Court and Indian Court. They snub all of the hard work and various investigations carried out by Terrallas, Ximenez, the preists and various notarios. The prosecuting secretary wrote that "after having seen the doings of the Ecclesiastical Court and the Provisor of Indios that was sent to the tribunal against a woman named Pasquala, whose *calidad* they are ignorant of because in her declaration she did not express what her *calidad* was, and that those who denounced her said that she was *India*, and that the three testifiers who were examined did not give conclusive

[196] Jeanette Favrot Peterson, *The Paradise Garden Murals of Malinalco: Utopia and Empire in Sixteenth-Century Mexico* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 1993), 414.

testimonies to her race."[197] The secretary of the Holy Office continued in his annoyance with the ordeal, saying that it didn't matter if she was *india* or not because Pasquala has been accused of divining and imprisoned based off of solely one testimony, that of Juan Chirlin.[198] The Holy Office is not having it and they order Pasquala to be freed from reclusion.

The Inquisition's dissmissal of Pasquala's case is surprising considering all of the hard work that went into getting their attention in the first place. Perhaps they could not be bothered with what they perceived as squabbles among Indians in rural villages. They also needed to have more testimonies and witnesses in order to proceed with a case against Pasquala. Nevertheless, the entire ordeal, although not ending up in Inquisitorial prosecution, must have been difficult for the elderly Pasquala. She was uprooted from her home and sent to live with a Captain, a total stranger to her, we can only guess how she might have been treated. Pasquala's reputation was important for midwives because their social bonds helped maintian their employment. Throughout the lengthy investigation of the Ecclesiastical courts her identity and position within the community were continously questioned. The consequences of this were quite possibly very damaging to Pasquala's already tenuous and fragile social position and status in her community, as an outsider female healer.

Pasquala's mysterious positioning within her community network, (she was known and unknown, indigenous and not indigenous) reveals how the multidimensionality of midwives in late colonial Mexico, could disturb not only Church

[197] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 992, exp. 10, f. 223r.
[198] Ibid.

officials but neighbors and villagers as well. Pasquala was known as a midwife who would have helped women in Tecomatlan give birth, but she also supplemented her income by practicing divination. Her flower ritual was marketable and though her knowledge was saught after, her borderless identity made her vulnerable to suspicion and punishment. Juan Chírlin, upset that Pasquala's divination ceremony failed to produce his lost donkey, saw that it would be easy to "get her back," by turning her into the Ecclesiastical authorities of the pueblo, who were eager to fully investigate every trace of her identity and relations. Pasquala teaches us that 18th-century midwives defied parameters of social order and identity. The strict parameters on race were becoming unmanageable for the various religious authorities and institutions. Fortunately for Pasquala, the Inquisition dismissed her case and ordered her freed from reclusion. Yet her story shows that even the pre-Inquisitorial trials, as with the various village courts (Ecclesiastical courts and Court of Indians) went to great lengths to define her identity and control her (putting her into reclusion). The policing and punishment of midwives, their practices, and identities, began before they ever stepped foot in front of an Inquisitor. Adverstiy for suspect women manifested in as many ways as their practices.

MARCELA

Superstitious After Birth: Doctors, mothers and midwives

In the sticky air of a Yucatecan August, Doña Josepha Pastrana began to suffer gravely from her stomach and womb. She felt that she was totally losing her mind, bending over uncontrollably, unable to lift herself up, and acting as a dementend person making strange movements with her head and hands.[199] These curious symptoms were experienced by Pastrana eight days after giving birth in Merida, in 1752. Seven months later, Pastrana came forward to the Inquisition to denounce the ailments and the person who she believed produced them. She attributed her suffering to a *mala asistencia* that she had endured with a *partera*, known only as "Marcela," the woman of a soldier. Even though Pastrana had a successful delivery and her ailments were cured by Marcela's healing techniques, the new mother believed to have been cursed by the midwife.

The denunciation of the Spanish mother against Marcela the midwife is all of five pages long and we do not know what more came of this denunciation. However, this testimony provides important insights into the culture of chidbirth in late colonial Mexico and shows continuity over geographical regions. Pastrana was cursed and cured by Marcela in Merida, Yucatan, hundreds of miles away from all of the preivous midwives discussed in this thesis. The mixed blessing of midwives was widespread across all of Mexico, who were frequently and simulatenously praised and condemned by their patients. Furthermore, Pastrana provides rare and detailed descriptions of her physical/spiritual post partum ailments and her testimony describes a midwife actually

[199] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 953 ex. 41, f. 310r.

performing post partum healing practices. These are rare details useful for understanding reproductive medicine in the New World medical culture because many Inquisition cases do not contain such personal physical testimonies of women's experiences with midwives.[200] Pastrana's experience under the care of Marcela also illuminates how class distinctions played an important role in the way healing experiences were created and manifested. We can see competition between midwives and doctors when the husband of Pastrana called a Doctor to aid his wife in her suffering after birth. Mystical and medical beliefs were also frequently combined in reproductive practices, and is demonstrated throughout Pastrana's denunciation, in her experiences under the care of both midwife and doctor.

Pastrana believed herself cursed and Marcela was to blame. Although happiness and ease surrounded her childbirth, eight days postpartum Pastrana began to exhibit curious symptoms that some thought were simple postpartum events and others saw as signs of demonic possession. In her testimony, she said she felt no control over her body, could barely lift her head, and compared herself to a "demented" person.[201] Pastrana's husband Bartolomew Garcia Cortilla, a church tithe collector, upon seeing his wife in such a state, immediately sought assistance from doctor Don Phelipe de León. When Dr. de León arrived at Pastrana's bedroom, the first "remedy" that this trained medical professional prescribed was to give Pastrana the Sacraments. Dr. León's performing of the sacraments to his patient indicates that he perhaps viewed Pastrana's ailments as a spiritual sickness primarily. Pastrana testified that the mere presence of

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[201] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 953 ex. 41, f. 310r.

Dr. León made her feel better.[202] Spirituality and medicine were merged and the implication of doctor as priest is suggested throughout Pastrana's testimony: "She noticed that whenever the doctor came to her bedside, she was very relieved and did not feel anything, yet when he would leave, all of her fatigues and anxieties returned."[203]

Still all was not healed because Marcela experienced her most intolerable day of this mysterious delirium and pain. Dr. de León returned to the new mother's bedroom, this time accompanied by the midwife Marcela. In the presence of both, Pastrana said she felt "more afflicted than ever, especially of lightheadedness and a lack of strength in the head."[204] When the doctor came to her bedside, Pastrana felt better once again, and everyone there noticed a sudden improvement. Marcela the midwife then approached the bedside and blew into Pastrana's face, which Pastrana inhaled and claimed that "she felt the *aire* of the midwives breath."[205] Marcela whispered to her, "if you want more health (*queria sanar mas*), do not cure yourself with Dr. de León, I will cure you instead."[206] After this, Pastrana said she felt her whole body vaporized into air.[207] In New World medical cultures there was competition amongst medical practitioners. Dr. León had his sacraments and title to soothe Pastrana, but the midwife Marcela intervened and persuaded Pastrana and her husband to let her be the one to cure.

Elite Spanish families, such as Pastrana and her husband (his job was that of Church tithe collector which indicates they had money) believed midwives to have knowledge, as this case demonstrates, that could be more useful in healing then

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[202] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 953 ex. 41, f. 310r.
[203] Ibid.
[204] Ibid.
[205] Ibid.
[206] Ibid.
[207] Ibid.

liscensed doctors. However, Marcela would be blamed for causing what she cured which reveals class tensions of the time and symptoms of the "colonizer's quandry." Art historian Carolyn Dean describes this as, "the paradoxical need to enculturate the colonized and encourage mimesis while, at the same time, upholding and maintaining the difference that legitimizes colonization."[208] The Spanish family in Merida benefitted from Marcela's practices but they turned her into the Inquisition. It must have been frustrating for those at the higher levels of the colonial social order to recieve help from the poor in such physical and spiritual personal affairs.

Historian Ryan Amir Kashanipour, argues in "A World of Cures: Magic and Medicine in Colonial Yucatán," that "basic experiences with sickness and rehabilitation created everyday bonds and connections," and highlights how racial and class divisions could be overcome through healing practices and magic.[209] Yet, Pastrana and her family demonstrate that although they had an everyday connection with the lower classes, they remained invested in maintaining their status and position at the top of subjugated peoples. Surviving in the colonial world, most everyday Spanish people were complicit in safeguarding divisions of race and ethnicity while benefitting from African, indigenous and mixed race knowledge systems.

Medical and ritual practitioners such as midwives and doctors across multiple races and identites employed magical/supernatural beliefs into their healing practices. From Pastrana's testimony, both Marcela and Dr. León are treating Pastrana's illness as emanating from the supernatural world. Marcela blowing into Pastrana's face and the

[208] Carolyn Dean, *Inka Bodies and the Body of Christ: Corpus Christi in Colonial Cuzco, Peru* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999), 47.
[209] Ryan Amir Kashanipour, "A World of Cures: Magic and Medicine in Colonial Yucatán" Dissertation, University of Arizona, February 2017, 14-19.

doctor's performance of the sacraments indicate this. Historian Sherry Fields in *Pestilence and Headcolds: Encountering illness in colonial Mexico* speaks to the varied practices of colonial medicine, "In practice, most practitioners combined the elements of rational and divine medicine; university-trained doctors acknowledged the powerful role played by divine providence in any illness, whereas indigenous healers almost always included physical remedies in treating their patients."[210] The blowing of air into Pastrana's face by Marcela possibly indicates the midwife's use of tobacco as a curing technique. It is likely that Marcela employed this remedy because Pastrana relayed that after the midwife blew into her face, that her body felt weightless, "vaporized," in other word's her energy had shifted.

Historians Patricia Gonzales and Sherry Fields agree that Tobacco was a common remedy used by midwives in treating their patients. Gonzales in *Red Medicine* further expounds on the widepread use of tobacco by indigenous midwives from her analysis of Ruiz de Alarcón's *Treatise on the Heathen Superstitions that Today Live Among the Indians Native to this New Spain, 1629,*[211] and interviews contemporary native midwives. From both sources, she found that tobacco was immensely important in reproductive healing techniques. Alarcón said that tobacco was used during difficult labors, to diagnose causes and actions, and used to cure afflicitons of the uterus.[212] Her findings were also confirmed by indigenous midwives practicing today whose tribal traditions included the use of tobacco for reproductive ailments, who blew smoke over

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[210] Sherry Fields, *Pestilence and Headcolds: Encountering illness in colonial Mexico*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2008), 5.
[211] Hernando Ruiz de Alarcón, *Treatis on the Heathen Superstitions that Today Live Among the Indians Native to this New Spain, 1629* (University of Oklahoma Press, 1987) Translated by Richard Andrews and Ross Hassig.
[212] Patrisia Gonzales, *Red Medicine: Traditional Indigenous Rites of Birthing and Healing,* (Tucson: The University of Arizona Press, 2012), 27.

the physical body to stimulate corporeal action.[213] Gonzales argues that, "Tobacco used in this physical and energetic manner is a technology of birthing because it is employed to move the labor and, therefore, energy."[214] Pastrana inhaled the medicine blown into her face by the midwife Marcela, and then she felt a physical change, as if she was "vaporized," this resembles the tobacco therapies employed by indigenous practitioners across Mexico. Yet Marcela's healing plan did not end with this treatment.

Pastrana testified that the day following the inhalation remedy and after several visitors had left her room, Marcela was alone in the room with her and that she felt "many fatigues and *arderas* (burns/screams)."[215] Everyone came back into the room asking what was wrong and the midwife assured them that Pastrana did not have any kind of accident or anything but that the screams came from her "apprehensions and melancholy."[216] Pastrana continued to scream and make strange movements with her body until finally her husband pleaded with the midwife Marcela to cure his suffering wife once and for all.[217] Now with the permission of the husband and after the "inhaling remedies," Marcela was ready to perform the final technique in the healing of the suffering post partum mother.

On the final healing day, Pastrana said that she "felt" Marcela come into her room and that she feigned slumber so that she could see what the midwife Marcela was about to do.[218] Marcela walked the perimeter of Pastrana's bed and then inserted her hand underneath the sheets, Pastrana said that she felt as though the midwife was

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[213] Gonzales, *Red Medicine,* 27.
[214] Ibid.
[215] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 953 ex. 41, f. 310v.
[216] Ibid.
[217] Ibid.
[218] Ibid.

pulling something out of her, and experienced intense pain.[219] When Marcela removed her hand thre were three drops of blood, and she told both Pastrana and her husband that now she was cured.[220] With that, Marcela left, saying she had other births to attend. Even though Pastrana felt better and was apparently cured from Marcela's treatments, she told her husband to never allow that midwife to return.[221] Marcela realized that Dr. León's sacraments were not working, she took inititiave and employed her knowledge and healed Pastrana. More than likely, Marcela massaged Pastrana's uterus, facilitating the expulsion of any left over afterbirth or placenta. The blowing of possible tobacco smoke would have also prepared Pastrana for the intrusive but helpful maneuver. Dr. León could have felt uncomfortable performing this technique or perhaps did not know it.

Two days following Pastrana's initial testimony she was summoned by the Holy Office to ratify her accusations and denunciations. They asked her if she had anything to add, and she replied that everything was told and all was true.[222] Then just before the signing of the ratification, Pastrana decided to make an addition to her statement, which was, "the midwife Marcela knew of the pains and fatigues that she had felt, and Marcela said that she would not heal until she asked for forgiveness for the words that aggravated her."[223] Marcela threatened Pastrana for the words that she had spoken against her to the Inquisitors. The authority and influence that midwives held, although at times supernatural, had very real consequences for all those involved. Pastrana

[219] AGN, Inquisición, vol. 953 ex. 41, f. 310v.
[220] Ibid.
[221] Ibid
[222] Ibid, f. 311r.
[223] Ibid.

continued to believe that the midwife had power over her health and well being. Which she did.

This brief case highlights so many important glimpses into the everyday world of colonial Yucatecan medical cultures and beliefs surrounding healing and reproduction. Marcela used not only physical therapeutic techniques, such as massaging the womb in post partum care, but also, according to her patient, Marcela used magic and curses to maintain healing power. The new mother had experienced a happy delivery free of complication alongside Marcela, yet she blamed her for everything that came after to the extent of seeking the midwife's punishment. Adittionally, Pastrana could have chosen to continue post partum care with Dr. León, who made her feel so good, but Pastrana and her husband decided to go with Marcela's knowledge. This demonstrates the "double character," the ambiguity and infamy of midwives across late colonial Mexico. Racial and class divisions constructed by colonialism and upheld by their beneficiaries, supported the appropriation and exploitation of indigneous, African, and mixed race healing knowledge systems because they were often tried and true techniques. Pastrana's womb massage and possible tobacco medicine were useful but the person from which the knowledge originated, were suspect. Female healers special relationship and power with their healing techniques necessitated regulation. There could be medicine but not unruly magic, that according to Pastrana, attributed to her indefinite illness. Yet, it is clear the Pastrana was truly suffering from a disconnection of community, and she did not really trust anyone to help her even after they did, which is perhaps the worst spiritual illness of colonialism for elite Spanish women.

CONCLUSION

Lorenza, Agustina, Guadalupe, Pasquala, and Marcela shared in common intersectional identities and healing practices. Mixed-race, Afro-Mexican, and indigenous women in late colonial Mexico demonstrated resilience in their everyday actions and ways of life as midwives. Lorenza refused to reveal her knowledge of herbal medicine under the pressure of judges and medical professionals. The Afro-Mexican midwife, Agustina, harnessed and created power through her ritual use of dolls, curses and magic from a distance. She reappropriated the conceptions placed on her from subjugating colonial systems, reworking that fear to her benefit. While María Guadalupe Sánchez expressed courage by maintaining that she was innocent even under the threat of torture. Pasquala's ritual ties to the land of her ancestors and its manifestation through her divining practices highlights cultural persistence overtime. Even though she was seen as an outsider by her community, she maintained her relationship with the land through her healing repertoire of divining and assisting women in childbirth, communicating with the flowers and hills of the valley of Malinalco, in order to maintain her survival. Marcela asserted her authority of healing practices in competition with medical professionals in Merída, Yucatan. She boldly combined natural and supernatural healing techniques aiding women before and after childbirth while maintaining her power through "curses."

The five Inquisition cases demonstrate that 18th-century Mexican midwives were resilient and performed many roles, while constituting complex intersectional identities. Their multidimensionality is conceived from the intersections of their race, class, and gender but also through their complex and varied healing practices. The healing and

ritual technologies came from multiple diasporas which were the consequences and processes of colonization but also from the midwives own creativity, resiliency, and power. Much like Ulrich revealed a lost subculture of women's local economy and social medicine through her analysis of Martha Ballard's diaries, the Inquisition cases of five Mexican midwives speak to the ways colonized women employed their knowledge, through midwifery, to make a living.

Mexican midwives had many important differences to that of North American midwives in the 18th century. The midwives discussed in this thesis utilized the supernatural and magical in their healing repertoire far more than has been made evident in histories of midwives in the North American colonies. Mexican midwives cursed, divined, and concocted remedies with unsanctioned plants. They were responsible for baptisms and theological knowledge. Families turned to them for their magic when the practices of medical professionals were still unsuccessful. Mexican midwives' racial variation and use of magic created major differences in relationships to power, from that of the white settler midwife Martha Ballard.

Multiplicity of identity and practices, the synthesis of the supernatural and natural that characterized 18th-century Mexican midwives, unsettled traditional authority figures and confronted systems of colonial violence. Although historians have argued that the Inquisition was lenient and even tolerant with women under investigation of witchcraft,[224] the cases presented here demonstrate an alternative

[224] Susan Migden Socolow, *The Women of Colonial Latin America* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2000), 157. Ruth Behar, "Sex and Sin: Witchcraft and the Devil in late-colonial Mexico *American Ethnologist* 14, no.1 (1987), 34-36. Martin Austin Nesvig, *Ideology and Inquisition: The World of the Censors in Early Mexico* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2009), 182-186.

perspective to this common misconception. An Inquisitorial investigation would have been a tribulation for poor, indigenous, Afro-Mexican, and mixed race women and their experiences under systems of colonial oppression should not be casually dismissed.

María Guadalupe Sánchez, although not under suspicion of witchcraft, was the most heavily persecuted among the five midwives in these chapters. But her identity and social role as midwife (one that was often under suspicion of witchcraft) led to her harsh punishment for the heresy of double baptism. Sánchez was singled out amongst various other participants in the double baptism because she was the midwife. They were expected to have theological knowledge but also seen as suspicious and ignorant. Sánchez was publicly whipped, given 100 lashes, had her property confiscated, excommunicated from the Catholic Church and reclused into the women's insane asylum, *Divino Salvador*, in Mexico City. Furthermore, Sánchez's case is the only one presented here that documents a full investigation, trial, and sentencing.

The notion that women in Inquisitorial investigations were treated leniently stems from there being few remaining records of sentencing in witchcraft trials. Many cases of witchcraft did not have full investigations or include what punishments they may have received. However, the absence of documentation does not make it a fact that witchcraft was tolerated by the Catholic Church and its officials. The investigations presented here show that even the lead up to a full Inquisitorial trial constituted hardship for midwives in late colonial Mexico. The divining midwife, Pasquala de los Reyes experienced a gendered form of punishment by being put into *depósito,* while the Ecclesiastical courts attempted to deindignize her, constructing her race as mestiza, so that she could be tried in the Inquisitorial courts. Rumors, suspicion, and inquiry into

the personal lives of midwives would have damaged the lucrative social capital in which they relied for the maintenance of connection to the communities they served. Many midwives who were already seen as outsiders experienced further marginalization from this culture of scrutiny, of which the Inquisition fathered.

Just as Martha Ballard, in New England, contributed and related to developing medical practices and professionals, so did Mexican midwives. Recalling the midwife Lorenza from Zacatecas whose plant medicine was sought after by colonial pharmacists and surgeons, demonstrates how midwives were important in contributing to New World medical cultures and the production of knowledge. While the detailed descriptions of Agustina Carrasco's and Pasquala de los Reyes' ritual items in the Inquisitorial transcriptions does not explicitly show connections to developing European science, the Catholic institutions interest at preserving testimonies that name and list unsanctioned ritual and healing practices constituted the creation of an important and growing binary. That of the supernatural and the natural, the body and the soul, and by implication, spiritual and secular fields and the limits of authority. The persecution of 18th-century Mexican midwives shows that the authority of doctors over that of traditional healers is established in a process of confrontation over the extent of that authority. This in turn generated and supported the "othering" of female healers in order to privilege incoming male medical practitioners in the development of obstetrical science during the Enlightenment era.

The tribulations of midwife María Guadalupe Sánchez, show how the Church authorities placed increasing expectations on midwives, this coming after the mandate from the Protomedicato in 1750 that midwives be licensed. Since many midwives were

unable to meet the requirements (literacy, wealth, and purity of blood) to become certified, the Inquisition supplemented the absence of regulation with their harsh theological expectations of midwives. The spiritual supervision of midwives would later transform more completely into the medical management of Mexican midwives in the 19th century. This is part of a long process driven by confrontation between holders of overlapping authority.

Understanding the lives, experiences, and practices of midwives in 18th-century Mexico, who cured and cursed, related and isolated, in their resilient attempts at maintaining power, demonstrates the importance of unsanctioned knowledge systems in larger historical processes, such as the construction of modernity. But also, recovering and taking seriously the stories of women who were often seen as unimportant, their practices labeled as superstition or quackery, contributes to methods of decolonization. For many Mexican-Americans, Latina, Indigenous, and Afro-Mexicans today, the history of our ancestors healing practices and their knowledge systems is crucial for navigating and surviving continuing processes of colonization in its manifestation of white supremacy and capitalism.

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