Bad Christians and Hanging Toads:

Witch Trials in Early Modern Spain, 1525-1675

by

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Department of History in the Graduate School of Duke University

2016
ABSTRACT

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Abstract

This dissertation challenges depictions of witchcraft as a sensational or disruptive phenomenon, presenting witch beliefs instead as organically woven into everyday community life, religious beliefs, and village culture. It argues that witch beliefs were adaptive, normal, and rational in regions that never suffered convulsive witch persecutions. Furthermore, this dissertation, the first to work systematically through Spanish secular court witch trials, upends scholars’ views about the dominance of the Spanish Inquisition in witchcraft prosecutions. Through a serial study of secular court records, this dissertation reveals that the local court of Navarra poached dozens of witch trials from the Spanish Inquisition, and independently prosecuted over one hundred accused witches over one hundred-and-fifty years. These overlooked local sources document witch beliefs in far greater detail than Inquisition records and allow the first reconstruction of village-level witch beliefs in Spain. Drawing from historical, anthropological, and literary methods, this dissertation employs a transdisciplinary approach to examine the reports from villagers, parish priests, and jurists, produced under the specific local judicial procedures. Free of the Inquisitorial filter that has dominated previous studies of Spanish witchcraft, these sources reveal the way villagers—not Inquisitors—conceived of, created, feared, and survived in a world with witches and sorceresses.
Using these local sources, this dissertation illuminates the complex social webs of witchcraft accusations, the pathways of village gossip, and the inner logic of witch beliefs. It reveals the central role of Catholic performativity and the grave consequences of being marked as a mala cristiana, the importance of fama and kin ties, and reveals the rationality of the curious and pervasive presence of the common toad (Bufo bufo) in Navarra’s witch trials. By moving away from the prevalent focus given to the more spectacular witch panics and trials, this work demonstrates the value of local trial records. This dissertation argues that far from irrational or absurd, witchcraft beliefs in early modern Navarra were internally coherent and intellectually informed by an amalgamation of religious, social, and legal forces.
Dedication

To the loving memory of my father, Adolfo Luis, “Al”, Rojas Barquero

(1942-2015).
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<td>AGN</td>
<td>Archivo General de Navarra</td>
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<td>AGS</td>
<td>Archivo General de Simancas</td>
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<td>AHN</td>
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1. Introduction

Witchcraft has retained its spell since witches were first created, feared, prosecuted, and executed. For five centuries, the academic, the religious, and the general public alike have debated, studied, and mused over this topic. The flirtation with the occult and the prospect of extra-human powers, through organic or diabolical means, captivates the human mind and imagination. This fascination has given birth to a hefty corpus of literature on the matter, resulting in hundreds of treatises, tracts, encyclopedias, monographs, articles, collections of essays, conference papers, and internet sources dedicated to witchcraft and sorcery. In the last four decades alone, scholars have produced dozens of books, articles, and papers on this topic, giving rise to a recent monograph dedicated solely to history of witchcraft historiography.¹ Given the prolific amount of erudition dedicated to this topic, what questions could possibly remain unanswered, justifying the existence of further witchcraft research?

Most scholarship has focused on spectacular panics and the more explosive regions of the Holy Roman Empire, which accounted for at least fifty percent of witch executions.² In doing so, the very place where witches were created, feared, and experienced—the village community—has been neglected. My project offers a new focus, that of a serial study at the village level. I locate this study in Navarra, a region in

¹ Jonathon Barry and Owen Davies eds., Witchcraft Historiography (Great Britain: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007).
² For a breakdown of trial and execution figures, see Wolfgang Behringer, Witches and Witch-Hunts (Cambridge: Polity Press, 2004), 149-150.
northern Spain that prosecuted witches under the battling jurisdictions of the Spanish Inquisition and a strong-willed secular court; one that rejected the recent conquest by Castilla and maintained its Basque language and identity; a region where witch beliefs flourished, but did not morph into mass denunciations and burnings. Through this examination, my dissertation seeks to answer: what was the nature of everyday witchcraft at the village level? How did villagers—not Inquisitors—perceive, create, fear, and manage witches at the local level? A close reading of every extant witch trial in the secular court of Navarra illuminates how this belief system was forged and informed by an amalgamation of religious, social, and legal forces over the course of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

1.1 Terminology

Any discussion of sorcery and witchcraft, and sorceresses and witches, is best begun with a definition of these elusive terms. How do I define witch and sorceress? How do I translate the Spanish terms bruja and hechicera? The very definition of a witch and witchcraft was, and continues to be, ambiguous and fraught with problems. The impossibility of a simple answer to this question only grows when we consider whether the German witch was the same as the Iberian, the fifteenth-century witch equal to the seventeenth-century witch, and if the male witch was the same as the female. This confusion deepens when we consider whether or not any accused witches were indeed practicing witchcraft.
Scholars, intellectuals, and theologians have crafted definitions of witchcraft and the distinguishing characteristics of witches for centuries. How have people tried to define sorcery and witchcraft? How have the Latin terms *maleficium*, *sortilegium*, and *veneficum*; and the vernacular words, *brujeria*, *Hexerei*, *sorcellerie*, and *stregoneria* been defined? Late medieval and early modern theologians, jurists, and intellectuals created a set of characteristics that resulted in a cumulative stereotype of witchcraft. Some prominent themes included: the notion of witches as apostates or heretics, *maleficia* caused by diabolical means, attendance at the Sabbath, transvection (flight), and interaction with demons and the devil. Overall, from the middle of the fifteenth century, learned notions of witchcraft became increasingly defined by heresy and diabolism, and witches took shape as part of an anti-Christian cult.

Ranges in modern definitions of witchcraft and sorcery are varied, ambiguous, and sometimes incongruent. Some scholars, such as E. E. Evans-Pritchard, have promoted definitions of witchcraft in functional terms. He argued “the notion of witchcraft is a function of misfortunes and of enmities.” This definition, however, becomes problematic when witchcraft becomes dysfunctional, such as in witch panics. Other scholars have attempted to define witchcraft in contrast to sorcery. Erik Midelfort declared “it was the Sabbath more than any other trait that distinguished continental

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witchcraft of the early modern age from sorcery.” This definition, though perhaps quite true within the Holy Roman Empire, does not apply to witchcraft in Navarra, as the Sabbath was not a prominent trait of its witch trials. However, Midelfort acknowledged the incredible variability of witch trials, and that witchcraft could not be defined in the same terms across trials. Considering the wide range of definitions promoted over the centuries, and the inherent limitations of any one definition, I have drawn from Wolfgang Behringer’s definition of witchcraft as “a generic term for all kinds of evil magic and sorcery, as perceived by contemporaries,” and propose the following definitions for my research.

In this dissertation I use the term “witch” (brujo or bruja) to describe anyone that was called a witch by his or her peers in early modern Navarra. I use the term “sorceress” (hechicera) to refer to anyone labelled as such by her or his peers. In doing so, I by no means imply that the witches prosecuted here, or elsewhere, were genuine dissidents who followed a pre-Christian, nature-based religion and blended herbal remedies with occult techniques to reach their own ends. I do not believe that witches, as historically conceived of in early modern Europe, actually attended Sabbaths, worshipped or interacted with the devil, or were part of an anti-Christian cult. It is irrelevant, however, whether or not I believe that witch belief corresponded with reality.

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Those who did believe in witchcraft absolutely considered it to be real. The witches of Navarra were real in that villagers, magistrates, clerics, and others assumed them to be potentially dangerous members of their communities. It is with this awareness that I refer to these “brujos and brujas” as “male witches and female witches” throughout my research. I also do not differentiate between hechicera and hechicero, meaning sorcerer and sorceress, with brujo or bruja, as they were often used interchangeably. It was common for villagers to describe the accused with the phrase “bruja, hechicera,” sometimes even adding “mala cristiana” (bad Christian). Therefore, I define “witch” and “sorceress” as anyone labelled as such by his or her neighbors. I make this conscious choice to privilege the terminology used by villagers in their reports over my own definitions of witchcraft and sorcery, or those proposed by other scholars.

For the sake of clarification, I do not believe there to have been any instances of the practice of witchcraft or sorcery by any of the witches accused in Navarra in the thirty-one trial records. Nor do I egregiously privilege the Court’s voice by referring to them as “witches.” In the few instances where the label of witch was not supported by fellow villagers, or where the pool of accusers was alarmingly narrow, I refer to the accused as “accused witch” or “accused of witchcraft” to denote this appellation was not a collective effort. In so doing, I am consciously not privileging the perceptions of the

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8 Several accused women were healers and invoked Christian prayers in conjunction with holy water, and such instances are noted accordingly.
magistrates. For the most part, however, the reports clearly emerged from the villagers themselves. I simply use the terms as they were used by early modern Navarrans to describe their neighbors, and by doing so, I seek to avoid judgement and anachronism by undermining their language through caveats and quotation marks.

1.2 Historiography

Since the time of witchcraft persecution, witches have been written about and studied with curiosity, contempt, moralization, and passion. The literature about witchcraft has passed through many different phases. The fourteenth to seventeenth centuries saw dozens of writings on the topic ranging from moralizing tracts to polemical treatises to personal accounts.\(^9\) Beginning with the *Formicarius* by Johan Nider (1437) and Heinrich Kramer (1486), theologians began to treat witches as an apostate cult that threatened Christians and, in the case of the *Malleus maleficarum*, needed to be exterminated.\(^10\) Other theologians, such as Martin Del Rio, wrote in moralizing terms, using the reality of witchcraft to argue for Catholic reform.\(^11\) Magistrates, such as Pierre de Lancre (1612) reflected on the witch trials and panics over which they presided in writings presented as personal experiences that attested to the reality and depravity of

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the diabolical witch cult. Other authors, such as Johann Weyer (1563) and Friedrich Von Spee (1631), cautioned about the dangers of believing in everything witches admitted to, and pointed to other understandings of these confessions.

Approaches to witchcraft in the nineteenth centuries and early twentieth centuries were equally varied, ranging from Romantic portraits of medieval folklore, to harsh anachronistic criticisms, to moralizations against religious fanaticism. William Monter identified three main paradigms in witchcraft literature: the research/rationalist, the Romantic, and the social science tradition. A rationalist approach, as reflected in the works of Wilhelm Gottlieb Soldan, Joseph Hansen, and Henry Charles Lea, presented witchcraft as a vestige of medieval superstition and an example of overzealous religious expression. Romantic approaches, characterized by the writings of Jules Michelet and Jacob Grimm, interpreted witches as “wise-women” of the past.

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custodians of folk medicine, and guardians of old pagan ways. From this tradition arose neo-pagan and modern Wiccan religions.

Social-scientific approaches have dominated the literature of the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. Beginning in the 1960s, scholars turned to witch trials, approaching them seriously and systematically. Since then, dozens upon dozens of monographs, edited volumes, journal articles, encyclopedias, and conference papers have been devoted to witchcraft and sorcery. Witchcraft themes have ranged from studies of folk beliefs (Carlo Ginzburg) to intellectual histories of belief (Stuart Clark). Scholars have examined witchcraft on a wide range of analytical scales, from broad overviews (Wolfgang Behringer) to micro-historical analyses (Thomas Robisheaux). From madness (Erik Midelfort) to psychoanalysis (Lyndal Roper), investigators of witchcraft have chosen their themes eclectically and creatively. Drawing from disciplines across the social-sciences, humanities, and beyond, scholars have turned to history, anthropology, ethnography, religious studies, gender and feministic studies, and linguistics. So extensive is this corpus that, in addition to several historiographical

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essays addressing the witchcraft literature, there is a monograph dedicated entirely to its historiography, entitled, *Witchcraft Historiography* (2007). This compilation features themes ranging from witchcraft and science; state, religion, and popular culture; crime and law; gender theories; changes within academic perspectives; and modern-day Wiccans. Given this voluminous body of literature, I will limit my focus to three aspects of the recent historiography that relate to my research: studies on the legal trials of witchcraft, literature on the cultural aspects of witchcraft, and scholarship dedicated to witchcraft in Spain.

The literature on the witch trials has tended to favor the regions that hosted the greatest witch persecutions, namely, territories in the Holy Roman Empire, especially the German lands. This is not without reason, as scholars often must rely on surviving trial records to study witchcraft, regardless of where their main interest lies. Thus, legal processes have been an essential focus of witchcraft studies. Erik Midelfort revolutionized the examination of witch trials in his *Witch-hunting in Southwestern Germany, 1582-1684: The Social and Intellectual Foundations* (1972). Though his work concentrated on an area of severe witch-hunting, that of southern-western Germany, Midelfort did not only survey the major witch hunts of this witch-ridden area, but also

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turned his attention to the smaller ones. Most importantly, he situated these witch-hunts within their social contexts, folding in contemporary debates from the region. Midelfort’s careful dissection of the inner workings of these witch hunts has inspired my own research, and I borrow from his close analyses of the social mechanisms at work in witch trials.

In synthesizing the literature of the witch trials between the 1960s and 1990s, Brian Levack identified broad regional patterns and focused on the legal underpinnings of trials in *The Witch-Hunt in Early Modern Europe* (1995). Levack analyzed the complex origins of the witch-hunt, contextualizing it within the legal developments of early modern Europe, and argued for the necessity of multi-causal understandings. He highlighted the importance of the legal changes that contributed to the persecutions, especially the transition from accusatorial to inquisitorial procedure, and the role of torture in the trials. Transcending an exclusively legal focus, he analyzed the intellectual, social, and religious contexts. Levack’s argument that witch hunting cannot be ascribed to a single cause, but arose from a conjunction of factors, is a fundamental feature of the extensive literature on the trials that also guides my dissertation.

Only more recently has attention been turned to regions with relatively small numbers of trials or no executions. Though Allison Rowlands’s work focused on witch trials within an imperial city in the Holy Roman Empire, she privileged a region that

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featured a restrained pattern of witch trials, much like Navarra. In her carefully researched *Witchcraft Narratives in Germany: Rothenburg, 1561-1652* (2003), Rowlands used close readings of trial records in a German region that had few witch trials, and only one execution in one-hundred years. She examined the legal moderation of this imperial city and located its source in the legal rigor with which authorities prosecuted and punished slander, including the frequent use of banishments for accusing someone of witchcraft. In addition to the court records of Rothenburg, and its interrogation and sentencing books, she wove in opinions of jurists and theologians. This dissertation adopts her method of close-reading of the records of accused witches, and shares with it a focus away from the center of witch hunting to an area with incredible restraint.

Cultural histories of witchcraft have the greatest influence over this dissertation, as it turns its gaze towards cultural beliefs and local ideas about witchcraft at the village level. Its partiality towards *mentalités* over the writings or opinions of clerics has inspired my own. The cultural histories of witchcraft have seen the value in the small, uneventful aspects of witchcraft over the spectacular and episodic witch hunts. Cultural histories have invited my research to attend to the “thick descriptions” of the seemingly

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insignificant, the odd. The volume of scholarship dedicated to cultural and social understandings of witchcraft is immense, as scholars have turned their attention to the mentalities and emotions of parties on both sides of witchcraft accusations, the folk beliefs often informing witch beliefs, and, in some studies, the search for the survival of pre-Christian rituals that shaped stereotypical accusations and constructs. Among this large body of literature, three works in particular have most influenced this dissertation.

In his *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries* (1983), Carlo Ginzburg ingeniously used inquisitorial sources to draw out the cultural features of a group of accused witches (the *benandanti*, or “good walkers”). Ginzburg approached the inquisitors’ interrogations as narratives, and used their records to draw out the folkloric traditions and popular beliefs in the Friuli region. He argued that the *benandanti* were an active agrarian cult, and that their self-identity morphed over time at the hands of inquisitors who interpreted their cultural beliefs through a learned and diabolical construction of witchcraft. Ginzburg treated these records, not as mere interrogations, but as recorded dialogues that represented a

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conversation, an exchange of ideas, and potentially held the voices of the villagers themselves. Ginzburg’s work guides my approach of the trial records as narratives useful in extracting popular beliefs.

Stuart Clark attended to the broader intellectual contexts of witch belief, and situated witchcraft within the textual world in his seminal work, *Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (1997).29 Clark approached demonological writings with a careful analysis of their language, and demonstrated that it made perfect sense to believe in witches, and the preternatural, in the early modern world. Rather than casting witch belief as aberrant or ill-informed, he positioned it alongside other intellectual concerns, such as religion, politics, and science. Clark’s examination of witchcraft on its own terms, rather than a search for external explanations for “people’s belief in things that already made sense to them,” inspires my dissertation.30 While Clark’s work was inherently limited to the textual world, I borrow from his methods a search for the inner logic of witch belief in the extra-textual realm, within the village community. Following Clark’s lead, I approach my documents with the understanding that the villagers’ words and reports reflected a world that made sense within their cultural systems, and were not merely irrational or superstitious beliefs.

Recent scholarship that examines witchcraft as deeply embedded in social and cultural relationships at the local level also shapes this dissertation. These studies have situated witch beliefs where they occurred with the most frequency: at the local level. In *Witches and Neighbors: The Social and Cultural Context of European Witchcraft* (1996), Robin Briggs looked to social contexts and networks for an understanding of the great persecutions of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Briggs argued that witchcraft is dauntingly complex, and can only be understood through examining multiple causations. He drew from more local sources than Levack, and thus revealed accusations and trials to be even more variable than Levack’s work was able to identify. With all the confidence of a seasoned scholar, Briggs asserted that “sweeping generalizations about it are either false or so banal as to lack any analytical power.” He also cautioned that analyses must start at the level of the ordinary people, the protagonists of most prosecutions. I follow Briggs’s objection to sweeping explanations and definitions, and take his suggestion of a local study, situating my work in the villages of Navarre.

The limited historiography on Spanish witchcraft has focused on the single, theatrical witch panic of 1609-10, or on the records from the Inquisition. This combination has greatly limited our understanding of Spanish witchcraft, as the panic was an anomalous event, and inquisitorial reports presented themselves as abbreviated

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trial summaries. The lack of convulsive and visible witch persecutions in Spain has resulted in few studies of the region. It has been commonly assumed that the Spanish Inquisition, in all its skeptical moderation, held power over this crimen mixti and thus kept the great witch hunts at bay. Over the past six decades, few monographs have been dedicated to this overlooked region, inspiring historian William Monter to refer to witchcraft as “the forgotten offense.”33 Monter, as other scholars have, was referring to witchcraft as a crime of the Inquisition.

The first in-depth examination of witchcraft in Spain was Julio Caro Baroja’s The World of the Witches (1964).34 In the first half of this work, he examined “the world of the witches” throughout ancient and medieval history, in an eclectic study borrowing methods from anthropology, religious studies, and ethnography. In the second half of his text, Baroja focused on Basque witchcraft, specifically the explosive and anomalous witch panic spearheaded by the Spanish Inquisition. At the time of this monograph’s publication, the trial documents from the panic had yet to be re-located after their usage by Henry Charles Lea, but he was fascinated by the skeptical conclusions drawn by the inquisitor Salazar y Frias. Though Caro Baroja seldom cited his sources, and tended to make sweeping statements, his work is a venerable cornerstone of Spanish witchcraft scholarship. Throughout his work he searched for the social and psychological aspects

of witchcraft, and explored the concepts and contexts that made “the world of witches” possible.

The most recognized scholarship on witchcraft in Spain is Gustav Henningsen’s *The Witches’ Advocate: Basque Witchcraft and the Spanish Inquisition, 1609-1614* (1980). Drawing from Inquisition materials, Henningsen’s tome painstakingly chronicled what is arguably the largest witch panic in Europe. Using the Inquisition’s trial summaries (*Relaciones de causas*), Henningsen meticulously researched Basque witchcraft including its folkloric beliefs, the development of the witch panic, the social dynamics of the panic, and the crucial role of the Spanish Inquisition. His superb scholarship, coupled with the scarcity of studies on Spanish witchcraft, has resulted in Spanish witchcraft’s almost exclusive association with this anomalous panic. His brilliant attention to sources, articulate reconstruction of connections among villagers, and his treatment of the mental world of the Basque villagers, has rightly earned his work its prominence within witchcraft studies. While moving away from Henningsen’s inquisitorial sources, and his focus on an explosive witch panic, my work is inspired by his attention to witch belief and his detailed treatment of the sources.

Using the Spanish Inquisition’s cases of *Supersticiones*, Gunnar Kntusen compared northern and southern witchcraft in *Servants of Satan and Masters of Demons*:

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The Spanish Inquisition Trials for Superstition, Valencia and Barcelona (2009).36 Using relaciones de causas, Knutsen examined the differences between the Inquisition’s treatment of witchcraft in Barcelona (northern Spain) and Valencia (in the south). He discovered the witch trials in Valencia were free from diabolism and the Sabbath, while Barcelona’s trials emphasized the diabolical aspects of witchcraft. According to Knutsen, the main reason for the difference in witch beliefs was the differing cultural influences of each region. French thought (featuring diabolism) had greater impact on the north, while the south had a substantial Muslim influence, one that lacked the concept of a Christian devil. Knutsen argued for the overall laxity of the Spanish Inquisition in its witch trials throughout his work. Though he claimed that the Catalan secular court “tried witches in the most appalling manner,” and that a “witch panic” was only avoided by the Inquisition’s ‘swift and decisive intervention,’ Knutsen failed to provide examples of this secular court’s trials, nor did he offer any information about how many witch trials were tried by this court.37 If indeed the Catalan court prosecuted witches to fruition, Knutsen overlooked an exceptional opportunity to examine witch trials by a secular court in early modern Spain. Knutsen’s attention to the regional differences in witch belief in Spain also guides this dissertation.

37 Knutsen, Servants of Satan, 100.
It is in this rather open territory that a Spanish scholar of witchcraft has recently situated her research in the land of Aragon. Maria Tausiet’s initial research investigated witch trials in Aragon as tried by the Inquisition, the ecclesiastical court, and the single witch trial by the secular court in *Ponzoña en los Ojos* (2004), though regrettably, this work remains untranslated from Spanish. More recently, however, Tausiet’s *Urban Magic in Early Modern Spain: Abracadabra Omnipotens* (2014) has been made available to English-speaking scholars. In it, Tausiet examined the types of magical practices within the trials of Saragossa. Her research underscored the shared elements between religion and magical practices, and the invisible connections between them. She argued that magic in urban Saragossa rested upon conjurations, invocations, and spells, and thus differed from rural magic that had a greater association with diabolism. Tausiet endeavored to incorporate source material from all three justice systems in Saragossa: the Inquisition’s tribunal, Saragossa’s secular “Chapter and Council,” and the ecclesiastical court. Her efforts were limited by her source-base, as the Inquisition had an almost complete monopoly over trials of the crimes it labelled *Supersticiones*. The ecclesiastical court treated only eight trials focused on charlatans and deceivers, while the secular court treated a single case throughout the early modern period. Tausiet concluded that “urban” magic was less focused on diabolism and more concerned with

love magic and treasure seeking. It is possible, however, that this is a greater reflection on the specific concerns of the inquisitors themselves, than the revelation of a rural/urban dichotomy. Though inherently limited to Inquisition sources, Tausiet’s work has made an important move in its consideration of all three jurisdictions in early modern Spain, an approach that guides my own research.

Focused on the large show trials and Spain’s Inquisitors, the Spanish literature has left largely unexplored the nature of witchcraft at the village level. It is within this large corpus of witchcraft literature, and this small collection of Spanish work, that I situate my research and contributions to witchcraft studies. I do this by turning away from the spectacular and episodic witch persecutions, and privileging the unremarkable, regular witch trials that yielded few deaths and did not amplify the role of the devil. I move from trials processed by the tribunals of the Spanish Inquisition and reflected in the Inquisitors perceptions of witchcraft, and turn towards to the local witch trials tried within the secular court of Navarra that are based on the reports by villagers. It is somewhat paradoxical that the most common locus of witch belief, the village community, has also received the least scholarly attention. Quotidian witch beliefs—as experienced by villagers in the early modern world—remain occluded in studies of theatrical panics, demonological texts, zealous hunts led by territorial lords, or trials whose only records remain in the form of truncated Inquisition summaries. My work shifts its attention to witch belief within its village community, and seeks to enrich our
understanding of witchcraft by turning to the voices of villagers, suspected witches, and their neighbors who accused them.

1.3 Women and Witchcraft

Witchcraft historiography has varied in its treatment of gender. Early witchcraft historians ignored the fact that most accused witches were women, while other more recent scholars have claimed that “the story of witchcraft is primarily the story of women.” As approximately 75% to 85% of those accused, prosecuted, and executed for witchcraft in early modern Europe were women, it is impossible to explore witchcraft without considering gender. One of the most basic explanations for the predominance of female witches lies within its Christian heritage. Beginning with Eve’s sin, women had been seen as more likely to fall prey to temptation, and more prone to evil. The general sentiment in early modern Europe towards the flaws of the weaker sex supported a vision of witch as woman. While this Christian bias, coupled with a binary view of the world, supported a general distrust of women, there existed vast regional differences among these Christian lands, thus suggesting the need or deeper investigations.

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42 For more on binary thought and women as witches, see Clark, Thinking with Demons, 119-133.
Of the estimated 40,000-50,000 people executed for witchcraft in early modern Europe, twenty-five percent were male.\textsuperscript{43} While witches in England, for example, were by far mostly women, with less than ten percent male, this was not the case throughout Europe.\textsuperscript{44} According to Robin Briggs, witchcraft in France seemed “to have had no obvious link with gender at all,” and he pointed out that of the 1,300 witches whose cases reached the Parlement in Paris on appeal, over half were men.\textsuperscript{45} Of the 500 known cases that did not reach the Parlement, men accounted for 42% of the accused witches. Though not the norm, some regions of early modern Europe featured men as the prominent sex accused of witchcraft. Men accounted for 50% of accused witches in Finland, 60% in Estonia, and a surprising 90% of those accused of witchcraft in Iceland.\textsuperscript{46} Even in areas where witchcraft was strongly viewed as a female crime, such as in the German lands where upwards of 90% of the accused were women, in times of witch panics men were increasingly charged as witches as traditional stereotypes broke down.\textsuperscript{47} These figures show that witchcraft was “sex-related, but not sex-specific.”\textsuperscript{48} Despite these important considerations, witches in early modern Europe were mostly

\textsuperscript{45} Briggs, Witches and Neighbors, 261.
\textsuperscript{46} Lara Apps and Andrew Gow, Male Witches in Early Modern Europe (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2003), 10-12.
\textsuperscript{47} Midelfort, Witch-hunting in Southwestern Germany, 182.
understood to be female. Navarra followed this trend, as appropriately 75% of accused witches were female. This begs the question: why were witches predominately women?

The connection between gender and witchcraft has been received extensive scholarly attention over the past three decades, and its full discussion is beyond the scope of this dissertation. The *Malleus Maleficarum* (1486) is routinely invoked to demonstrate that witch-hunters hated women, and fueled a ‘gendercide’ through early modern witch-hunts. Its author, Heinrich Kramer, unequivocally blamed witchcraft on women and their uncontrollable lust, their tendency towards evil, and their weak faith.\(^{49}\) He relied on quotes from the church fathers to convince his audience that it is “women are chiefly addicted to evil superstitions,” and thus more likely to be discovered as witches.\(^{50}\) While a handful of other authors such as Jean Bodin (1580) and Pierre de Lancre (1612) drew similar conclusions highlighting the link between women and witchcraft, these texts were not representative of the body of demonological literature as a whole.\(^{51}\) Unlike the sharply misogynistic arguments Kramer made in the *Malleus*, most demonologies did not focus on witches as women. As noted by Stuart Clark “the experts on witchcraft were not eccentric in what they said about women as...they were entirely representative of their age and culture.”\(^{52}\) Thus, a strict reliance on demonological writings in locating gender in witchcraft is somewhat limited to a few


\(^{50}\) Kramer, *Malleus Maleficarum*, 41.

\(^{51}\) Bodin, *De la demonomanie* (1580); De Lancre, *Tableau de l’inconstance de mauvais anges et demons* (1612).

\(^{52}\) Clark, *Thinking with Demons*, 115.
texts. To properly understand the relationship between gender and witchcraft, it must be situated within all its contexts, not just its demonological writings.

In *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (2004), Lyndal Roper examined accused witches, eighty percent of whom were old women, in southwestern Germany. Roper situated women at the center of witch belief, but was careful to provide complex understanding within its early modern German contexts. In addition to examining the legal systems used to prosecute witches, and the specific religious circumstances of the German lands, Roper explored the cultural factors that shaped witch belief: ideas driven by fantasies and fears. For example, during the dangerous lying-in period that lasted for six weeks after child birth, fears were heightened, and these tense moments, sometimes coupled with sudden death of mother or child, often resulted in women charging other women with witchcraft. Roper concluded that “the terrors, anxieties, and dependence that childbed brought lay at the heart of the witch-craze.” Thus she argued that to truly appreciate “the ferocity against harmless old women,” one must first take seriously “the fears of those who hunted witches.” In this compelling and well-researched monograph, Roper locates these fears and fantasies in

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feminine issues and females’ spheres, illuminating several factors that influenced the gendered aspect of early modern witchcraft.

Similarly, in Witches and Neighbors (1996), Robin Briggs’s acknowledged that “gender did play a crucial role in witchcraft, but we will only understand this properly as part of the system, within which many other forces operated.” To uncover the connection between gender and witchcraft, Briggs turned to the place where witchcraft was lived and experienced the most: village communities. Briggs searched for gender-linked understandings within the social sphere, and highlighted that “women occupied a distinct social space of their own,” featuring daily labor activities that often put them in close contact with one another. Whether baking at the communal oven, washing at the water’s edge, participating in religious services, or marketing for goods, women had close contact with one another. This constant interaction within the social sphere led to more frequent quarrels among women, causing feuds that sometimes morphed into witchcraft accusations. Briggs, as did Roper, also noted the fears of childbirth and childcare, both activities experienced in feminine circles, also invited tensions and fears that could lead to witch accusations. Briggs then shifted from rumors to trials, and examined witchcraft within its legal sphere, noting that women were more likely to marry away from their own village and family and thus “were less able to mobilize

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Briggs, Witches and Neighbors, 263.
Briggs, Witches and Neighbors, 261.
Briggs, Witches and Neighbors, 267.
Briggs, Witches and Neighbors, 270-271.
groups of kin than men.”\textsuperscript{61} This put them at greater risk than men to accusations and prosecutions, as they had no kinship network to defend them from witnesses or prosecutors. While Briggs explored gender within its contexts, he arrived at the conclusion that link between women and witchcraft were “part of a much more complex set of causes and connections,” and cautioned against falling “into anachronism when writing about witchcraft and gender.”\textsuperscript{62}

The Royal Court and Council of Navarra cautiously referred to ‘male witches and female witches’ throughout its trials, and men partook with equal frequency as women in giving depositions both for and against the accused witches. While male witches appeared throughout the witch trials, they accounted for only twenty-five percent of those accused in Navarra. Male witches were often related to or associated with women with \textit{mala fama}, and were noticeably absolved with greater frequency than female witches. As Clark and Briggs have pointed out, a careful study of gender and witchcraft requires examining the larger social, cultural, and legal systems first. While the predominance of female witches in Navarra invites further investigation into the gendered notions of witchcraft, a focus on the cultural, legal, political system unique to this region must come first to lay the ground for later examinations of gender and witchcraft in Navarra.

\textsuperscript{61} Briggs, \textit{Witches and Neighbors}, 273.
\textsuperscript{62} Briggs, \textit{Witches and Neighbors}, 273.
1.4 Sources and the Problem of Language

The records I use in this dissertation are the surviving trials for witchcraft and sorcery prosecuted by the secular Court and Council of Navarra (Corte y Consejo de Navarra). These sources are housed in the Archivo General de Navarra (AGN), a remarkable archive built upon the very structure of Pamplona’s royal palace dating from the twelfth century. These sources offer an astounding repository of rich testimonies—thousands of folios of local gossip, beliefs, fears, and thoughts reflecting the cosmos as understood by early modern villagers in Navarra. I approach all thirty-one trials of sorcery and witchcraft, from the first in 1525 to the last in 1675. These court cases, produced under the local interrogation procedures, are incredibly discursive, ranging from one-hundred to more than two-hundred folios in length. The bulk of these records are villagers’ reports, followed in length by the arguments set forth by the prosecutor (fiscal) and defense attorneys (procuradores).

To these trials I add other documentary support found in the AGN. To examine the medieval heritage of persecution of sorcery in Navarra, for example, I use fiscal records from the medieval Treasury Registers to show that women were burned as witches in the early fourteenth century in Navarra. Though they are brief accounting ledgers tallying costs for chains, wood, and executioners’ salaries, they reveal that the prosecution of “sorceresses” and “herbalists” had a deep history in this region. Another example of supplementary sources are the archival fragments from various sources I use.
to decipher the witch trials of 1525. Though the records from the 1525 prosecutions are missing or deteriorated beyond use, an inheritance petition brought forth by the prosecuting magistrate’s heirs seeking their share of the witches’ confiscated goods has proven to be a remarkably insightful source.\(^6\) Brought forth in 1532, this legal suit provides the names of the accused witches and the villages from which they came, inventories of their material goods, and some testimonial records. Surviving correspondences also give shape to this problematic event, including letters between the magistrates of the Court and Council, correspondences between these judges and the Spanish Inquisitors, and complaints from the Vicar General of Navarra.\(^6\)

To examine the contentious relationship between the Court and Council of Navarra and the Spanish Inquisition’s tribunal in Navarra, I turn to surviving correspondences between the two jurisdictions. These letters involved a wide range of intermediaries such as the Council of Castilla, the Inquisitor General in Madrid, and the Vicar General of Pamplona. These letters are found in the Archivo General de Navarra (AGN), the Archivo Historico Nacional (AHN) in Madrid, and in the Archivo de Simancas (AGS). Though I do not privilege Inquisition records, I have examined all records of those witches who were tried by both courts. To do this, I have compared procesos from the secular court with the Spanish Inquisition’s Relaciones de las causas

\(^6\) AGN, 63825 (1532): “Proceso de los Herederos de Licenciado Balanza.”
\(^6\) 1525-Caja 113512, AP_Rena, Caja 94, N. 13.
found in the Inquisition section at the Archivo Historico Nacional in Madrid. Finally, I approach one rich witch trial tried by the ecclesiastical court and housed in the Archivo Diocesano de Pamplona (ADP). While several others trials of sorcery and witchcraft fell to the ecclesiastical Curia diocesana de Pamplona, I choose to focus on the only one that I consider to be a witch trial rather than a trial of superstition or mere religious heterodoxy.

Though free from the Inquisitorial filter, the sources in the Archivo General de Navarra present their own challenges. To begin with, the records are not unaffected by the influence of the magistrates, scribes, and translators that were used in interrogations. But the local interrogation processes allowed for great room in their answers as reflected by their long and diverse depositions. To be sure, there were several trial records whose conformity and repetition of exact phrases among the witnesses alerted me to a problem, causing me to treat them with some caution. However, these red-flags pertained more to the villagers’ suggestions for punishment than to the testimony regarding the witches they provided. It is with caution and attention to the flows, consistencies, and inconsistencies that I approach these records. Fortunately for my approach in treating

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65 These are summaries of cases submitted to the seat of the Inquisition in Madrid by each tribunal. In this case, the examination pertains solely to cases treated by the tribunal with oversight of Navarra. Thanks to a personal gift from Gustav Henningsen, many of the Inquisition sources from the AHN have been given to me digitally.

these records as dialogues, I have found that most of the records are varying in the accusations. That is, villagers’ denunciations often differed from one another, suggesting that their accusations were not mere suggestions plied by the interrogators. This feature allows me to approach these sources with greater confidence that villagers were not merely reporting statements suggested by the interrogators. Furthermore, the trial records made it clear from the onset when accusations were not initiated by the villagers, but from an alcalde or cleric. The limited variability of the accusations in these particular trials clearly reflected the denunciations were not brought forward by a general fama, but rather by a specific person or family. It is with the cautionary tales of other scholars that I approach these sources critically, but also with the appreciation that within these records, the voices of the villagers of Navarra can be approached.

The more concerning issue with these sources is that of language. The people of Navarre did not speak Castellano, or Spanish, but rather Basque, what they referred to as vascuence (now known as Euskera).67 Though Castilian had been used in official matters since the medieval period, it was not until the conquest by Castilla in 1512 that the Castilian tongue began to force itself into Navarre and the surrounding Basque

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regions (Guipuzcoa, Alava, Viscaya). Very few villagers in early modern Navarra spoke Spanish, but all spoke the curious Basque tongue.

Euskera is a language isolate ancestral to the _vascones_. It is believed to be the only surviving pre-Indo European language in Western Europe, and one of the few in Europe. Little is known of its origins or history, but an early form of the Basque language was likely present before the arrival of the Indo-European languages to the area. Though geographically surrounded by Romance languages (those which evolved from Vulgar Latin between the sixth and ninth centuries), it is not related to them. This mysterious lineage has prompted researchers to seek its roots, and various theories as to its linguistic heritage have been put forth. Some have recently gone as far as to challenge conventional wisdom that Basque is a language isolate, and sought to prove its Indo-European roots. Because it does not resemble Spanish in any way whatsoever, magistrates and villagers had to rely upon interpreters.

This introduces another layer of language between the words expressed by the villagers and the text appearing in the documents. With this awareness I approach these sources with the awareness that they have been translated from the original Euskera. Though I am inspired by Emmanuel LeRoy Laduries’s brave trust of the Occitan-to-

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68 Caro Baroja, _Con letra aguda y fina_, 353-54.
69 Name given to the pre-Roman tribe that inhabited the region known as present-day Navarra.
Latin written record as if it was “the direct testimony of peasants themselves,” I take his appreciation of the comments and move in a more cautious direction. I do not believe my sources to be virginal imprints of early modern Navarrans, free of all mediation and mitigation. It would be folly to accept these sources, regardless of how rich and organic seeming they may be, as spontaneous declarations free from politics. But I do believe they represented a dialogue, and created a narrative. For example, when the villagers answered the questions presented by the court’s scribes, they chose what to share, or omit. They were not restricted to specific questions, and were often simply asked if they knew the accused, and if she was a witch. In their answers, villagers were presenting how they defined witchcraft, and this dialogue in turn, informed the scribes’ perceptions of witchcraft and guided the magistrates in their proceedings. Furthermore, the importance of their conversations transcended each specific dialogue, impacting other interrogations, and the scribes’ expectations and own sets of questions. Thus, armed with both this foresight, and faith, I accept Carlo Ginzburg’s invitation to uncover evidence about witchcraft beliefs from the records, read as dialogic texts.

1.5 Methods

There is no one right way to approach history, though some tools of inquiry may be more effective than others depending on the question. Expansive questions lend themselves to larger tools of inquiry, those which favor sweeping patterns and meta-narratives. Conversely, questions of mentalités or concepts which are particularly ephemeral are more accurately addressed via smaller scales of analyses. To undertake this project, I closely analyze the testimonies of witnesses, the accused, the judges, and litigators in witch trials. I examine each of the trials through a historical lens and close reading, unpacking historical clues as they elucidate how witch beliefs reflected early modern religion and society. I build on the work of other historians who have sought to make sense of alternative systems of beliefs that might strike modern readers as irrational; scholars such as Carlo Ginzburg, Julio Caro Baroja, Emmanuel Leroy Ladurie, and Stuart Clark. Inspired by these scholars, I use methods that best serve my goal in answering the question: what was the nature of everyday witchcraft at the village level?

I employ three main methodological frameworks in my treatment of the witch trials. First, I accept Carlo Ginzburg’s invitation to view court records as “dialogic text,” their dialogic nature represented by a set of questions, and then, answers. This methodological approach invited me to observe the villagers’ beliefs of witchcraft, moments when villagers generally agreed with particular witchcraft accusations, and

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74 Ginzburg, Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method, 159.
points of continuity and divergence with the magistrates’ notions of witchcraft. When I noted a rupture in the villagers’ reports, that irregularity in turn invited me to follow clues and explore the original of the accusation. Ginzburg also encouraged historians to see inquisitors (or, the magistrates of Navarra) as anthropologists. With this analogy, records could be treated as field notes. Fortunately for me, the villagers of Navarra were very talkative. The judges, like me, were trying to elicit information from the villagers, they wanted to know who the witches were, why they were suspect, what crimes they had committed, and so forth. In many ways, they were asking the same questions that I ask. I treat these records as a “transcript between an anthropologist and his informants.” While Ginzburg lamented the repetitive and “monologic” quality often encountered in Inquisition sources, he offered hope for “some exceptional cases where we have a real dialogue: we can hear distinct voices, we can detect a clash between different, even conflicting voices.”

Remarkably, the sources of Navarra actually evidence these qualities as the norm, thus allowing my use of them as “dialogic texts” to help me recreate village witchcraft beliefs. To be sure, suggestive questioning was present, though usually quite implicit, but the responses provided by the villagers of Navarra were variable, diverse, and often contrary, suggesting that the villagers had maneuverability in how they chose

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75 Ginzburg, Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method, 159.
76 Ginzburg, Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method, 160.
to respond to the inquiries. The interrogation process employed in Navarra thus yielded a source base compatible with an approach that sees judicial records as a dialogue. This conceptual framework allowed me to better understand, for example, the factors influencing the peak of witch trials concentrated in 1575. Through an examination of the dialogues between the scribes and villagers, I noted how the questions during this epoch were geared towards finding a suspect, not necessarily a particular villager with established _mala fama_, but anyone who may be labelled a witch. This shift in the dialogue solved the puzzle of the spike of witch trials in 1575: witches were actively being sought.

The second approach I draw from is the literary method of discourse analysis, which views the function of language beyond the sentence. Discourse involves a “particular way of talking about and understanding the world,” and thus it is through these discourses in Navarra that I seek to find the nature of witch belief in Navarra.77 Discourse analysis is not a single approach, but rather a series of interdisciplinary methods that can be used to explore many distinctive social features in different types of studies. This approach recognizes that words are not neutral, but rather, play an active role in creating that which they are used to describe. Thus, our knowledge of the world is not objective truth. No such “truth” exists. The ways in which the villagers understood the world were historically and culturally specific and contingent, and this

was reflected in their language. So to understand the reality of witch belief in early modern, I had to turn to the words and categories that villagers used to represent their world.

Using this framework, I have analyzed the importance and contexts of specific words and phrases in attempting to elucidate witch beliefs in Navarra. What words and signifiers did the people use to construct their witches? Their discourses when analyzed closely tell us so much we need to know about how witches were created, what factors led to accusations, what sorts of behaviors exonerated witches from suspicion, and what kinds of feelings these witches emoted in their neighbors. For example, an analysis of the term “bad Christian” illuminates the centrality of reputation, roles of external religious devotion and ritual, and the gravity of being perceived as a *mala Cristiana*. It meant more than being a tepid Catholic; it meant being a bad neighbor, a potential murderer, a blemish in the social fabric, and often, it signified being a witch.

The third method I draw from is microhistory. The chatty reports by villagers in Navarra lend themselves well to micro-historical analysis. Microhistories are complex examinations that require extreme attention to details, pursuit of clues and radiating threads, intertextuality, contextualization, thick descriptions and self-conscious choices which guide the historian's narrative. This mental framework lends itself to a descriptive analysis of the various working parts of any history; in this study it is the legal, religious, and cultural contexts of witchcraft in Navarra. It is the duty of the historian to
give meaning to these scrutinized-sources and to construct the framework in which to understand the event. Microhistory is not plagiarizing the past through simple re-telling of singular or serial events. It requires a self-conscious awareness of the choices the author is making in setting forth her analyses. Yet, micro-historians also need not be forced in their choices. As encouraged by Carlo Ginzburg, I use the documents to follow clues to guide my research. In his essay, “Morelli, Freud, and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and the Scientific Method,” Ginzburg proposed a model for “construction of knowledge” inspired by the art historian, Giovanni Morelli. Morelli followed the “clues” of seemingly minor details in works of art, such as the contours of earlobes and shapes of fingers and toes. By attending to the less obvious, thus less likely to be imitated details, Morelli was able to uncover which works of art were original and which were copies. In other words, small details yielded large discoveries.

Throughout my research for this dissertation, I consciously followed clues. For example, the odd clue of a goat, worth seven ducados, confiscated from the husband of a sentenced witch led to an incredibly serendipitous and extraordinary find in the Archivo General of Navarra. Following the confiscated goat, I realized that a witch, Catalina Yrañeta of the village of Villanueva, had been sentenced by the court for witchcraft, but there was no record of this in the archive. I pointed this clue out to the lead archivist

\[\text{Ginzburg Carlo, “Morelli, Freud, and Sherlock Holmes: Clues and Scientific Method, History Workshop no. 9 (Spring 1980): 5-36.}\]
\[\text{Ginzburg, “Morelli, Freud, and Sherlock Holmes,” 7.}\]

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Miriam Etxeberria, and armed with a name, date, village, and the close friendship we had forged, Ms. Etxeberria spent weeks after the archive’s closing hours, combing through unsorted boxes searching for the missing witch trial. Ms. Etxeberria’s hard work paid its dividends as she discovered a box of files containing, not only Catalina’s trial, but also another twelve witch trials. Had it not been for the framework of micro-history which promotes attention to detail and the following of clues that may not fit, that confiscated goat would not have led to this discovery, and the data set would have been reduced by more than one third.

1.6 Dissertation Structure

This dissertation is divided into five chapters, each one dedicated to a particular aspect of the witch beliefs and witch trials of Navarra. These chapters reflect a close examination of witchcraft within its legal, religious, and cultural contexts, and seek to enrich our understanding of witch belief by villagers at the local level.

The first chapter, “The Witches of Navarra,” provides an overview of the witch trials under the secular court of Navarra from its medieval beginnings, to the first witch trial in 1525, to the last sorcery trial in 1675. It also includes a brief history of the political, religious, social, and physical landscape of Navarra. I argue that, though there were moments of change over time, points of continuity remained, and trials did not
follow a linear trajectory, rather they rose in peaks, and then tapered off after the largest peak, the witch panic of 1609.

Chapter two, “Litigating Witches,” presents the legal and institutional contexts of the trials, guiding the reader through the judicial procedures from accusations through to sentencing. It argues that the older and more local interrogation system that guided witch trials in Navarra leaned heavily towards the reports given by villagers, thus depositions were less reliant on the learned ideas of the Sabbath and diabolism. This feature precluded the devil from developing into the prime focus, and kept witchcraft attentive to fama and other localized concerns, and thus witchcraft prosecutions in Navarra were handled with restraint, in spite of the region’s profound witch beliefs.

In chapter three, “The Christian Crux,” I situate witch belief within its religious contexts, examining the centrality of Christianity in defining witches, and the frequent use of the term “bad Christian” (mala Christiana) as synonymous with witch. Though not all malas cristianas were witches, all witches were malas cristianas. Operating under this conceptual framework, accusers sought to discredit the religiosity of the accused, and pointed to their deficits in Catholic performativity and Christian responsibilities. I argue that Christianity created, defined, and informed the language of witch belief in Navarra.

Chapter four, “The Village Voices,” turns to the rich villagers’ reports at the heart of the witch trials. Rich and variable, these depositions reflect the vast and deep reservoir of belief villagers drew from as they crafted their witches in early modern
Navarra. Through a close-examination of these diverse voices I argue that the village voices, communicated through *fama* (reputation) and gossip, crafted the witches of early modern Navarra.

In my final chapter, “The Struggle for Souls,” I turn my attention towards the Spanish Inquisition’s tribunal in Navarra, and examine the Inquisition’s role in shaping and litigating witchcraft in Navarra. It is here that I analyze the tense relationship between the two competing jurisdictions. This chapter argues that the ambiguous nature of the mixed crime of witchcraft contributed to this constant battle over witches, and that many witches and their defense attorneys (*procuradores*) actively sought to be judged by the Inquisitorial arm.

1.7 Contribution to Historical Studies

With witchcraft as its analytical lens, my dissertation contributes to the wider scholarship of disciplines across the humanities and social sciences. My work speaks to studies of late medieval and early modern European witchcraft, religious studies, Inquisition studies, legal history, and the history of belief. As its primary focus, my research uncovers the inner logic that imbued witchcraft belief with meaning. These local reports reveal that witch beliefs were but a part of their religious understanding, and no less rational than the belief in God himself. Secondly, these remarkable trials adjudicated by a secular court in early modern Spain, revolutionizes Spanish witchcraft
historiography, and challenges assumptions about the dominance of the Inquisition. Third, using unplumbed letters between Spanish Inquisitors, local magistrates, the Bishop of Pamplona, and the Supreme Court of Castilla, this project elucidates the ways in which competing jurisdictions battled over their rights to control behavioral transgressions. This contributes to trends in legal history that increasingly argue for the complexity of jurisprudence within early modern state formation, and in contemporary law. Finally, my work, a contribution to the history of mentalité, promotes an understanding of alternative systems of belief that might strike modern readers as irrational or absurd. It is my hope that my research demonstrates Carlo Ginzburg’s claim that “a close reading of a relatively small number of texts...can be more rewarding than the massive accumulation of repetitive evidence.”

80 Ginzburg, Clues, Myths, and the Historical Method, 164.
2. Witchcraft in Navarra

In the early sixteenth century, the theologian Dr. Martin de Andosilla, canon of the Cathedral of Pamplona, composed a treatise aimed at reforming the robust superstitious practices persisting in the kingdom of Navarra. In his treatise, *De superstitionibus* (1510), Andosilla underscored the connection between this region and a hearty belief in witchcraft and sorcery, alleging: “First, these women falsely believe in witches and sorceresses and this is most prominent in the Basque region to the north side of the Pyrenees mountains, [where they are] commonly called brujas (witches).”¹ Andosilla was not the first to initiate reforming efforts of the “superstitious” Basque people. A synod convened in Logroño in 1323 decreed that “diviners, enchanters, augers, sorceresses and those who commit other types of maleficia, whoever they may be” would be excommunicated.² So intense was their effort, the synod extended the excommunication to “all those who go to them, and believe in their words and acts, and take advice from them, and use them.”³ The long-standing connection between the mountainous land of Vasconia and its reputation for magic, sorcery, and witchcraft

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¹ Martin De Andosilla, *El tratado De Superstitionibus de Martin de Andosilla*, trans. by Jose Goñi Gaztambide (Gobierno de Navarra: Institution Príncipe de Viana, 1971), 276. “et primo de falsa opinione credentium illas maleficas et sortilegas mulierculas, que ut plurimum vigent in regione basconica ad septentrionalem partem montium Piereneorum, que vulgariter broxe nuncupantur.”
² Fernando Bujanda, “Documentos para la historia de la diócesis de Calahorra. Constituciones o casos del obispo don Miguel,” *Berceo*, no.1 (1946), 121: “Los que hacen adivinos, encantadores, auguraros, sortilegos, y los que hacen…otros maleficios, cualesquier que sean.”
³ Bujanda, “Documentos para la historia,” 119: “Y a todos aquellos que van a ellos, e creen en sus dichos y hechos, y toman consejo de ellos, y usan por ellos.”
emerges from Andosilla’s treatise and the synod records from 1323. Multiple expense
legers detailing the executions of “herbalists” and “sorceresses” from the early
fourteenth century strengthen this connection.

Without resorting to environmental determinism, it is useful to situate Navarra’s
witch trials in their ecological setting. Navarra was, and remains, a wet, mountainous
land dotted with villages amidst the rolling hills and deep valleys. This rural flavor is
reflected in its trials of witchcraft, ideas that privileged folkloric notions of maleficas who
used venoms from poisonous toads and potent local herbs that harmed the fields and
livestock. It contrast to Spanish cities’ preference for love spells and preternatural
pursuit of treasure, Navarra’s rustic witch beliefs resisted the elaborate diabolical
speculations of lettered men.⁴

Nestled in the mountains of northern Spain lies the autonomous community of
Navarra (Nafarroa in Euskera, the region’s native tongue). This humid land in the north
bears a limited resemblance to the Mediterranean landscapes for which Spain is often
known. Along the eastern range are the Pyrenees mountains.⁵ To the east and south,
Navarra borders Aragon and La Rioja respectively. To its northwest lies the Basque
autonomous community (compromised of Viscaya, Alava, and Guipuskoa). This diverse
territory spans 10,440 square kilometers, and is inhabited by a low population of only

⁴ For more on the differences between urban and rural magic, see Maria Tausiet, Urban Magic in Early
⁵ Navarra shares a 163 kilometer border with France.
According to this census from January 1, 2016, more than fifty-percent of people live in towns of less than 20,000, with twenty-percent of living in hamlets of less than 2,000. The demography of contemporary Navarra parallels its early modern demographics, which was also characterized by low populations, especially following the Black Death that left the region decimated. A census from 1533 reported 32,000 hearths, or about 150,000 people (14 persons per square kilometer).

Navarra’s landscapes rise to rugged peaks in the Pyrenees and span the gentle valley in Cantabria. Multiple bio-geographic areas converge in this small land: alpine systems, fluvial areas and humid zones, pastures and heaths, extensive forests, and Mediterranean scrublands. Vast forests and an abundance of water dominate the eco-scape. Its special geographical location (mountainous and fluvial) encourages rich biological diversity. Navarra remains heavily forested and its natural beauty well-preserved, thanks in part to conservation efforts and its low population density.

This chapter examines the characteristics and patterns of witch trials in Navarra as reflected by the surviving records of the Royal Court and Council from 1525-1675. These dates reflect the first and last extant trials for witchcraft or sorcery.

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9 Navarra’s population density is 59 people per square kilometer, whereas the rest of Spain averages 91 people per square kilometer. “Geography and People,” Gobierno de Navarra. Accessed August 15, 2016. www.navarra.es.
10 These dates reflect the first and last extant trials for witchcraft or sorcery.
with a brief overview of the remarkable geographic, historic, and linguistic landscape of Navarra, this chapter describes the fiercely independent spirit the people of this terrain have maintained over the centuries, beginning with the Roman Empire and continuing to present-day.\textsuperscript{11} A survey of the surviving fiscal records from the fourteenth century uncovers a surprisingly vigorous medieval heritage of prosecution (and execution) of women accused of sorcery and poisoning. The next section of this chapter provides an overview of the types, trajectory, and characteristics of witch trials in Navarra under the secular court. It follows a chronological study from 1525-1675 of specific trials, their features, and outcomes. This close examination allows an appreciation of the diversity of witch trials in Navarra, and reveals the varied paths these trials followed. While some trials remained isolated, others spawned more accusations, morphing into cluster trials, and even a large witch panic. This long-term temporal perspective permits an understanding of large patterns of change over time, while also revealing continuities in beliefs. The chapter concludes with a close examination of the final trial of the seventeenth century of an individual sorceress with surprising conclusions drawn by learned men of medicine. Their conclusions nuance narratives about “enlightenment,” linear progress, and belief versus disbelief in the early modern period.

2.1 A Brief History of Navarra

The diverse and fertile terrain of the region of Navarra has been characterized by fierce independence and semi-autonomy in the face of conquest for centuries. This

\textsuperscript{11} A modern history of Navarra is not discussed here, but contemporary movements for succession from Spain continue, as does the successful re-introduction of Euskera into Navarra’s educational, administrative, and political systems.
desirable land has been inhabited for tens of thousands of years: Neanderthal and Cro-Magnon activity can be traced back to the early and later Paleolithic eras, and caves throughout Navarra tell of homo-sapiens’ activity reaching back to 6500 BCE. Bronze-Age dwellings dating around 2500 BCE have been found in the Pyrenean sierras, and cave remains from 1200 BCE suggest human migrations across this rich land, perhaps in search of metals. Around 900 BCE, Celtic peoples crossed the Pyrenees into Navarra, but it was those crossing the Ebro from the south who shaped Navarra most profoundly, a people known as the Vascones.

The Roman historian Livy was the first to note the Vascones’ territory (present-day Navarra) in his chronicle of the Serterian War from 76 CE, where he detailed the crossing of the Ebro River into the flatlands of the Vascones (vasconem agrum). Other classical authors, such as Pliny the Elder in his *Natural History*, and the Greek geographers Strabo and Ptolemy, also recognized the Vascones’ land, referring to its center (*polis*) as Pompaelo (modern-day Pamplona). Even though most of Vasconia was Romanized, the mountains in the north resisted wide-scale Roman settlement and they

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12 Jesus Maria Usunáriz Garayo, *Historia breve de Navarra* (Madrid: Silex S.L., 2007), 13. These eras correspond to 75,000-35,000 BCE, and 35,000-9,800 BCE, respectively.
seem to have been able to navigate some amount of autonomy. It may be worthy to note that the witch trials of the early modern period were concentrated in these very same independent northern mountains and valleys. Following the decline of the Roman Empire, invasions from tribes such as the Franks and Visigoths descended upon Iberia, but the Vascones’ territory continued to resist their attempts at complete subjugation, as would be done in the face of future conquests.

The kingdom of “Navarros and Pamploneses” was established in 803 CE, following the Vascones’ defeat of the Franks at the major “Battle of Roncevalles.” The Basque leader Inigo Arista was then crowned King of Pamplona, and his Basque lineage ushered in a golden age for the Kingdom of Navarra. The kingdom flourished under the reign of Sancho III, expanding socially, politically, and economically, and boasted major territorial gains throughout his rule in the eleventh century. The kingdom suffered a setback when the neighboring kingdom of Aragon subjugated it in 1076, but Navarra quickly regained its independence in 1134. In the twelfth century, the popular “Sancho the Wise” advanced Navarra through the formation of important legal and administrative institutions. Sancho the Wise oversaw the foundation of the Consejo Real (the Royal Council) and Cort General (General Court), and also intensified the kingdom’s
campaign against the Moors. Perhaps Sancho’s most significant act was promoting his title from “Pampilonensium rex” to “Rex Navarre”: the King of Navarra. This symbolic move heralded Navarra’s territorial sovereignty amidst the constant threat of annexation by its powerful neighbors Aragon and Castilla, and signaled that Sancho was more than a noble prince from Pamplona; he was King of an independent territory.

Navarra’s bloom under Sancho the Wise was short-lived, however, as the early thirteenth-century saw Navarra depleted of its territories of Alava, Guipuzcoa, and Viscaya at the hands of Castilla, and in 1234 the Kingdom fell to French rule after the death of its King Sancho VII, who had left Navarra without a successor. The next century and a half was characterized by instability, foreign rule, and conflicts surrounding unclear successions. It was this state of internal weakness that Ferdinand of Aragon exploited when he invaded in 1512, and took the Kingdom of Navarra for the Crown of Castilla.

Ferdinand of Aragon and Isabella of Castilla gained dominion over all western Spain after their marriage in 1469. Twenty years later, the expulsion of the Moors brought them control over every territory in Spain except for one: the independent Kingdom of Navarra. The Catholic Kings sought to unify their realm, and under the

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24 Usunáriz Garayoa, Historia breve de Navarra, 65.
25 Usunáriz Garayoa, Historia breve de Navarra, 50.
26 Usunáriz Garayoa, Historia breve de Navarra, 67-117.
guise of the war with France, Castilla invaded Navarra in 1512. The superior Castilian forces outnumbered the Navarrese army, and they were forced into subjugation that same year, though not without resistance.28

King Ferdinand recognized the independent pride of Navarra and prudently appointed a Viceroy who took a formal oath to honor Navarrese institutions and laws. When the Parliament of Navarra convened in 1513, the new Viceroy, Marquis de Comares, swore to “preserve our charters, laws, freedoms, exemptions, liberties, privileges, to each and every one.”29 This gesture had its limitations, especially as the Spanish Inquisition expanded into Navarra, greatly affecting its Jewish and Moorish populations and undermining Navarra’s judicial autonomy. Many Navarrans remained disgruntled by the conquest, a sentiment exacerbated by the Castillian destruction of plazas, castles, and walls.30 Two more efforts at liberation (following the initial resistance in 1512) were made in 1516 and 1521, both backed by popular support. Navarra came closest to regaining its independence in the revolt of 1521, but this last effort was squashed at the Battle of Noáin, and the army was left in complete defeat.31

28 For a history of the conquest in 1512, see Peio Monteano, La Guerra de Navarra (1512-1529): crónica de la conquista española (Pamplona: Pamiela, 2010).
29 Usunáriz Garayoa, Historia breve de Navarra, 139.
30 Caro Baroja, Con letra aguda y fina, 123-24.
31 Usunáriz Garayoa, Historia breve de Navarra, 144-45.
The people of Navarra did not speak Castellano (Spanish), but rather Vascuence (Basque), now termed Euskera.\textsuperscript{32} Euskera is a language isolate ancestral to the Vascones, and is believed to be the only surviving pre-Indo European language in Western Europe.\textsuperscript{33} Little is known of its origins or history, but an early form of the Basque language was likely present before the arrival of the Indo-European languages to the area. Though geographically surrounded by Romance languages (those which evolved from Vulgar Latin between the sixth and ninth-centuries), it is not related to them. This mysterious lineage has prompted researchers to seek its roots, and a vigorous debate continues as linguists, scholars, and revolutionaries argue over its linguistic heritage.\textsuperscript{34} Though Latin and Castilian were used in official matters throughout the Middle Ages, it was not until the conquest by Castilla in 1512 that the Castilian tongue began to force itself into Navarra and the surrounding Basque regions (Guipuzcoa, Alava, Viscaya).\textsuperscript{35} During the early modern period, all villagers spoke vascuence, and very few were noted in the records to understand Romance, or Castilian. The elites of Navarra also spoke vascuence, though many would have been bilingual.

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\textsuperscript{35} Caro Baroja, \textit{Con letra aguda y fina}, 353-54.
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Remarkably, despite Castilian’s dominance, Navarra’s institutions maintained their autonomy throughout the early modern period. The Parliament, the Royal Council and the Royal Court, and the Diputacion del Reino all continued to convene from the sixteenth to eighteenth centuries. Navarra enjoyed a special semi-autonomous status under the Spanish monarchy, maintaining its own Parliament, taxation system, and custom laws. It is within this early modern context, just a few years after the last revolt, that we encounter the first witch trials in the records of the Royal Court and Council from 1525. But that is not to say that maleficent magic and sorcery was not punished by the Tribunals of Navarra well before this date.

2.1.1 Medieval Magical Heritage

The land of Navarra enjoyed a long heritage associated with sorcery and the occult. Attempts to penalize magic stretch back to 1323, when a synod met in to Logroño and voted to excommunicate those who used divinations, enchantments, augury, sorcery and those who “try to do other maleficia.” While no trials of sorcery survive, neither under the Royal Tribunals nor the ecclesiastical court, surviving fiscal reports from portions of the fourteenth century bear witness to the fact that women were tried

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and executed by the Courts for their alleged magical arts.\textsuperscript{38} Preserved in the Archivo General de Navarra is an archival series of the \textit{Registros de Comptos} (Accounting Ledgers), which include annual costs from districts in Navarra. These expenditures were submitted to the treasury of the Kingdom beginning in the thirteenth century.\textsuperscript{39} The survival of this detailed and precise record-keeping allows a view, albeit limited, of the penal proceedings of sorcery that pre-date the trial record left to us. Though only records from thirty-seven years of the fourteenth century remain, and none exist after 1360, there is significant evidence that suggests the Court of Navarra was no stranger to the persecution of the occult.\textsuperscript{40}

A fiscal report from 1314 offers the first account of the punishment of maleficent magic by the secular court. According to the ledger: “Two women from the village of Ciga were imprisoned and brought to justice, they were herbalists and killed other women with bad herbs...and for the \textit{maleficia} they had done...the women were burned.”\textsuperscript{41} Their execution came with a cost, and thus payment was solicited for the “logs and chains and cut sticks” and for the labor “of the men who burnt them and with

\textsuperscript{38} I extend my gratitude to Felix Segura Urra, chief archivist at the Archivo General de Navarra, for his kind assistance in pointing me to these special sources.

\textsuperscript{39} Segura Urra, “Hechicería y brujería en la Navarra medieval,” 287.

\textsuperscript{40} Segura Urra, “Hechicería y brujería en la Navarra medieval,” 288.

\textsuperscript{41} AGN, Comptos. Reg. 43, f. 168v (1314): “Por hacer justicia: por dos mujeres de la tierra de Ciga que fueron presas y justificadas, las cuales eran herboleras e qui mucho de mal fiziero e mataron otras mujeres con hierbas malas...de los maleficios que feyto avian las...mujeres fueron quemadas.”
their expenses in the prison."\textsuperscript{42} Though we do not know these women’s names or ages, these archival records reveal that two centuries before the first surviving witch trial from 1525, the notion of \textit{maleficia}, committed by women, and facilitated by means of herbs, was already established. This is an important clue, as we will see that most of the witch trials of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries featured women, focused on their acts of \textit{maleficia} (as opposed to attendance at the Sabbath or the diabolism), and an emphasis on herbal and other organic means of harm (not diabolic in origin).

The fiscal records continue to mention an assortment of women charged with \textit{maleficia} by virtue of their herbal craft. In 1329, Joana la Christiana and several other women, were accused of being “sorceresses and herbalists”, and were charged with “poisoning the people and being herbalists and doing much \textit{maleficia}.”\textsuperscript{43} These evil-doers were burned, an execution of justice that cost the court thirty-four \textit{sueldos}, the value of more than twenty lambs.\textsuperscript{44} A record from the following year reports that “Jordana de Irissari, herbalist, was burned in San Juan (Pie de Port).”\textsuperscript{45} Six years later another entry in the fiscal archives reports that some people “being \textit{sortilegis}...[were] brought to

\textsuperscript{42} AGN, Comptos. Reg. 43, f. 168v (1314): “Con leña con cadenas y con palos comprados y con el loguero de los hombres que les daban el fuego y con la expensa que hicieron en la prisión....”

\textsuperscript{43} AGN, Comptos. Reg. 25, f. 244r (1329): “Que emponzoñaban la gent y eran herboleras y hacían muchas maleficios”

\textsuperscript{44} Idoate, \textit{La brujería}, 11. Another comparative value is five weeks’ salary for laborer.

\textsuperscript{45} AGN, Comptos. Reg. 26, f. 214v (1330): “Jordanna de Irissari herbolera fue quemada en San John.” San Juan Pie de Puerto (Saint-Jean-Pied-de-Port) was the old capital of Lower Navarra until the conquest by Castilla in 1512.
justice.”⁴⁶ Two years after, in 1338, Condesa de Urritzaga was “accused by her neighbors in Lasso that she had done sorceries.”⁴⁷ Condesa was then “arrested by the Lord and put in the castle, and she confessed to him after being in the castle for thirty-eight days.”⁴⁸ She was then publicly burned in the marketplace of San Juan Pie de Puerto, the capital of lower Navarra at that time.

The capital of San Juan Pie de Puerto hosted another burning in 1342. Two women, Alamana de Sara and Montanya de Vasques, “were killed according to their confession for being herbalists=sorceresses.”⁴⁹ The fiscal demands of their execution offer some clues about their death, which generated expenditures for: “The salary for the men who strangled them, the salary for the town crier who trumpeted their sentence, the cost of the rope to take them…the cost of the firewood to burn them."⁵⁰ It is noteworthy that this procedure of a public notification, and the death by the garrote before public burning in the capital, mirrors the two surviving execution sentences of the witches in 1575.⁵¹ The same year of 1342 saw another two women burned for being “herbalists and

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⁴⁶ AGN, Comptos. Reg. 36, f. 104r (1336): “acusatem de sortillegis...justicia hacienda...”
⁴⁷ AGN, Comptos. Reg. 40, f. 222r (1338): “Condesa de Urruizaga, faytillera, due acusada por los sus convecinos de Lassa que ella habia hecho faytillas...e fue quemada en el mercado de Sant John...”
⁴⁸ AGN, Comptos. Reg. 40, f. 222r (1338): “La fue presa por el castellan e puesto en el castillo, la cual antes que confessas las dichas faytillas tuvo en el dicho castillo en son xxxvii dias.”
⁴⁹ AGN, Comptos. Reg. 47, f. 231 (1342): “Alamana de Sara y Montanya de Basquez que fueron faytilleras a puadas según leur confession por herboleras=faytilleras...”
⁵⁰ AGN, Comptos. Reg. 47, f. 231 (1342).
⁵¹ Though executions for witchcraft occurred in 1525, those records do not survive, leaving the death sentences of 1575 as the only extant records of an execution in Navarra by the secular court. See AGN, 699853 (1575).
sorceresses.”⁵² According to the ledgers, the “lady of Arozteguia and a woman from Gabat” were burned in the market Garriz for their crimes. The request for payment included the “costs of each one of their loads of firewood, and a beam on which they were tied and burned.”⁵³ From these records emerges a pattern: women were burned in a public space for using herbs for maleficia. Unfortunately, the kingdom changed its accounting procedures in 1360, and these ledgers came to a halt.

These fiscal accounts offer a glimpse of how magic and sorcery was conceived of, and punished, in medieval Navarra. The Middle Ages had not yet developed the full stereotype of the diabolical witch sect, but popular fears of maleficent magic and sorcery would endure in this part of Spain and continue to shape the features of witchcraft documented in early modern period. Many characteristics of medieval sorcery in Navarra were seen in early modern witch trials: villagers, most women, working alone or in pairs; herbs and powders used for their maleficia; and the absence of a diabolical focus.

2.2 Patterns of Witch Trials

The surviving witch trials under the Royal Tribunals begin in 1525 with a large group of witches’ sentenced to execution and conclude in 1675 with a sorceress’s exile.

⁵² AGN, Comptos. Reg. 47, f. 251r (1342): “Por herbolera y faytilleras.”
⁵³ AGN, Comptos. Reg. 47, f. 251r (1342): “Costo cada una de las dichas cargas de leña, una viga en que ellas fueron atadas y quemadas.”
There are thirty witch trials over the one-hundred-and-fifty-year period, representing some 145 people accused of witchcraft. Three types of witchcraft prosecutions emerge from the records: isolated trials, cluster trials, and witch panics.

Scholars have constructed categorizations to describe the patterns of witchcraft persecutions in the early modern period. Arguing for the analytical benefits of categorization, Erik Midelfort was the first to propose specific categories to describe patterns in witchcraft prosecutions. He defined large-scale witch hunts as more than twenty executions in one year. Another definition was proposed by William Monter who refined the notion to include “small panics” as “groups of four, five, six, perhaps ten people arrested, tortured, and often killed...in one tiny jurisdiction over a span of eight to fourteen months.” Witchcraft scholar Wolfgang Behringer proposed another classification distinguishing between: “witch trials with up to three executions, panic trials with 4-19 victims, large-scale witch-hunts with 20-99 executions, major persecutions with 100-249 executions, and...massive witch-hunts with more than 250 victims within less than five years” in a territory. Behringer acknowledged the imperfections and limitations of these categories, but argued for its use over “terminological confusion.”

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54 Usunáriz Garayoa, “La casa de brujas,” Akelarre, 316.
57 Behringer, Witches and Witch-Hunts, 49.
58 Behringer, Witches and Witch-Hunts, 49.
Unfortunately, the definitions proposed by scholars of German witchcraft are predicated on executions, and thus have a limited application to witch trials in Spain.

Navarra’s witch trials do not fit into these categories. In fact, arguably the largest witch panic in early modern Europe (spearheaded by the Inquisition in Navarra of 1609), would fall short of being labelled a “large-scale witch hunt” under these classifications. The historian of Spanish witchcraft, Gustav Henningsen, proposed a distinction between witchcraft and “witch craze” or “witch panic.” He differentiated between the two by defining the witch craze as “an explosive amplification caused by a temporary syncretism of the witch beliefs of the common people with those of the more specialized or educated classes.”59 Henningsen constructed a table of “aspects” useful in identifying a “witch craze,” proposing them as “materials for a dynamic theory of witchcraft.”60 The criteria he identified are qualitative: how witch beliefs were transmitted, the connection with the devil, and who the candidates for the witch role were. These criteria he combined with the percentage of the local population accused. While Henningsen’s definition succinctly describes a “witch craze” or “panic,” his scheme leaves open the question of how to conceive other patterns in Navarra’s witch trials.

60 Henningsen, The Witches’ Advocate, Table 15, p. 392.
I propose a scheme that blends Behringer’s quantitative criteria of trials with Henningsen’s qualitative criteria in order to describe the data from Navarra’s trials. In the run of extant documents, from 1525 to 1675, I identify three patterns of witch trials. They are defined not by the number of executions, but lay in the manner in which the prosecution unfolded. The first are the “isolated” or “single witch trials” that are instigated and treated in a single location with a single person, or single group of people. They can include any number of accused witches, but do not extend beyond that one moment in time and space. Examples are the solitary witches and sorceresses found throughout the trial records, the group of accused witches in 1595, and all trials following the witch panic of 1609. The next category I refer to as “cluster trials.” These cases extended beyond one village and instigated a search for other witches. The number of accused is not relevant, though inherently these tended to include more than twenty villagers. Two examples of these cluster trials emerge from the records, in 1540 and 1575. Finally, there is an instance of a “witch craze,” or as I prefer “witch panic,” which is succinctly identified by Gustav Henningsen’s definition. It is characterized by mass numbers of denunciations and confessions, a break in the “functional” role of witch belief, and the indictments of atypical people. The thousands of confessions and hundreds of accusations that occurred in Navarra in 1609-1610 is the clearest example of a witch panic. It is possible that the multiple witch trials of 1525 (which featured more executions than in 1610) would count as a witch panic, but this cannot be said with
certainty as the actual trial records are missing. These three patterns of witch prosecution enable us to see the trends of witch trials in early modern Navarra.

2.2.1 The first wave, 1525

The record of witch trials under the Royal Court and Council of Navarra begins in 1525 with a large-scale witch hunt involving a zealous judge, his traveling entourage of assistants, and two young witch finders.61 These witch trials, under the direction of Judge Pedro de la Balanza of the Royal Council, resulted in the hasty executions of over fifty witches, the most lethal episode of witch hunting in Navarra’s history. Though the trial records do not survive, the fragments from various sources permit a general view into this dramatic affair.

The most voluminous surviving account of this witch crisis is offered through an inheritance petition brought forth by Judge Balanza’s heirs seeking their share of the witches’ confiscated goods.62 This legal suit brought forth in 1532 serves as a rich source, and provided the names and places of the accused witches, inventories of their material goods, as well as some testimonies. Surviving correspondence reveals other features of these events. These include letters between the magistrates of the Court and Council hinting at clashes among themselves; heated debates between these magistrates and the

61 Florencio Idoate, La brujería en Navarra y sus documentos (Pamplona: Institución Príncipe de Viana, 1978), 34.
62 Pedro de Balanza died in 1527; Idoate, La brujería, 34.
judges of the Spanish Inquisition (discussed in greater detail in Chapter 5); and complaints from the Vicar general about the abrupt executions ordered by Judge Balanza. Finally, the indispensable transcriptions by Florencio Idoate (chief archivist at the Archivo General de Navarra for many years) offers access to dozens of folios from this documental record now deteriorated beyond use.63

In January of 1525 the Royal Council dispatched the magistrate Pedro de Balanza to “inquire, learn, correct, punish, and sentence the diabolical sect and the crimes committed by these witches who are said to be in this Kingdom of Navarra.”64 Two young girls, aged nine and eleven, had appeared before the Royal Tribunals with information about the evil witch sect.65 In exchange for their testimony, they were granted pardon for their own witch activity. The Council thus set out to investigate these claims, with Balanza as chief investigator, along with the two girls who declared themselves “witch-finders.”66 Balanza began a zealous campaign against the witches in the Valley of Roncevalles and the Valley of Salazar, working diligently in this inquisition alongside a dozen various assistants. The results were swift and dramatic, and within a few months the first mass execution was held.67

63 Florencio Idoate assembled his brilliant collection of excerpts from witch trials, along with commentaries, in Florencio Idoate, La Brujería en Navarra y sus Documentos.
64 AGN, 063825 (1533), 6r: “Para Inquirir y saber corregir, punir, y castigar la diabólica secta y delitos y casos cometidos y perpetrados por los brujos que dicen que hay en este mismo dicho Reino de Navarra.”
65 Idoate, La brujería, 24.
66 Idoate, La brujería, 24.
67 Idoate, La brujería, 24.
The resulting executions did not occur in Pamplona. They were not centralized; rather the judge and his entourage toured villages and “the executions were made in the same villages where they had committed their crimes.”\(^68\) This is a crucial difference from the judicial procedures used over the next one-hundred-and-fifty years, where it was standard for local justices to send their accused witches to Pamplona and the Royal prison. Not only was its traveling search for witches anomalous, so too were the executions that took place within the villages, instead of in Navarra’s capital. Balanza’s activities prompted the continued search for more witches, and fueled concerns that there were “many other delinquents and participants of this same crime [of witchcraft].”\(^69\) The Council therefore agreed that “given the severity of this situation, and the offensiveness to our Lord God, and the great harm it has brought to our Republic, that we continue with the appropriate remedy.”\(^70\) The Council authorized Balanza to take whatever action he saw as appropriate, given the seriousness of this witch plague. Judge Balanza proceeded accordingly.

Balanza’s actions did not go unnoticed. The local judges of the Spanish Inquisition and the Vicar of Pamplona expressed their displeasure to the Royal Council

\(^68\) AGN, Proceso de 1532, f. 22; as cited in Idoate, *La brujería*, doc. 7: “La ejecución se haga en los mismos pueblos donde delinquieron.”

\(^69\) AGN, Proc. de 1532, f. 22; as cited in Idoate, *La brujería*, doc. 7: “Otras muchas que sean delincuentes y participantes en el mismo delito.”

\(^70\) AGN, Proc. de 1532, f. 22; as cited in Idoate, *La brujería*, doc. 7: “Y conviene que, según la severidad del, y lo que tan notoriamente es ofendido Dios nuestro Señor, y nuestra república recibe gran danos, se provea en el remedio que conviene.”
through multiple letters, and his colleagues urged him to not order any more executions without first sharing his findings with them. They were alarmed by second-hand reports claiming some eighteen witches had been executed, and also bothered by the admonishing letters they received from the Inquisition and the Vicar. Balanza’s zealous campaign came to an end in July or August of 1525. His tours of the Valleys of Roncal and Salazar occupied one-hundred-and-ninety-seven days, and involved one to two hundred witch accusations, though only fifty were likely executed.

These trials present a unique pattern of witch persecution never to be repeated in Navarra. The judicial power concentrated in a single magistrate’s hand lent itself to a less constrained, more vigilant flavor of justice; one that more closely resembled the German lands than Iberia. Since the records from Balanza’s activities are scant, it is impossible to categorize this event with certainty. If we rely on numerical data alone, the witch prosecutions of 1525 would be classified as a “witch panic.”

This unusual convulsion of trials had several consequences. First, the Spanish Inquisition (whose tribunal was newly established in the region) would remain alert and aggressive over their claims to the prosecution of witchcraft. Secondly, it prompted a junta (synod) held by the Supreme Council of the Inquisition in 1526 to define the inquisitorial stance regarding the reality of witchcraft. Lastly, Balanza’s witch hunt

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71 AGN, Proc. de 1532, f. 22; as cited in Idoate, La brujería, doc. 9.
would serve as a reminder cautioning against over-zealous persecutions of witchcraft, as Royal Tribunals of Navarra, the Council of Castilla, and the Spanish Inquisition (in particular the inquisitor Salazar y Frias in 1614) would allude to this momentous episode for over a century.\textsuperscript{73}

2.2.2 A Solitary Witch, 1534

The Royal Tribunals of Navarra did not prosecute another witch or sorceress for a decade. This lull was interrupted by an accusation against Maria Sagardoy, from the village of Aezcoa, who was denounced for witchcraft and poisoning.\textsuperscript{74} Maria’s reputation for being a “bad Christian and poisoner,” coupled with the common knowledge that she kept a dead toad on her porch, was sufficient for her arrest and imprisonment in the royal jail in Pamplona.\textsuperscript{75} The Council charged Maria with being a “\textit{malefica}” and with acts of poisoning spanning a decade, in which she used “venomous materials, with burnt, flayed toads, and with large black spiders, and with children’s livers, and other deadly things.”\textsuperscript{76} It was alleged that Maria used this noxious concoction to harm neighbors and that “throughout the land of Aezcoa, she is known to have killed

\textsuperscript{73} See AGN, 035728 (1525); AGN, 1525_CO_PS1.1, Leg.66, N.4.
\textsuperscript{74} AGN, 209502 (1535), 1r.
\textsuperscript{75} AGN, 209502 (1535), 3r: “\textit{Mala Cristiana y ponzoñera}.”
\textsuperscript{76} AGN, 209502 (1535), 7r: “Con materiales venenosos con sapos desolladas, quemadas, y con arañas grandes, negros, y con hígados de criaturas y con otras cosas mortíferas.”
men, women, children, and livestock.” Maria denied these charges, prompting the Royal Tribunals to order interrogation under torture to uncover the truth. It was a sentence she never would serve.

Inexplicably, the magistrates released Maria Sagadoy on the bond of two-hundred ducados. Maria neither paid it, nor ever returned to the Court. When the prosecutor Licenciado Ovando noted her failure to pay and sent for her, Maria resisted, cleverly asserting she was unable to be tortured as she was four months’ pregnant. The trial record abruptly concluded with Ovando’s terse note: “Have her come to the jail and have the midwife see her.” Maria Sagardoy had triumphed over the Royal Court and Council.

The trial of Maria Sagardoy is an example of the solitary sorcery trials peppered throughout the records of Navarra. The sorceress belief here was well-formed: she was female, she performed her maleficia alone, she cleverly concocted and utilized poisons to harm neighbors and society at large. The devil, night flight, the Sabbath, and preternatural powers were all absent. Trials of solitary sorceresses and witches heavily relied on the accused’s reputation or fama in the village and did not conform to learned diabolical ideas. At this time, in the autumn of 1534, the Royal Tribunals did not zealously pursue a conviction, nor did Maria’s denunciation generate a search for other

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77 AGN, 209502 (1535), 7r: “Y en todo la dicha tierra de Aezcoa conviene saber ha muerto hombres, mujeres, criaturas, ganados.”
78 AGN, 209502 (1535), 49r: “Que venga a la cárcel y que vea la nodriza.”
witches, or a hunt for every other “bad Christian” in Aezcoa. In five years’ time, however, that would not be the case.

2.2.3 Witches of the Valley of Salazar, 1540

Villagers from the Valley of Salazar were no strangers to the persecution of witchcraft. Judge Balanza’s zealous campaign had been waged in Salazar only fifteen years before a second cluster of witch trials would resurface in this valley. Beginning in 1539, a clutch of witches was brought before the Royal Tribunals for witchcraft. In total, the Royal Tribunals arrested almost thirty people for witchcraft, but only handed out four sentences. The remaining accused witches were transferred to the Spanish Inquisition’s tribunal of Navarra where they were adjudicated.79

One of the more impressive features of these cluster trials was the primary accused witch: the town’s mayor, Lope de Salazar. It is possible he was included due to suspicion of negligence, as the authorities claimed that witches remained in the valley after the witch trials of 1525.80 More likely, though, he was a natural target because of his father’s reputation and arrest for witchcraft.81 The prosecutor charged this large group of accused witches, including the town mayor, as follows:

They are and have been witches [and] poisoners...They have reneged God and our Lady, his Blessed Mother ...And with filth and powers and burnt toads and other poisons, they have used poisoned powder to kill...And they have gathered

79 This is treated more closely in Chapter V. The names of the accused appear in the auto de fe of 1540.
80 As suggested by Usunáriz, “La casa de brujas en la Navarra moderna,” Akelarre, 312.
81 AGN, 063994), 25r.
many times both night and day, in their gatherings and festivities and dances of witches’...

The indictments against the accused witches were long and detailed, specifying the days of the week they gathered at the Sabbath, their infernal activities at these gatherings, and of course, toads. Generally speaking, however, the expansive list of crimes lacked specificity (for example, no one was specifically charged with drying up their neighbor’s best cow’s milk) and mirrored that of accusations leveled against other groups of witches in cluster trials. The pattern in Navarra’s witch trial records reveals that the more people who were accused, the more generalized (and diabolical) the accusations became.

The accused witches from the Valley of Salazar ended up in the hands of the Inquisition, where almost fifty witches appeared in its annual reports from Navarra. Thirty minors, between ages ten and fourteen, were prescribed penances as “male witches and female witches, apostates”; eight “male witches and female witches, apostates” over age fourteen were abjured de levi, and eleven male witches and females witches were abjured de vehementi as “witches, apostates, maleficas, idolaters, and

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82 AGN, 63994 (1540), 59r-60r: “Han sido y son brujas y ponzoñeras...han renegado de Dios y de nuestra Señora, su bendita Madre...y con suciedad y polvos y sapos quemados, y otros ponzoñas, echaban polvos ponzoñosos para matar...han juntado muchas veces de día y de noche, en sus ayuntamientos y regocijos y danzas de brujas.”
83 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, f. 13r.
84 Public renunciation for misdemeanor crimes, or “light” suspicions.
85 Public renunciation for greater crimes, or “heavy” suspicions.
blasphemers of our Sacred Religion.”86 This is a unique feature of witch trials in Navarra: the presence of the extra judicial safeguard of the Spanish Inquisition. It is impossible to deny the unique presence and influence of the institution. Whether this small panic would have expanded had the Spanish Inquisition not taken over the trials is hard to say.

2.2.4 A Solitary Witch, 1560

Two decades passed between the witch trials from the Valley of Salazar and the Royal Tribunal’s next trial for sorcery or witchcraft. The energetic prosecution of sixty-eight-year old Graciana Belca from the Valley of Roncal began with a robust list of accusations over two folios in length!87 Every ill that had ever befallen the villagers of Vidangoz seems to have been credited to this notorious neighbor. Every bedsheets, handkerchief, and dressing gown stolen from a drying rack, every missing chicken, and all general misfortune was blamed on Graciana. Graciana was arrested alongside another accused witch, Maria Lopez, and both were charged as “people of bad living, habits, and fama (reputation), bad Christians and thieves.”88 But the magistrates showed greater concern for Graciana’s maleficia and mala fama, while Maria Lopez cleverly used this prejudice to her advantage. She responded to her arrest with the accusation that

86 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, ff. 13r-16r: “Por brujos y brujas, apostates,” “por brujas, apostates, maléficas, idolatrás, y blasfemas de nuestra Sagrada Religión.”
87 AGN, 21115 (1561), 12r, 12v, 13r.
88 AGN, 21115 (1561), 21r: “Personas de mala vida, costumbres, y fama; mala cristianas y ladronas.”
Graciana had bewitched her with herbs, forcing her to steal from neighbors. Maria’s tactic succeeded, as the prosecutor Ovando presented Maria as a victim of the “herbs” Graciana had used to control her. 89

Graciana’s lengthy list of indictments began with thievery and gradually included more serious crimes. She was charged with using “spells and herbs against many other people to do harm to them and kill them.” 90 Multiple neighbors reported that Graciana had bewitched and poisoned them, recalling strange ailments they experienced after interactions with this suspicious neighbor. The litany graduated to charges “she has used spells to kill many cows and mares and male horses and nursing animals of Maria Perez.” 91 Her reputation as a bad Christian, a thief, and a poisoner was amplified by the claim “she said many words and other things of a mala Cristiana, a sorceress, a witch.” 92 Multiple villagers reported they had been threatened by her and that she left the whole village “terrified.” 93 Armed with this arsenal of complaints, the Royal Tribunals sentenced Graciana to torture.

Graciana Belca’s questioning under torture, as it is recorded, was vigorously delivered by executioner of the Royal Tribunals. Its administration was ordered to be

89 AGN, 21115 (1561), 21r: “yerbas”
90 AGN, 21115 (1561), 21v: “Hechizos y yerbas a otras muchas personas por les hacer mal y les matar.”
91 AGN, 21115 (1561), 22r: “Ha muerto con hechizos muchas vacas y yeguas y machos rocines y ganados menudos de María Pérez.”
92 AGN, 21115 (1561), 22r: “Ha dicho... otras muchas palabras y cosas de mala Cristiana, hechicera, y bruja.”
93 AGN, 21115 (1561), 22r: “Atemorizados.”
“very robust until she declares the truth.”94 The “executioner of justice” began by securing the elderly Graciana to the rack and was ordered to “tighten the cords” repeatedly.95 Despite the multiple sessions on the rack, Graciana refused to confess to maleficia. The magistrates then ordered the executioner to abandon the rack, and administer the water torture. Three times the executioner poured “a jar of water” down her throat, while the judges continued to interrogate her, but still she remained “negativo” (denied any wrongdoing).96 Having seen “her perseverance, the magistrates ordered [the torture] suspended,” though by that point Graciana had two broken arms and had been maimed.97 She was sentenced to one-hundred lashings, and ten years’ exile; a sentence that was doubled when she violated the terms of her banishment by returning to the Court in search of mercy.

Graciana’s case was a single witch trial featuring a notorious town witch with established mala fama, and numerous denunciations. Hers was one of the lengthiest indictment reports through the records. It is noteworthy, then, that among the multiple and diverse accusations against her, there was a complete absence of diabolism, fantastical elements (such as transvection or theriantrophy), or the Sabbath. Even her murders were committed with herbs. Diabolical tropes usually did not appear in the

94 AGN, 21115 (1561), 65r: “Muy recio hasta que declare la verdad”,
95 AGN, 21115 (1561), 65r: “Ejecutor de la justicia”
96 AGN, 21115 (1561), 65r: “Un jarro de agua.”
97 AGN, 21115 (1561), 65r: “Su perseverancia, sus Mercedes mandaron suspender.”
isolated witch trials of Navarra. The devil seemed to materialize only when larger groups of individuals were accused of witchcraft, as would be the case in 1575.

**2.2.5 Cluster Trials, 1575-1576**

In 1575 the numbers of witch trials increased dramatically. There are only five witch trials on record from 1525 to 1574, and the years spanning 1576 to 1675 only saw seven trials of sorcery and witchcraft. In eight months, from Fall 1575 to Summer 1576, the secular court of Navarra tried eighteen cases, representing almost fifty witches. That is, more than half of all over Navarra’s witch and sorcery trials were conducted within a single year. The wave of witch trials that rippled throughout Navarra began in the tiny village of Anocibar with a priest, a woman prone to unexplained fits, and two young boys.\(^8\) In August of 1575, a vigilant abbot, Pedro de Anocibar, reported that two young boys, ten-year-old Miguel de Olagüe and his eight-year old brother Martin, had been taken to the witches’ gathering by their aunt, Mari Juan. From its onset, this witch trial was markedly different, as the abbot himself (not a magistrate) had prepared the questions and interrogated the boys while a scribe transcribed the interrogation.\(^9\) The eager abbot presented this material to the Royal Court in late August of 1575, and the accused witch, sixty-year-old Maria Johan, was summoned by the prosecutor.

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\(^8\) AGN, 69853 (1575).
\(^9\) Idoate, *La brujería*, 92.
Maria Johan’s confession was candid and discursive: she had been troubled by evil spirits since she was five years old, and the devil himself had bothered her from the time she was only ten years of age.\textsuperscript{100} Decades of exorcisms and spiritual interventions were to no avail, and her trials and tribulations had left her exhausted and ready to find peace in death. But, she asserted, she was not a witch, had never taken her young nephews to the witches’ gatherings, nor “has she done any bad.”\textsuperscript{101} Though we cannot offer a postmortem diagnosis some four-hundred years after her passing, it could be speculated she suffered from epilepsy, as she reported fits that caused her to fall to the floor, at times emitting “smoke” from her mouth. Her life was plagued with diabolic harassment, peppered with occasional exorcisms, and tortured by a condition that left her body bruised until her dying day.\textsuperscript{102}

Maria Johan’s nephews accused her of inducing them into the witches’ sect and they implicated two other villagers—Miguel Zubiri and Maria Xandua. The narrative shared by the eight and ten-year-old boys echoes accounts of the Sabbath throughout much of early modern Europe: they flew to a field by means of an unguent where there was dancing and music, reverence to a man seated in a throne (often a goat), people in

\textsuperscript{100} AGN, 69853 (1575), 6r.
\textsuperscript{101} AGN, 69853 (1575), 8r: “Ni hacen mal alguno.”
\textsuperscript{102} When Maria was stripped for torture, the executioner noted a body that was covered in bruises. The jail guard and Maria’s cellmates reported she had been abused by an evil spirit.
the shapes of cats and dogs, and of course, the destruction of the fields with poisoned powders.\textsuperscript{103} Unique to Basque witch belief, the children were also given toads to care for.

The Royal Tribunals accused the three adult witches, and the two young boys, of a long list of crimes divergent from the reports given. I refer to this stock indictment as a “formulaic definition” which blended villagers’ reports with pre-conceived notions of what a member of the ‘witch sect’ was thought to do. The lengthy catalogue of accusations included:

Many nights they have traveled to meet with large groups of men and women that danced to the sound of a flute and \textit{bandurria}\textsuperscript{104}…in the presence of the man of evil deeds that appeared sitting in a seat…And Maria Johan was in the shape of a large animal among all the people in the countryside who were witches…And they threw certain powders and poisons on the land that had been cultivated with wheat and destroyed all the crops and all the grain turned black…And they went to these \textit{Sabbaths}\textsuperscript{105} to do harm to the crops and to children as well.\textsuperscript{106}

This list of accusations took on a life of its own—inspired by the testimony of the young boys, filtered through the religious understandings of the abbot, then reinterpreted by the legal erudition of the magistrates—such an egregious list of abuses had not yet

\textsuperscript{103} AGN, 69853 (1575), 68v.

\textsuperscript{104} A small musical instrument native to Spain in the shape of a tear droplet with six strings.

\textsuperscript{105} The word used is “\textit{maleficos}”, an adjective meaning “evils”. Its usage and context here connotes a gathering where evil meets, thus, the Sabbath.

\textsuperscript{106} AGN, 69853 (1575), 25r-26r: “Ha ido de noches por diversas veces donde se juntaban muchos hombres y mujeres que bailaban y danzaban a son de una flauta y bandurria …en presencia del dicho hombre de mal gesta que aparecía sentado en una silla...Y María Juana que andaba en figura de un grande animal entre toda la gente del campo que fuesen brujos…25v/...En muchos heredades del dicho lugar que estaba sembrados de trigo echaba ciertos polvos y veneno con que se pierda todo el fruto y salía todo en grano negro...26r/...Siempre iban a los dichos \textit{maleficos}…hacer el daño de las frutas han hecho también mucho daño en las criaturas.”
appeared in the trial records. This distinct list prompted a sentence of torture for the three accused witches.

The tortures recorded by scribe were delivered with intensity and vigor. All three accused witches were stripped naked, subjected to the rack (this including the tightening and stretching of ropes on the arm and leg muscles), and the brassiers, the burning of the feet with oil and an open flame.\textsuperscript{107} Though Maria Joan persisted in her refusal to implicate others, she finally broke down during her fourth session and denounced Miguel and Maria Xandua (known as Xandua). All three witches were sentenced to death.

Maria Johan was burned in the Plaza de la Taconera in Pamplona on October 25, 1575.\textsuperscript{108} Maria was ready to die, and on the eve of her execution she confessed to the friar Johan de Ernani, and died a “good death.” Miguel Zubiri was executed the following month on November 28, 1575, also in the Plaza de la Taconera.\textsuperscript{109} In a twist of fortune, Maria Xandua escaped execution and was transferred to the Inquisition. The defense attorney Pedro Larremendi had argued for this transfer for all three accused throughout the proceedings, but had limited success. In addition to his petition, he had delivered convincing arguments that cast doubt on the young boys’ testimonies, and argued their

\textsuperscript{107} The only time this method was used in the witch trial record.
\textsuperscript{108} AGN, 69853 (1575), 94r: “Bien morir.”
\textsuperscript{109} AGN, 69853 (1575), 117r.
testimony was all dreams. The Court ignored him at this time, but somehow, Xandua managed to avoid her death sentence.

The first execution for witchcraft in five decades had astonishing effects, and sent ripples of witch fear and hunting throughout Navarra. The impact of the burnings of the witches from Anocibar was made explicit in both the authorities’ meeting notes, and the villagers’ reports that alluded time and again to the executions. Over the course of only seven months, the Royal Tribunals processed seventeen witch trials. That is, more than half of the total witch trials documented tried by the Royal Tribunals over 150 years occurred within a single year.\(^\text{110}\) As village authorities throughout Navarra launched investigations into whether or not their region had witches, more and more were created and found. This phenomenon would later be astutely characterized by the inquisitor Alonzo Salazar de Frias (an inquisitor with oversight of the witch panic in 1609) who remarked: “There were neither witches nor bewitched in a village until they were talked about and written about.”\(^\text{111}\)

The burnings of the two accused witches in Pamplona sparked a chain reaction of trials in the kingdom of Navarra lasting from the fall of 1575 until the spring of 1576. Though each trial offers rich testimony and its own nuances, an in-depth treatment all seventeen trials and their accompanying accused witches is beyond the scope of this

\(^{110}\) Fifty-four percent of the trial records are from 1575-1576.

\(^{111}\) Henningsen, The Witches’ Advocate, 117.
chapter. Instead I provide an overview of these cluster trials and highlight their commonalties. These trials began to unfold immediately following the discovery of the witches of Anocibar, as commissaries from the Royal Court commenced a tour throughout the valleys of northern Navarra, collecting information during their visitations.\footnote{These towns were Oricáin, Ostiz, Burutáin, Etuláin, and Esáin, in the valleys of Ezcabarte, Olaíbar, and Anué. Idoate, \textit{La brujería}, 112.} Only ten days after Maria’s execution, the discovery of a new group of witches had been made.

Receiving information from the Valley of Araquil, the Court and Council reported: \enquote{We have been informed that in the village of Huarte and its jurisdiction there are many people who have done much harm with spells and other maleficent arts.}\footnote{AGN, 327213 (1576), 1r: \enquote{Somos informado que en la dicha villa de Huarte y su jurisdicción hay muchas personas que han hecho muchos danos con hechicerías y otras artes malas.}} This produced four witches accused of a formulaic definition of witchcraft that was unique to these years of 1575-76 (this will be discussed further in Chapter IV). Repeated throughout the string of witch trials, this stock definition featured: night flight, attendance at the witches’ gatherings; raising, nurturing, and manipulating toads; poisoning crops, animals, and people with poisoned powders; and \textit{occasionally}, sexual deviance and the presence of the devil.\footnote{AGN, 327213 (1576), 78r-80v.} As the \textit{alcaídes} of the neighboring villages in northern Navarra sought intelligence of their witches, they were easily found. A blend of established town witches, fresh suspects, and the ease of using a denunciation for
revenge, supplied witches in every town they were sought. Huarte’s witch drama ended with the banishment of two female witches, the prison death of another female witch, and the release of the male witch.\textsuperscript{115} Meanwhile, other villages in the same Valley of Araquil continued the search for their own witches.

During the same month of November, an inquest began in the village of Urdain in the Valley of Araquil.\textsuperscript{116} Five villagers accused eighty-year-old Graciana Martinez of witchcraft, an unusually small number of denunciations, which rely on village gossip and reputations. One witness, seventy-year-old Johan de Ciordia, claimed he passed her house one night thirty years before, and witnessed twelve women in white who “disappeared into the air” and turned into dogs, cats and pigs.\textsuperscript{117} He also claimed Graciana raised a herd of toads in her home to poison crops, animals, and children. Despite the presence of seventeen villagers testifying on her behalf, including the Vicar, an abbot, and even one of the witnesses used by the prosecution, the Royal Court sentenced the bedridden Graciana to torture. Ignoring her defense attorney’s desperate attempts to spare her from the torture that would certainly kill her, the impassioned Royal Court asserted “she is stout, with good aspect and strengths, and is no more than

\begin{itemize}
\item \textsuperscript{115} AGN, 327213 (1576), sin numero (final page).
\item \textsuperscript{116} AGN, 327215 (1576).
\item \textsuperscript{117} AGN, 327215 (1576), 2r-v: “Más de diez o doce personas todos vestidos de blanco y se les habrá parecido que eran mujeres y visto se pararon y espantaron.”
\end{itemize}
sixty-years-old.”\textsuperscript{118} Fortunately, the opinion of the prison doctor contradicted that of the magistrates’ and he confirmed that Graciana was “dry and consumptive, with little blood…she is bone and leather, like an elephant’s skin…and has an imperceptible pulse” and that not only could she not endure torture, she would certainly die.\textsuperscript{119} For four months she languished in the Royal prisons, unable to rise to use the chamber pot. Graciana’s son gave her cellmates money for her care and to “give her broth and milk like a newborn.”\textsuperscript{120} Finally, the Court revoked the torture order, but handed down another harsh sentence. On May 8, 1576, after seven months in prison, the elderly Graciana Martinez was condemned to “perpetual exile.”\textsuperscript{121}

Given the meager number of villagers who testified against her, in contrast to the volume of those who reported her good character (sixteen villagers, including the Vicar and an abbot), it is somewhat perplexing why the Court pursued Graciana Martinez with such zeal, an old woman who by all witness accounts never caused any harm to anyone, but lived her life as a poor and Christian widow. This surprising case demonstrates that in times of heightened witchcraft fears or chain witch trials, the prosecutorial procedures of an energetic court often broke from typical patterns of

\textsuperscript{118} AGN, 327215 (1576), 62r: “La acusada no llega tener sesenta años y es mujer recia y de buen sujeto y disposición y fuerzas.”

\textsuperscript{119} AGN, 327215 (1576), 68r: “Esta seca y consumada…como el cuero del elefante…casi tiene el pulso imperceptible…delgado como un hilo.”

\textsuperscript{120} AGN, 327215 (1576), 67v: “Como una creatura le dan leche y caldo porque no puede comer otra cosa.”

\textsuperscript{121} AGN, 327215 (1576), 63r.
jurisprudence. This resulted in denunciations of people who normally would not have been accused of witchcraft, as well as hyper-aggressive sentencing.

In the same month of November of 1575, another village in the Valley of Araquil launched an inquest of those “suspected to be witches or sorceresses in the village of Villanueva.”122 Similarly, the town of Ciordia launched an investigation into its witches. Its report from November 1575 began:

> Notice has come that in the Valley of Araquil and in other parts and places of the mountains of Navarra…there are many people, men and women alike…who are witches and caused much evil and damage to the land and in other parts with spells and other things.123

This resulted in the arrest Catalina Arana and nine witches, seven women and two men, all charged with the formulaic definition of witchcraft so prevalent at this time. All of the witches from Ciordia, along with many other affected by this string of witch trials, ended up in the arms of the Spanish Inquisition, where most received mild sentences.

The witch hunts spilled over into 1576. In January, the village of Burguette hunted its witches and four were found: one notorious witch, along with one other woman and two men.124 Villagers’ reports centered around the most notorious witch, Graciana Loizu and her toad familiars. She was accused of caring for toads, washing them, wearing leather made from their skins, feeding them bread, and generally having

122 AGN, 327295 (1576), 1r: “Sospechas de que fuesen brujas o hechiceras en el lugar de Villanueva.”
123 AGN, 327214 (1576), 1r: “Noticia ha venido que en la valle de Araquil y en otras partes y lugares de las montañas de Navarra…hay muchas personas, así hombres como mujeres…que son brujos y hacen mucho mal y daño en la tierra y en otras partes con hechiceras y otras cosas.”
124 AGN, 98192 (1576).
them loiter about her person. The magistrates sentenced Graciana to five years’ exile from the village of Burguette, and freed the appended witches. From this emerges a trend found in cluster trials: villagers free from long-standing witch reputations were arrested alongside persons with established mala fama. In Navarra, these appended witches were usually released, and sentencing was reserved for the primary suspect(s).

The hunt continued in February, when the Royal Court dispatched the commissary Elba Tiller Ozcoidi to the villages of Oztiz, Burutain, and Essai. The language used by the villagers in these reports underscores with precision the impact of Maria and Miguel’s executions on these cluster trials. Witness after witness alluded to the “accused witches from the village of Anocibar.” Sixty-six-year-old Peruzqui de Yraycoz admitted: “He does not know who in the place of Burutain and its neighbors have been and are in the fama and reputation and are witches...because before those from Anocibar were imprisoned and killed as witches, he never saw any [witches].” Similarly, the testimony from fifty-year-old Martin Joan Torena reveals much about the crucial importance of Anocibar and its repressions:

And it had never come to his notice that any person at all in his town had the fama of being a witch until the ones from Anocibar were imprisoned and burned. And from that moment on, he heard in Burutain that Catalina...has been placed on the “roll of” and memorial of those who are male witches and female witches

125 AGN, 98192 (1576), 17r, 19r.
126 Idoate, La brujería, 111.
127 AGN, 11219 (1576), 9v-10v: “Los de Anocibar.”
128 AGN, 11219 (1576), 9v: “Y no sabe que personas en el dicho lugar de Burutayn y en los comarcas han estado y están en fama, reputación, y que son brujas......porque antes que los de Anocibar fueron presos y quemados por brujos...no vio.”
in the said land. He does not who put this *fama* on her because before, he never
Heard that Catalina had that *fama* nor has he ever seen her do or say things of
witchcraft, nor had he heard anyone say she did.\(^\text{129}\)

This villager uncovers for us the impetus and driving force behind the large cluster trials
in 1575-76. His testimony clearly highlights the importance of village voices, and
elucidates that witch fears were sensitive to and dependent upon collective discussions.

As news of the burnings in Pamplona reached villagers, they in turn became primed to
find witches among their neighbors. And thus the cycle continued.

In February 1576, the villages of Legarda and Urtega also began their inquiries
into “who have been or are in the opinion of being witches or sorcerers.”\(^\text{130}\) This yielded
two very unlikely suspects in Navarra, a man of great wealth and Teresa de Ollo, a
*hidalga* (noble) woman with an impeccable reputation. Hers was the unmistakable case
of a witchcraft accusation used for revenge that left her dead within a month of her
arrest (Teresa’s case will be discussed in depth in Chapter IV). For the section at hand,
however, the denunciation of Teresa illustrates how suspects in cluster trials often broke
with traditional witch stereotypes. Meanwhile, the local vicar of the neighboring village

\(^{129}\) AGN, 11219 (1576), 10r-10v: “Y no venido a su noticia que persona alguna del dicho lugar haya tenido y
tenga fama de que sea bruja hasta que fueron presos o quemados los de Anocibar. Que después acá ha oído
decir en Burutayn que Cathalina mujer de Martin de Juan Aycena esta puesta en el rolde y memorial de los
que son brujos y brujas en la dicha tierra. No sabe quien la ha puesto ni porque causa porque antes del dicho
tiempo este testigo no entendió que la dicha Cathalina tuviese tal fama ni le ha visto hacer ni decir cosas de
brujerías ni a nadie ha oído decir que se las hayan.”

\(^{130}\) AGN, 327744 (1576), 1r: “Si habido o hay personas de quienes se halla tenido o tenga opinión de brujos o
hechiceros.”
of Olague followed the lead of the zealous abbot of Anocibar and searched for his town’s “roll of witches.”

In March of 1576, the witchcraft trials for the village of Orroquieta began with the ominous report: “In the Valley of Larraun there has been and are many people who are witches and have caused and caused much harm with spells are other evil arts.” The town witch, Graciana de Orroquieta, was quickly fingered by the villagers and charged with a formulaic accusation. Similarly, the trial from the village of Ciga began its report in March of 1576 with the telling start: “There is notice that in San Martin de Amescoa there are many male witches and female witches.” This search brought forth Pedro Sanz and twelve other accused witches, two of whom perished in the royal prison. That same month, the Licenciado Ozcoidi, one of the Royal Court magistrates from the Anocibar witch trial, conducted interrogations in the village of Ulzama (a neighboring village). His interrogations yielded a group of four witches, three women and one man, all accused of a formulaic definition divergent from the villagers’ reports, including charges they used an unguent made from the arm of a child and urine of a

131 Idoate, La brujería, 101.
132 AGN, Graciana Oroquieta (1576), 1r: “En la dicha Valle de Larrun ha habido y hay muchas personas que son brujas y han hecho y hacen muchos danos con hechizos y otras artes malas.”
133 AGN, Graciana Oroquieta (1576), 20r-21r.
134 AGN, Pedro Sanz (1576), 7v: “Hay noticia que en San Martin de Amescoa hay muchos brujos y brujas.”
135 Idoate, La brujería, 107.
The procurador Joan de Olague highlighted that these new witch allegations are were very recent. All four witches were released only having to pay court costs.\(^{137}\)

The witch-hunt spread to the village of Muez in March 1576. The records began: “I, Pedro de Gabadi, receptor and commissary of the magistrates of the Royal Court, have been named to inquire and discover who are male witches and female witches in the Valley of the Berrueca.”\(^{138}\) This introduction to a witch trial is telling: it began from a court official and not from within the village. Though the village as a whole did not have any witches to report, one clever family of wealth seized this opportune time to avenge their father’s death and settle decades’ worth of animosities with another prominent family (this will be discussed in detail in Chapter IV, alongside the aforementioned Teresa de Ollo).

In the same month of March, the magistrate Bachiller Ozcoidi, conducted his visitations in the Valley of Roncal. The villagers of Roncal had little difficulty revealing their witch’s identity. Joana Larrimpe was readily identified by multiple witnesses, who pointed to her ubiquitous mala fama, and emphasized the rumored guardianship of a large toad in her house. The Court’s report revealed the source of Joana’s most unfortunate reputation:

\(^{136}\) AGN, 69259 (1576), 14r-v: “Hacían con un brazo de criatura sin bautizar y con agua de sapo.”
\(^{137}\) AGN, 69259 (1576), 73r.
\(^{138}\) AGN, 294640 (1576), 1r. “Yo, Pedro de Gabaldi, señores alcaldes de la casa y corte mayor de este reino nombrado para inquirir saber en la Valle de la Berrueca quienes sean brujos y brujas.”
According to all the witnesses, Joana Larrimpe is and has been with the *fama* of being a witch, because her mother was *sambenitada* (penanced by the Spanish Inquisition), with her *sambenito* (penitential smock and hat) still hanging in the church of the said town, [she was] reconciled. And her maternal grandmother was sentenced and hung for being a notorious witch.\(^{139}\)

The taint of three generations of female witches was difficult to escape. While her defense attorney petitioned for her transfer to the Inquisition, Joana languished in the Royal prisons, and died in April of 1577, still incarcerated after two years.\(^{140}\)

Though villages throughout Navarra accused their witches, and the Royal Tribunals adjudicated them, there were no more executions after the deaths of Maria Johan and Miguel. After the witches of Anocibar, torture was only administered three times, that is, in less than 18% of the trials of 1575-76. This restraint likely curbed the number of confessions and denunciations of other witches. The Royal Tribunals did not follow the pattern of witch hunting in other regions such as the German lands, where a routine line of the interrogation process was dedicated to asking about accomplices. The cluster trials of 1575-76 illuminate that when witches were actively sought in a legal context, villagers were often able to produce a list of possible suspects. These accusations usually emerged from those with long-term *mala fama*, but sometimes extended to others without *fama*. The witches produced by the cluster trials of 1575-1576

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\(^{139}\) AGN, 327775 (1576), 9r-10r: “Resulta=Por todos los testigos que Joana Larrimpe presa ha estado y está en fama de ser bruxa en razón que su madre fue sambenitada y su sanbenito está en la iglesia parroquial del dicho lugar reconciliada y su abuela materna también fue muerta de un garrote que le dieron por sentencia y como bruja notoria.”

\(^{140}\) AGN, 327775 (1576), 20r.
were transferred to the Spanish Inquisition and were either acquitted, or processed in the *auto de fe* of 1577 (this will be discussed in Chapter V). Interestingly, the Inquisitors had stopped Navarra’s cluster trials.

### 2.2.6 A Solitary healer, 1590

After the panic trials of 1575, the Royal Court and Council did not try a single case of sorcery or witchcraft for fourteen years. But in the summer of 1590, an accused sorceress from the village of Barasoain was summoned before the Royal Court.\(^{141}\) Thirteen villagers had testified against Milia de Otano, including thirty-year-old Catalina de Elcano who declared that “the accused is known to be a person of bad reputation, a sorceress, a charlatan, and full of superstitions, and that this is the truth.”\(^{142}\) Witnesses both in support of and against Milia described her rituals used to un-bind married couples (that is, undo spells impeding procreation), help babies and young livestock nurse, and improve women’s fertility. Her reputation for healing was diffuse, and many villagers actively sought her services, praising the efficacy of her cures. But some were dissatisfied with the results, and left Milia in the “bad reputation of being a sorceress or charlatan and that she does not heal by means of holiness or any particular

\(^{141}\) AGN, 148294 (1590).

\(^{142}\) AGN, 148294 (1590), 15r: “La dicha acusada por persona de mala opinión de todo hechicera o engañadora y toda abusiones y que esta es la verdad.”
grace.”"\textsuperscript{143} Her healing practices left her vulnerable to accusations by unhappy clients who felt the pain of their disappointments doubly when they paid Milia precious funds with no results. Central to her cures was blaming others for the curses, a treacherous line to follow should she implicate the wrong villager. Milia also drew disapproval for “the reputation that if she was not content with her payment, she would not unbind them. And if she had already unbound them, she would undo it and make it even worse until she was satisfied with the payment.”\textsuperscript{144}

Despite the reports of copious heterodox behaviors with ample witness testimony, no one used the term “witch.” This solitary trial featured illicit healing by a woman using rituals and counter-sorcery. Yet, these charges did not devolve into accusations of the Sabbath, diabolism, or the quest for denunciations. This was typical of individual sorcery trials in Navarra, offering a pattern of witch prosecution that usually did not devolve into convulsive witch hunting. This trial remained isolated and it would appear that Milia never received a sentence from the Royal Court.

\textbf{2.2.7 The Lord’s Witches, 1595}

The pattern in Navarra’s witch trials took a sharp turn in 1595 when a group of accused witches from the village of Araiz were denounced, not by neighbors reporting

\textsuperscript{143} AGN, 148294 (1590), 22r: “A la cual la tiene en mala opinión de hechicera o engañadora y no que haga las dichas cosas por santidad ni gracia particular.”

\textsuperscript{144} AGN, 148294 (1590), 20r: “Y otros le decían que la dicha acusada tenía fama que si no le pagaba a su contento, no desataba y si desataba, tornaba atar peor hasta que la contentasen.”
their established fama, but by the territorial Lord Andueza. Andueza had charged a young “witch-finder” to discover the witches in his territory, which she did by looking for toad-shaped pupils in the villagers’ eyes. Seventeen villagers, including children, were imprisoned “in the palace of the Lord Andueza on the first Wednesday of February, 1595.” The Lord Andueza and his son interrogated them, while a local scribe, Juan de Areso, took their confessions in vascuence (Basque), and translated them in romance (Spanish). Their confessions diverged sharply from the more common concerns about witchcraft in Navarra, and instead reflected the belief in a diabolical Sabbath and unnatural sex with the devil. This level of diabolism transcended that of any other witch trials in the records, including the cluster trials of 1575. Its sexual content was more explicit than that of the witch panic of 1609, which also featured diabolical sex but to a lesser extent. These villagers, comprised of families, including three related girls aged eight, thirteen, and sixteen, confessed to maleficia, diabolism, and sexual activities with the devil (referred to as Belcebut).

The accused witches were dispatched to the royal jail in Pamplona a week after their initial imprisonment in the palace of Andueza, and appeared before the royal magistrates on February 22, 1595. One by one these accused witches were interrogated by three magistrates and the court’s secretary who translated from Castillian to Euskera,

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145 AGN, 71319 (1595), 97r.
146 AGN, 71319 (1595), 1r: “En el palacio de Andueza, miércoles primera día de Febrero de 1595.”
and they ratified much of their previous admissions that had made to Lord Andeuza. Some of the accused, like twenty-nine year-old Catalina Mercero, amended parts of their previous confessions. While Catalina confessed that “Belcebut inserted his member, that was hard like bone, in her natural parts,” she changed one part of her previous statement, clarifying “but he never poured his seed in her, like her husband does.” She went on to ratify the rest of her deposition, confessing to maleficia and her renunciation of God himself. These villagers ratified most of their statements at this first encounter with the magistrates of the Royal Court in late February. But by March, many of these accused villagers were dying in prison, and they began to recant their previous admissions, while telling the story of imprisonment, threats, and coercion by the nobleman Andueza.

By mid-March their procurador (defense attorney) petitioned the court for their release, reporting that their poverty was so great, they could not support themselves, and “they are suffering with dire need, so great that to eat, they have had to pawn their coats and other garments.” He reported that: “For one and a half months [they] have been incarcerated in your royal prisons...and [are] dying in the prison, as they have no belongings. And what the fiscal gives them for food is not enough to sustain them, especially for the diseases that are presented in jail, and four of them have already died

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147 AGN, 713710 (1595), 87r: “Y que el dicho Belcebut le metía su miembro, que le tenía como un hueso en su natura...aunque jamás vertió simiente en ella como lo hace su propio marido.”

148 AGN, 71319 (1595), 108v: “Padean extrema necesidad de tal manera que si han de comer han habida de empeñar sus capotes y otras prendas.”
and now three are in danger of dying. Shortly thereafter, these accused villagers began to revoke their previous confessions made to the Lord Andueza and the magistrates of the Royal Court.

In danger of dying, the three youngest girls were released to a hospital on April 30, 1595. Away from the royal jail and the court, they recanted their confessions. Their release came too late however, and all three girls died, the youngest being nine-year-old Maria Chorro and her thirteen-year-old sister, Miguela. In the same month, the Inquisitors received notice of these accused witches, and sent a commissary to re-examine the accused. The commissary reported “all of them revoked the statements they had made in front of the secular justice where they were imprisoned, and in front of the alcaldes of the [Royal] Court.” Because of the irregularities of this case, the Inquisition chose not to involve themselves, though the Inquisitors conscientiously noted in their report to the Inquisitor General that the final decision should be made quickly “because the defendants remain imprisoned and some of them are dying.”

Within several months of their initial arrests, all the villagers had recanted and nine had perished. The Court continued to deliberate and in June, the magistrates

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149 AGN, 71319 (1595), 111r: “Micheto de Usarbarrena y sus consortes...de mes y medio están presos en vras cárcceles reales...y mueren en la prision por no tener ellos bienes ningunos, y lo que se les da del fiscal para sus alimentos ser tan poco que no tienen bastante sustento, en especial para las enfermedades que se ofrecen. Por lo cual han muerto cuarto de ellos y ahora tres están en peligro de morir.”

150 AGN, 71319 (1595), 181r:

151 Archivo Histórico Nacional (AHN), Inquisición, Libro 791, f. 353r: “Y todos ellos...revocaron las confesiones que habían hecho ante la justicia seglar de los lugares donde fueron presos.”

152 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 791, f. 353r: “Porque los reos están presos y se van muriendo algunos.”
interrogated a key witness: twelve-year-old witch finder Johana de Baraibar. Johana claimed that she could recognize witches by a toad-shaped mark in their eyes, the approach she used to identify the witches of Araiz. Johana’s report suggested that she was not actively seeking to denounce fellow villagers, but was persuaded to by the Lord Andueza who had heard of her special skill. In July, their procurador, Juan Perez de Dindart, mounted a formidable defense in which he highlighted the coercion and threats that produced their false statements. He argued:

They deposed [falsely] because of the gifts, inducements, and persuasions by certain people. And many of them retracted their statements and these people threatened them, saying they would quarter them into four parts and burn their bodies if they retracted their statements …They did not want to [depose] because it was false, but they were cajoled and threatened.

Dindart based his arguments of the statements given by the villagers, accounts that were consistent with what the Father Pedro in the prison was told. Sick and some on their deathbeds, the accused witches confessed to the Father that they had perjured at the urging of Andueza and some clerics. They claimed the men assured them that if they confessed to be witches, they would be freed. Andueza threatened that if they refused to confess, or if they rescinded their confessions in front of the court, he would burn
them.\textsuperscript{155} The magistrates continued to detain several of the surviving villagers and to conduct interrogations in the valley of Araiz throughout the autumn.

This anomalous and unfortunate case came to an end in November, when the court scribe and commissary, Joan de Loyola, was dispatched to Araiz to receive testimony about the alleged perjuries. He discovered that the original scribe who deposed the accused witches in Andueza’s palace, Juan de Areso, had told many people, including his daughter, mother-in-law, and neighbors that “they were not witches, nor were those they in turn denounced as witches.”\textsuperscript{156} The records reveal the fate of the last two prisoners: Juanes Zamarguiñarena was absolved, while Martin Barazarte was banished for six years.\textsuperscript{157} Nine of the villagers had perished, all women and the three young girls, while the rest were presumably absolved.

The event in Araiz offers several points of examination. First, it suggests that in top-down trials, testimony is more likely to involve diabolism, witches’ gatherings and, in this case, learned, sexual ideas about witchcraft. Second, it shows a break in the pattern of how most witches came to the Court’s attention. Instead of \textit{fama} at the village level, these “witches” were accused at the hands of a very select group of people (Andueza’s family, and some unnamed clerics). Finally, on the larger level, it shows how Navarra’s witches were not tried by local, territorial lords like Andueza, but rather

\begin{footnotes}
\item[155] AGN, 71319 (1595), 192r-197r.
\item[156] AGN, 71319 (1595), unnumbered: “No eran brujos ellos ni los que ellos acusaban.”
\item[157] AGN, 71319 (1595), 209.
\end{footnotes}
referred to the Royal Court. This greater level of accountability likely contributed to the absence of the abuses and irregularities at the hands of territorial lords, princes, and so forth in more fragmented European lands.

After the trial of witches of Araiz, almost sixty years would pass before another case of sorcery or witchcraft appeared in Navarra’s court records. During that time, however, Navarra would host the largest witch panic in European history, one that would be led by the Spanish Inquisition’s tribunal in Logroño from 1609-10. This large witch panic included over one-thousand accusations and conspicuously stands outside of the general pattern of Navarra. Since the Royal Tribunals were not involved with any of its prosecutions, it will be discussed in the fifth chapter which treats witchcraft trials under the Spanish Inquisition.

2.2.8 Sorcery trials of the Seventeenth Century, 1647-1675

The calm following the witch craze of 1609 lasted almost four decades. During this time not a single trial of sorcery or witchcraft was brought before the Royal Tribunals. The absence of trials does not indicate that magical beliefs had vanished. Such whiggish narratives of “progress” and rationalism distort the longer history of magic and witchcraft in this region. The continued belief in magic and sorcery among in this
region is reflected by the dozens of crimes that fell under the Inquisition’s label of *Supersticiones* between the witch panic and the Royal Tribunal’s sorcery trial of 1647.158

From 1595 until 1647, no crimes of sorcery or witchcraft fell to the Royal Tribunals. The first trial of sorcery in the seventeenth century was in 1647, when Maria Yrisarri and Maria de Ollo, two healers from Pamplona were denounced to the secular court for *maleficia* and sorcery.159 According to multiple witnesses, each woman had “the reputation and common opinion of all that she is a witch and a sorceress and with her sorceries and diabolical arts she has done and does much harm in the republic.”160 More than ten villagers reported their extensive reputations for being sorceresses and witches. Accusations against Maria Yrisarri included sickening a young girl, harming those who refused her charity when she begged, and, somewhat incongruently, taking a villager to the *aquelarre* when he was a child some three decades earlier.161 As their provisor argued for a deferral to the Spanish Inquisition, the Court’s prosecutor fought to retain their case, highlighting the crimes of *maleficia*, and the lack of any solid proof of heresy. Their case stalled in the doldrums, while they remained imprisoned in the Royal jail for a

158 Data from Henningsen’s unpublished *Supersticiones* log given to me in 2012. Recall that the category of *Supersticiones* encompassed healing, superstitious prayers, and other superstitions; and that the Logroño tribunal oversaw three regions in addition to Navarra.
159 AGN, 16058 (1647).
160 AGN, 16058 (1647), 6v: “En reputación y común opinión de todos que es bruja y hechicera y que con sus hechizos y artes diabólicos ha hecho y hace mucho daño en la república.”
161 AGN, 16058 (1647), 12v.
year-and-a-half until their final remission to the Spanish Inquisition where they received sentencing.

A decade later, fifty-three-year-old Maria Brigante was tried for sorcery following the accusation of murdering one of the Court’s lawyers by means of spells. The attorney Bartolome Ximenez died “after a long illness he had had” and the Court was tasked to “verify who had bewitched him.”162 His wife reported an altercation of sorts had recently occurred between Bartolome and Maria Brigante in the hot baths of Baños de Tiermas. Thus the Court sent commissaries to Maria’s native village of Lumbier where they discovered her notorious fama. Twenty-four witnesses testified to her mala fama and reputation for sorcery. Additionally, the Court ordered religious men to investigate after Bartolome’s death and “the clerics collaborated and decided for certain that he had been bewitched.”163 The clerics examined his mattress and within the wool covers discovered “a figure of a made with wool and thread of different colors” with a hole in the doll’s mouth where one could insert the point of something such as a pin. Bartolome had complained of oral pains in that exact spot.164 Thus they concluded “he had been bewitched and…that said woman had cast a spell on him.”165

162 AGN, 59308 (1661), 3r: “Después de una larga enfermedad que ha tenido… verificar quien le ha hechizado.”
163 AGN, 59308 (1661), 3r: “Los dichos religiosos que se conjuraron dando por cierto que estaba hechizado.”
164 AGN, 59308 (1661), 3r: “una figura de hombre de lana e hilos de diferentes colores.”
165 AGN, 59308 (1661), 3r: “estaba hechizado y…le hechizo la dicha mujer.”
Maria’s provisor fought the torture sentence handed down by the Royal Court, arguing against any proof “that my client is a witch” and asserted “it is certain that he [Bartolome Ximenez] died of illness and natural attacks” and was definitively “not cursed.”¹⁶⁶ He suggested the testimony was brought forth with bad intentions, and said “it cannot be proven by the witness and it is illusion and fantasy.”¹⁶⁷ It appears that the Court nonetheless blamed Bartolome’s death on Maria’s spells, though Maria’s fate is missing to us. This late trial features clerical testimony to bewitchment, a voodoo doll of sorts, and evidence of the continuity of belief despite the slimming number of judicial persecutions.

A decade later in 1672, Pedro de Badostain and Maria de Sarasa were brought before the Royal Tribunals, accused of maleficia and sorcery.¹⁶⁸ Their mala fama in the town of Burlada had reached a crescendo when a very young infant died in his mother’s arms, distorted and black, one night following a visit from Maria Sarasa. Maria was also charged with giving “bewitched nuts,” full of demons to little girls, claiming she herself could not eat them since she had no teeth. Fortunately, a sculptor named Lucas was able to exorcise the demons.¹⁶⁹ The Royal Court exiled Maria de Sarasa for four years, and

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¹⁶⁶ AGN, 59308 (1661), 99r: “Que mi parte sea bruja…es cierto que murió de enfermedades y ataques naturales…no ha muerto hechizado.”
¹⁶⁷ AGN, 59308 (1661), 99v: “No se puede probar por testigos, y es ilusión y fantasía.”
¹⁶⁸ AGN, 299756 (1672).
¹⁶⁹ AGN, 299756 (1672), 74r-75v.
released Pedro Badostain, sentencing him only to court costs. The Court sold all their goods to finance their stay in prison and trials, leaving both of them penniless. This case shows that belief in the “supernatural” was not over, despite the reduction of trials of magic.

The last sorcery trial under the Royal Tribunals is a paradoxical end to Navarra’s long history of sorcery and witchcraft prosecutions. The Council prosecuted the healer Maria Esparza in 1675, offering new investigation techniques blended with the established belief in the potency of magic. This trial featured greater procedural sophistication in terms of the investigative efforts by the Court, but also the same level of belief in the power of sorcery. Though the devil was not included in the courts formal charges, the medical investigations credited diabolical influences. This final case provides an opportunity to observe how the court had changed over the one-hundred-and-fifty years, while also challenging arguments that credit an era of rational thought and “enlightenment” with the end of witch trials in Europe.

Maria Esparza was a fifty-year-old healer from the village of Assain. Many villagers testified to her healing practices, attesting to her effective powers of healing. She was known to boost lactation, untie babies and calves so they could nurse again, and unbind impotent couples and livestock. Overall, many villagers considered Maria’s

170 AGN, 299756 (1672), 131r.
171 AGN, 17676 (1675).
healing practices to be legitimate and were pleased with their results. But among the village voices were ten witnesses who spoke of her *mala fama* and that of her deceased husband who was known to be a witch. Though this case began much like the others, with a mixed bag of witnesses and varying accusations, her case diverged from the trend of the trials, as the most thorough interrogation, and later investigation, began to unfold. While this final sorcery trial featured the most sophisticated investigative processes on record, its conclusions were no different than those reached over the preceding century.

The intensity of the magistrate’s questioning is nowhere found in others trials.\(^{172}\) Similarly, the thoroughness of the witnesses’ testimonies was nowhere else seen. Each deposition was detailed, nuanced, and unique to each of the witnesses. This quality departs from the repetitiveness and generalities often noted in the trial records. The attention to detail extended to Maria de Esparza’s own testimony. The interrogator pushed Maria on the source of her healing powers, pointing to specific examples of the healing she did, and questioning why some issues she could resolve, but not others. For example, he asked why her cures worked for one mother struggling with lactation, but not an ill boy who later died. He focused, too, on the *mala fama* of her husband. The interrogator grilled Maria de Esparza on thirty-five articles, pushing her responses on many points.\(^{173}\) Another unexpected addition was the re-interrogation and ratification of

\(^{172}\) For example, even the fact that Maria’s testimony was given “en la lengua bascongada” and then read back to her was noted, an uncommon feature in the run of documents. AGN, 17676 (1675), 17v.

\(^{173}\) AGN, 17676 (1675).
all the witnesses in this case. As she crafted her defense, the interrogator pushed her and questioned her at every juncture.

The most fascinating component, and one that had not been used before in a witchcraft or sorcery trial, was the presence and reliance on medical experts. The prosecutor ordered four men of medicine to examine the witness testimonies and decide whether or not Maria de Esparza’s cures could occur by natural or supernatural means.\textsuperscript{174} The medical colleagues, two medical doctors and two master surgeons, opined in a most unexpected way. Rather than examining the people Maria had helped or harmed, they responded with citations of Hippocrates, Martin del Rio, and Pedro Ciruelo.

It began with the question as to whether or not these things could have occurred naturally with her remedies or supernaturally. Thus, for the first time in the history of witch trials in this region, the magistrates appointed four medicos to “declare if the incidents of the cases referred [Maria’s healing] could possibly be natural” or if the various practices and ills ascribed to her were the result of “supernatural effects.”\textsuperscript{175} The doctors Don Francisco de Olazagutia, Don Francisco de Elcarte, and the master surgeons Juan de Leyza, and Juan de Anelieta, were summoned to provide medical

\textsuperscript{174} AGN, 17676 (1675), 26v. \\
\textsuperscript{175} AGN, 17676 (1675), 26v: “Declaren si los incidentes de los casos que se refieren pudieron ser naturales”, “efectos sobrenaturales.”
interpretations for the deeds ascribed to Maria Esparza. But their conclusions did not involve any medical examinations, but relied solely on the works of learned writers. They invoked the name of Martin Del Rio. They cited Pedro de Ciruelo. They paraphrased Hippocrates, declaring: “ailments induced by spells will not be given [effect] by natural remedies because [the ailments’ have a supernatural cause.” Thus, Maria could not have cured those ills by natural means alone. They drew from Pedro Ciruelo’s treatise Reprobacion de supersticiones where he concluded: “Words have no natural powers.” Maria’s natural remedies and words could not have yielded any effects.

On September 27, 1675, they declared: “With great attention and care they have seen the report on the information against Maria Esparza, accused of sorcery” and concluded that because “no words at all are known to have supernatural properties to yield any effect”, therefore her healing must have been by “supernatural” means. But, if Maria’s natural healing rituals and remedies, and words of Catholic prayers and religious invocations brought forth no effect, how could the efficacy of her services reported by multiple villagers be explained? The four medical men concluded: “It did

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176 AGN, 17676 (1675), 27r:
177 AGN, 17676 (1675), 27r: “Males inducidos por hechizos no le den a remedios naturales por tener causa sobrenatural.”
178 AGN, 17176 (1675), 28r: “Las palabras no tienen virtud natural.”
179 AGN, 17176 (1675), 28r: “Que han visto con toda atención y cuidado la resulta de la información contra María Esparza acusada de hechicería...Ningunas palabras se sabe que tengan virtud sobrenatural para hacer algún efecto”, “sobrenatural.”
not come from a natural virtue in the power of natural remedies nor in the power of words nor from miracles. So we conclude without a doubt, it came from the hand of the Devil…only the Devil.” Maria’s healing of non-natural impediments could not be cured by natural means, thus when she remedied bewitched people, she had to rely on supernatural remedies, that is, the help of the Devil. Though these learned men cited works of erudition, they uncritically accepted and relied solely on the testimony, while neglecting to examine any of people or animals she had been said to cure (or harm).

Maria’s defense attorney, Licenciado Quadrado, mounted a strong defense challenging the medical testimony. Quadrado forcefully argued:

I challenge the deposition of the doctors because they do not prove the corpus delicti with what they have said in relation to the parties and they are ignorant of the cause of the illnesses. And to prove the corpus delicti they should have visited and examined those sick people to confirm that neither the beginning nor the end of the ailment had been caused by natural means, as the witnesses say.

He blasted their medical verdicts as “ignorant” and ridiculed their opinions on the cause of illness in the absence of any medical examination. Quadrado’s defense was disregarded by the Court, and he realized that the Inquisition was the best option for his client to receive a lesser sentence. Thus he insisted “they must remit this case to the

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180 AGN, 17176 (1675), 28v: “No vino por virtud natural en fuerza de remedios naturales ni en fuerza de virtud natural de las palabras ni por milagro. Concluyese claramente venir por mano del demonio …solo el Demonio.”
181 AGN, 17176 (1675), 30r: “La deposición de los médicos la impugno por que no prueban el cuerpo de delito con lo que decían por relación a las partes y son ignorantes de la causa de la enfermedad y así para probar el cuerpo del delito habían de haber visitado y visto a estos enfermos por averiguar que ni la entrada no el fin de la enfermedad no fue por la causa natural como dicen los testigos.”
tribunal of the Holy Inquisition.” Unsurprisingly, the Royal Court did not wish to relinquish its jurisdiction. Surprisingly, however, the Inquisition had no interest in the unorthodox healer Maria de Esparza. The Royal Tribunals, drawing from the findings of the medical men, harshly sentenced Maria Esparza to two-hundred lashings and ten years of exile from the Kingdom of Navarra.

The last sorcery trial treated by the Royal Court and Council of Navarra featured distinctive interrogation techniques, including detailed questions and the re-examination of witnesses. For the first time, this investigative process transcended the bounds of the magistrates, and enlisted men of medicine. Yet, the belief in sorcery or “supernatural” powers to heal and harm was never called into question. These new investigative processes did not rely on the scientific method, skeptical thought, or even specific medical knowledge. Despite the change in procedure, the continuity in belief was palpable.

Never again was another person brought before the Royal Tribunals for sorcery or witchcraft. Only three more cases regarding witchcraft were adjudicated, and all centered around defamation and false accusations of witchcraft. On the eve of the eighteenth century, a woman accused of witchcraft took her accuser to court “for injury

182 AGN, 17176 (1675), 31r: “Que debía remitir a aquel al tribunal de la Santa Inquisición.”
183 AGN, 17176 (1675), un-numbered final page.
184 They were brought forth in 1683, 1691, and 1714.
and false accusations of witchcraft.”\textsuperscript{185} Sebastaina Marchena blamed the death of young child on Isabel de Abinzano, claiming she had “bewitched” the baby. \textsuperscript{186} Isabel and her husband responded by accusing Isabel of slander, a claim five witnesses confirmed. The Royal Court ruled in Isabel’s favor, and Sebastiana was sentenced to all the court costs. And so ended of trials of witchcraft and sorcery in the Royal Court and Council of Navarra.

2.3 Conclusions

Navarra’s longstanding tradition of linguistic and cultural independence contributed to its Tribunals’ remarkable ability to try witches and sorceresses during its early modern period. Over one-hundred-and-fifty years, the court prosecuted over one hundred witches and sorceresses despite the legal objections raised by the Spanish Inquisition. Nowhere else in Spain did a secular court adjudicate as many witches. The patterns of witch-suspects in Navarra were similar to elsewhere in Europe, they tended to be older, and females, and many had long-lived bad reputations or relatives that had been accused as well. The witches of Navarra were usually Old-Christians, and locals, neighbors of their accusers. This is in contrast to their counterparts in Saragossa, where

\textsuperscript{185} AGN, 1691 (1691), cover folio: “Injurias y falsas acusaciones de brujería.”
\textsuperscript{186} AGN, 300321 (1691), 24r.
the vast majority of accused witches were members of transient populations of vagrants, gypsies, prostitutes, or foreigners.187

Overall, the prosecution of witchcraft and sorcery in Navarra followed a pattern of restraint. This moderation was interrupted by moments of intense panic trials or cluster trials, such as in 1525 and 1575. One trial, that of 1595, also broke from the pattern as its witches were denounced by a singular nobleman instead of the collective village voice. The greatest aberration in the pattern, however, occurred at the hands of the Inquisition in 1609. While the Spanish Inquisition had twice curbed the witch trials of Navarra (1525 and 1575), the witch panic remained firmly in their control. In the aftermath of the witch panic, only five sorcery trials (and none of witchcraft) were prosecuted by the Royal Court and Council of Navarra until its final case in 1675. Compared to patterns in the Holy Roman Empire, the Royal Tribunals of Navarra were moderate in their persecution. Compared to other regions in early modern Spain, however, the court was eager and jealous of their control over the prosecution of crimes of witchcraft and sorcery

187 Tausiet, Urban Magic, 12,
3. Litigating Witchcraft

One of the most distinctive features of witchcraft in early modern Navarra is that its prosecution fell to three judicial courts: the secular Royal Court and Council (Corte y Consejo Real de Navarra), the ecclesiastical Curia diocesana de Pamplona, and the Spanish Inquisition’s tribunal in Navarra.\textsuperscript{1} The ambiguous definition of witchcraft made a rigid jurisdictional distinction difficult, and there was no official legislation mandating which of the three tribunals—the secular, the ecclesiastic, or the inquisitorial—held judicial rights under certain circumstances. As a result of this ambiguity, the Royal Tribunals and the Inquisition’s tribunal battled over the jurisdiction of witch trials for over a hundred years.\textsuperscript{2}

Though the Inquisition oversaw the majority of trials of witchcraft and sorcery, the Royal Tribunals processed over thirty witch trials, prosecuting at least one hundred-and-forty accused witches and sorceresses from 1525-1675. Navarra’s secular trials were exceptional in early modern Spain, as almost all prosecutions of sorcery and witchcraft fell to its Inquisition. The Curia de Pamplona did not stake high claims to witchcraft persecution, and only one significant witch trial came to its court. This one case likely

\textsuperscript{1} The Inquisition’s regional tribunal was initially located in Calahorra until 1535, but later moved to the more central location of Logroño.

\textsuperscript{2} See “Chapter V: The Struggle for Souls” for a detailed examination of the contentious relationship between the courts.
came to the clerical court because its accusation centered around a cleric charged with shepherding a small sect of witches from his parish.\(^3\)

Scholarship on Spanish witchcraft has been dominated by studies of the singular witch panic of 1609-10, or the trials of *Supersticiones* under the Spanish Inquisition.\(^4\) Within the literature of Navarra, the witch panic of 1609 continues to command the attention of all witchcraft studies of this region.\(^5\) This chapter moves away from the Inquisition studies and turns to the cases tried under the Court and Council of Navarra. Not only did the Royal Tribunals prosecute witchcraft in the face of the Inquisition, thereby asserting their control and independence, they did so for one-hundred-and-fifty-years. As a point of comparison, the neighboring Kingdom of Aragon saw eight witch trials processed by its ecclesiastic tribunal instead of the Inquisition’s, but its secular court was only able to secure control over a single trial, in 1590.\(^6\) How did the secular court of Navarra manage to poach so many trials of witchcraft and sorcery in early modern Spain, when almost all witchcraft was prosecuted by its Inquisition? The answer can be drawn from a simple point made by a scholar of Navarra’s court, María Puy

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\(^3\) This stands in contrast to the non-inquisitorial witch trials in Aragon that were treated by the ecclesiastical court instead of the secular court. See Maria Tausiet, *Urban Magic in Early Modern Spain: Abracadabra Omnipotens* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014).

\(^4\) A recent exception to this trend is found in Maria Tausiet’s work that examines cases in Aragon. See Maria Tausiet, *Ponzoña en los ojos: brujería y superstición en Aragón en el sigo XVI* (Madrid: Turner, 2004).

\(^5\) The exception to this is a compilation of witch trial excerpts and analyses edited by the archivist of the Archivo General de Navarra, see Florencio Idoate, *La brujería en Navarra y sus documentos* (Pamplona: Institución Príncipe de Viana, 1978). Also, a local scholar has recently written on the single witch trial of the ecclesiastical court, see: Felix Sanz Zabalza, *Las brujas de Burgui* (Navarra: Editorial Evidencia Medica, 2013).

Huici Goñi, who in a passing remark, observed: “The powerful and autonomous courts of Navarra shaped its witchcraft prosecutions.” This chapter examines the trials of witchcraft and sorcery under the secular Court and Council of Navarra, and seeks to answer the question: How did the particular legal circumstances in Navarra shape its witch trials?

This chapter explores the Royal Tribunals and the legal sphere in which witchcraft was understood and prosecuted in the secular courts of Navarra. Beginning with a brief history of the independent Court and Council of Navarra and the autonomy this jurisdiction enjoyed, the first section explores the trial procedures featured in trials of witchcraft and sorcery. Drawing on the thirty-one surviving trial records, this section analyzes the phases in the legal process: the denunciation of the witch and initiation of the trial, the depositions from villagers both for the prosecution and defense, the arguments made by the defense, the interrogation of the accused, and the use of judicial torture. These trials were produced under the more local inquisitorial procedure, offering an unparalleled opportunity to examine non-Inquisitorial witch trials in early modern Spain. The second section of this chapter turns to imprisonment and the incarcerated experiences confronted by accused witches and sorceresses. It also explores prison deaths, a reality that claimed exponentially more lives of accused witches than

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did sentences of execution. The third section concludes with an examination of the sentences handed down by the Royal Court and Council. Though the chances of absolution were slim, in comparison to the sentences meted out by magistrates in other lands of early modern Europe, the Royal Tribunals’ sentencing was mild overall. This chapter shows that the centralized and organized secular court and appellate court (council), combined with the extra safeguard of the Inquisitorial court, shaped Navarra’s witch trials and resulted in comparatively mild sentences and few executions throughout the early modern period.

3.1 The Royal Tribunals of Pamplona

The roots of Navarra’s Royal Court and Council reach back to the Middle Ages. The foundations for the Royal Council were laid in 1329 when Queen Juana II instituted the court in an effort to improve and streamline legal procedures. The establishment of this legal arm was somewhat detrimental to the nobility, as it concentrated power in the hands of a single court. At the time of the Castilian conquest in 1512, a pact was made between Navarra and Castilla, allowing Navarra to retain autonomy over their courts. Whether or not this can be attributed to the “intransigence of the Vascones,” as claimed by the Navarran scholar María Puy Huici Goñi, or to the political prudence of King

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8 Huici Goñi, Las cortes de Navarra, 8.
Ferdinand II, it is indeed remarkable that the kingdom retained its judicial autonomy, separate from royal power.⁹

In 1525, the Royal Court and Council was reorganized, but continued to maintain its autonomy. The Royal Court was established as the lower tribunal, and the Royal Council was designated as the appellate court. The restructuring of the Royal Council included the appointment of a regent and six judges, and as part of the conquest deal, the King reserved the right to appoint both the regent and two of the Councilors.¹⁰ This privilege allowed the King to appoint Castilians instead of Navarrans, as well as ensure a Castilian regent. The regent presided over administrative matters, and acted as president over the Council. Requirements to be appointed a Councilor included being an Old Christian and possession of a law degrees, therefore most Councilors came from noble families and had other relatives within the Tribunals.¹¹ The Council also had four secretaries who annotated the trials, took declarations from witnesses, drafted agreements, and even assisted with carrying out sentencing (including corporal punishments).¹²

Overseeing the Royal Tribunals was the fiscal or prosecutor. He supervised the disciple of the officials in the lower Court and acted as the official accuser in all cases of

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⁹ Goñi, Las cortes de Navarra, 18: “intransigencia de los Vascones.”
serious matters, such as deaths, mutilations, sedition, contempt of court, and as the records would suggest, trials of witchcraft and sorcery. As such, summaries and sentences in the witch trials were often labelled as emerging from the fiscal. The “lawyer of the poor” served as the defense attorney and defended a multitude of cases of those too poor to afford a defense before the Court and Council. These attorneys had to have completed at least five years of the faculty of canons and laws, complete an internship, and pass an aptitude tests before the Council to obtain this position of defense attorney (often referred to as the procurador).

Compared to other early modern Spanish courts, these Royal Tribunals enjoyed considerable independence. The Court and Council was independent from the Inquisitions, and even functioned separately from the King and the Viceroy. As noted by the leading scholar of Navarra, Jesús María Usunáriz Garayoa, “it was the Royal Council, not the Viceroy...who was charged with administering justice in the kingdom.” With such special provisions, it is not surprising that the Royal Tribunals felt entitled to try their own witches and sorceresses.

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3.1.2 Witchcraft Legislation in Navarra


legislation to curb witchcraft persecutions.\textsuperscript{21} Given the prolific amount of legislation in the sixteenth century dedicated to witchcraft, what legal codes guided magistrates of the witch trials in Navarra?

Surprisingly, Navarra’s laws contained no explicit codes on how to treat cases of witchcraft and sorcery. Unlike the secular court in neighboring Aragon, which promulgated witchcraft laws in 1584 and 1586, Navarra’s legal codes, extending back to its medieval \textit{fueros}, simply did not address the crimes of witchcraft and sorcery.\textsuperscript{22} Due to this lack of written law regulating sorcery and witchcraft, it is not possible to define with certainty the way the tribunals defined witchcraft or exactly what criteria they drew from in their initiation of trials, but the one theme that is consistent throughout the records is the importance of \textit{fama} as a legal concept.\textsuperscript{23}

Trials of witchcraft and sorcery in Navarra were produced under the Inquisitorial system. The local interrogation methods of shaped witch trials in Navarra as depositions were less reliant on the learned ideas of the magistrates, and leaned heavily towards the reports given by villagers. Inquisitorial procedure was the primary approach used to prosecute witchcraft in the early modern period, significantly

\textsuperscript{22} Tausiet, \textit{Urban Magic}, 17.
\textsuperscript{23} This will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter IV: The Village Voices. For more on the legal concepts of legal \textit{infamia} and \textit{fama}, see Thelma Fenster and Daniel Lord Small, \textit{Fama: The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe} (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).
facilitating the conviction of accused witches. Introducted into continental European jurisprudence by the sixteenth century, the inquisitorial system replaced the accusatorial one throughout most of Europe. The new inquisitorial procedure changed both the way prosecutions were initiated and the manner in which magistrates determined guilt. Though witchcraft denunciations came from the villagers’ opinions and the fama of the accused, it was the magistrates who began the initiation process of the sorcery and witchcraft trials in Navarra.

Inquisitorial proceedings featured more learned elements, and privileged opinions held by jurists which were often based on legal and theological doctrines featured in demonologies. This is reflected in the learned inquisitorial persecutions in the German lands where witch belief often broke from local notions and morphed into witch panics fueled by diabolical fears. Though produced under the inquisitorial method, witness interrogations in Navarra were biased toward common villagers and did not privilege the elite voices of jurists, doctors, and learned men. Not all of early

modern Europe, however, adopted the inquisitorial process. In both England and
Scandinavia, for example, the accusatorial procedure was still in use.29

3.1.3 Initiation of Trials

Accusations of sorcery and witchcraft began at the village level, when witches
were denounced to the local alcaldes (mayors with legal powers, often territorial lords).
Though several trials suggest an alcalde himself or a local cleric instigated or sought the
denunciation, most of accused had established mala fama supported by the reports of
numerous villagers. Once this fama came to the notice of the alcalde, it is likely that
alcaldes conducted their own investigations by interrogating witnesses before
transferring these denunciations the magistrates in Pamplona. The magistrates of the
Royal Court would then usually dispatch one of their commissioners, along with a
scribe and a translator, to investigate in situ and conduct their own interrogations of the
accusers and (perhaps) the accused. If the fiscal decided to move forward with the case, a
functionary of the Royal Tribunals would escort the accused to Pamplona.

Once the accused arrived in Pamplona, she was imprisoned within the royal jails
and a summary complaint was filed. A functionary listed a careful inventory of her
goods, as it was the sale of these possessions that covered the debts she incurred while

29 Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, “The Rise of Government and the Judicial Revolution,” Witchcraft and
in prison, including: the cost of her arrest and transport, court costs, traveling costs for
scribes and interrogations, litigating fees, and her room and board. A summary
complaint against the witch, including name, original, residence, and a generalized
accusation, introduced each extant trial record. Pronouncements similar to this one
began most trials: “The supreme court of this Kingdom of Navarra, received notice that
María de Arguello... resident of the said town of Senosián...bewitched a child...She is
securely imprisoned in the jail, accused of sorcery.” Maria’s denunciation—prompted
by a bad reputation (mala fama), in turn reported by the town alcalde, and then
transferred to the Royal Court—was the common trajectory for most trials of witchcraft
and sorcery from 1525-1675. This procedure was broken, however, during the string of
witch trials in 1575-76, when commissaries from the Royal Tribunals made visitations to
villages throughout Navarra in search of witches, and again in 1595 when the powerful
alcalde, the Lord Andueza, and not villagers, initiated accusations.

3.1.4 Depositions

Immediately following the standard summary complaint and list of goods of the
accused, the trial records of the Royal Tribunals’ began with the villagers’ reports. These
lengthy interrogations and testaments reported by villagers of all kinds, including

30 AGN, 333121 (1675), 1r: “La corte mayor de este Reina de Navarra habiendo tenido noticia que María de
Arguello vecina del dicho lugar [Senosián]...hechizo un niño...bien presa en las dichas cárcel acusada de
hechicera.”
clerics, town officials, commoners, and men and women alike, occupy the bulk of the trial records, or *procesos*, and offer an extraordinary opportunity to examine witch belief at the village level.\textsuperscript{31} The rich variability among depositions suggests that interrogations were not tightly scripted, but rather interrogators encouraged the villagers to share freely the social drama, the gossip, and the *fama*. The first set of reports presented in the *procesos* were testimonies against the accused, interrogated by the magistrates of commissaries of the court as witnesses for the *fiscal*. Once the witch was imprisoned, the *fiscal* issued his formal charges. Following these depositions, the *procesos* sometimes added the interrogations of the accused, but this was not a regular feature in the trials. Arguments of defense and declarations of innocence were usually not presented by the accused, but by their *procuradores* as is evidenced in each *proceso*.

### 3.1.5 Defending Witches

Once the magistrates crafted its formal accusation, the *procurador* for the accused began the difficult task of mounting a defense. Witches whose accusations made it to the Royal Tribunals had a slim chance of receiving a verdict of absolution, in fact, the *fiscal* only absolved ten witches throughout the trial records. *Procuradores* struggled to prove that accusations of witchcraft were false, and sought to prove their clients had *buena fama* and were *buenas cristianas*. The striking difference in the arguments set forth by the

\textsuperscript{31} This will be discussed in detail in “Chapter III: The Village Voices.”

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procuradores and the approaches contemporary litigators would pursue lay bare the core differences in modern understandings of witchcraft and those of the villagers of Navarra. Defense attorneys did not dispute the reality of witchcraft, the ability to fly, the use of poisonous powders and unguents, or the significance of toads. How did, then, defense attorneys represent accused witches?

The procurador for the defense listed articles, or assertions, that he would prove through the interrogations of his own set of witnesses. The articles of defense varied among the trials but consistently featured several themes. The very first line of defense always argued that the accused was a buena Cristiana (a good Christian), and focused exclusively on their Catholic acts, good Christian reputation, or legitimate marital status. Similarly, the villagers’ reports on behalf of the accused also focused on the buena cristianidad of the witch and her good reputation. In cases involving accusations of murder by means of maleficia, procuradores argued that the deaths were by “natural means” and presented reports of villagers that substantiated this claim. For example, in the 1576 case against several accused villagers in Olague, Maria de Aniz was accused of witchcraft and the murder of her husband and two other men, and her procurador Martin de Aragon argued that they died from “natural causes” and her husband died due to a fall.32 Aragon then examined eleven witnesses, ranging from 28-80 years of age,

32 AGN, 69260 (1576), 43r-v: “de causas naturales.”
all of whom testified to the commonly known illnesses of the two men and her husband’s accident.33

Procuradores also defended their clients by arguing that enmities were the driving force behind accusations.34 In the abovementioned trial of the witches in Olague, Martin de Aragon defended Maria de Olague against the accusations made by Miguel de Gozcue that claimed he saw Maria near his house, and she had turned “into the figure of cat and dog...to kill one of his children.”35 Maria’s procurador did not approach her defense by throwing into question the possibility of her transformation into domesticated animals, rather Aragon argued “he is a known enemy of my client and of her son and they have exchanged [harsh] words before.”36 Though variable, defense statements centered around buena cristianidad, refutations of specific acts of maleficia (especially those involving murder), and arguments that pointed to feuds among accusers and the accused. As mentioned earlier, the testimonies of the accused are almost completely lacking from the trial records. However, the trial records do reflect the testimonies from the accused when they were questioned under judicial torture.

33 In response to this solid defense, the fiscal oddly introduced child witnesses and the Vicar of Olaque who introduced the witches’ Sabbath to the accusations, including reverence to the devil. AGN, 69260 (1576), 66-68r.
34 Witchcraft as a tool of revenge will be discussed further in Chapter IV: The Village Voices.
35 AGN, 69260 (1576), 19r: “en figure de gato y perro...para matar una criatura suya.”
36 AGN, 69260 (1576), 22r: “Es enemigo de mi parte y de su hijo y ha tenido palabras entre ellos.”
3.1.6 “The Question of Torture”

Throughout early modern Europe, both secular and ecclesiastic courts considered the accused’s confession as *regina probationum*: the “Queen of evidence.”\(^{37}\) No other form of proof—aside from the firsthand testimony of two unimpeachable witnesses—offered such close proximity to the “truth.” From the late middle Ages and throughout the early modern period, torture was used as a form of judicial investigation which sought to uncover the truth by yielding a confession. In the Roman-canon law of evidence, “full proof” appeared only in the form of the testimony of two unimpeachable eye witnesses—or—confession by the accused.\(^{38}\) Thus the judicial system turned its attention to torture in hopes of discovering the queen of proofs.

This legal practice was not free from criticism. Intellectuals and theologians raised concerns about false confessions induced by physical pain. One of the great ‘Enlightenment’ thinkers, the philosopher and jurist Cesare Beccaria, lamented “The ultimate confusion arises when a tortured man becomes both the accuser and the accused at the same time; when pain becomes the crucible of truth.”\(^{39}\) In order to understand torture as used by the Royal Tribunals, it is imperative to situate it within

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the judicial landscape of its time. John Langbein explains “The use of torture presupposed a legal system that wanted to base judgement on the truth and thought it feasible to get the truth in part by means of regulated coercion.”\textsuperscript{40} While many modern minds find judicial torture to be fraught with issues, medieval minds would have clucked their tongues in equal disapproval of \textit{our} burden—or lack thereof—of proof. They would struggle to understand how modern western juries, lawyers, judges and courtrooms are comfortable using interpretations drawn from circumstantial evidence as “proof” beyond a reasonable doubt. Circumstantial evidence was considered an inadequate standard of truth, and as such counted as a “half proof.” Thus, the Royal Council turned to interrogations under judicial torture.

Judicial torture was defined as “the use of physical coercion by officers of the state in order to gather evidence for judicial proceedings.”\textsuperscript{41} Torture was referred to as “\textit{el question de tormento}” in the witch trials of Navarra, and remained one part of their judicial arm towards truth-seeking. Since there is no known legislation surrounding witchcraft, it is not possible to definitively assert that it was considered a \textit{crimen exextum} in Navarra, but the relatively small number of accused witches that were interrogated under torture is remarkable. Scholars often credit the laxity in witchcraft persecution in Spain to restrictions placed on torture by its Inquisition, which used judicial torture in


\textsuperscript{41} Langbein, \textit{Torture and the Law of Proof}, 3.
only one percent of the cases it processed.\textsuperscript{42} Remarkably, the Royal Council issued torture sentences with even greater infrequency. The Royal Council and the \textit{fiscal} used judicial torture during interrogation with only five witches (four women and one male) throughout the one-hundred-and-fifty-years of extant documents. That is, only one-third of one-percent of accused were known to be subjected to judicial torture.\textsuperscript{43} While twelve accused witches were ordered to be judicially tortured, one died in prison beforehand, and six had their orders revoked.

The first order of judicial torture dates from the first extant \textit{proceso}, that of Maria Sagardoy, accused of poisoning villagers and crops in 1534.\textsuperscript{44} The \textit{fiscal}'s accusation highlighted her concoctions of “venomous materials with flayed and burned toads and large spiders and children’s livers and other fatal things, and she mixed it all and made a poisonous powder” using it to kill children, adults, and crops throughout the village of Villanueva de Aezcoa.\textsuperscript{45} In consideration of the long list of accusations and testimonies against her, the \textit{fiscal} condemned “Maria the accused to el \textit{cuestión de tormento}.”\textsuperscript{46} The court provided no justifications or reasons behind the sentence, and this was not a time of high witch concern, with some ten years’ distance between this trial and the mass

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item[\textsuperscript{42}] Henry Kamen, \textit{The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision} (Great Britain: Weidenfeld & Nicolson, 1997), 188.
\item[\textsuperscript{43}] The data from the trials of 1525 may skew these results, but it is impossible to venture a guess with what information is available.
\item[\textsuperscript{44}] AGN, 209502 (1534).
\item[\textsuperscript{45}] AGN, 209502 (1534), 7r: “Materiales venenosos con sapos desollados, quemados y con arañas grandes, y con hígados de criaturas y con otras cosas mortíferas, y así todo lo molía y hacía de ello polvo ponzoña.”
\item[\textsuperscript{46}] AGN, 209502 (1534), 44r: “A la dicha Maria acusada a cuestión de tormento”
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executions of 1525. Perhaps the lack of a zealous prosecution and *procurador* did, however, influence the course of Maria’s case, as she was never tortured and released with a fine of two hundred *ducados*.47

Judicial torture was ordered in the next trial of Fortuno Legaz in 1539. Licenciado Ovando, the *procurador* for the court, argued passionately for the reasons torture was especially necessary in this case, one in which Fortuno was accused of poisoning livestock by means of tainted salt. Ovando explained:

In these enormous crimes...it would be difficult to prove...with [only] proof of conjectures...and only by reputation to convict [him] within the ordinary law. Most importantly, according to the law, crimes committed with poison are often made in secret and seldom can you find and know, the *truth*, without torment.48

Ovando envisioned the usefulness of torture as twofold. Primarily, *maleficia* was usually committed clandestinely, prohibiting the court access to eye witnesses, and in the absence of such witnesses, only a confession would suffice. Torture was the ultimate tool to elicit confessions, “the truth,” so it followed that due to its very nature, such crimes demanded torture to unveil the truth. Secondly, as an efficient jurist, he appealed to the court’s desire for an efficient judicial proceeding, promoting torture as the right tool to

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47 Several months after Maria’s release, Licenciado Ovando sent a court official to her home to return her to prison for failing to pay the court her debt. Maria resisted her arrest, claiming “she is four months pregnant,” but agreed to comply with the payment. The case concluded with the magistrate’s order “Come in the afternoon and the midwife will see her.” Most likely Maria never returned to prison and her sentence of torture was never realized. AGN, 209502 (1534), 48r: “está preñada cuatro meses”; “que venga a la tarde y que la vea la nodriza.”

48 AGN, 36180 (1539), 67r: “En los delitos enormes cuya probanza será difícil basta muy menos probanza de conjeturas e juicios y de solo la fama para condenar en la pena ordinaria del delito. Mayormente que según derecho, los delitos que se cometen con veneno se suelen hacer y hacen ocultamente y pocas veces se puede hallar y saber la verdad sin tormento.” Italics mine.
make it “quicker and easier to convict.”⁴⁹ Despite Ovando’s solid advocacy, the court denied an order for Fortuno’s torture, and his sentence was reduced from three years to three months’ of exile. Twenty years later, however, the same Licenciado Ovando had greater success in persuading his colleagues, and a particularly severe interrogative torture session was ordered, despite protestations raised by the procurador.

In 1561, in the village of Vidángoz, Graciana Belca and Maria Lopez were accused of countless acts of maleficia, including theft and infanticide.⁵⁰ Early on in their trial record, after his intense summaries of the accusations, Licenciado Ovando urged the court to use the tool of judicial torture, arguing, “I wish to put the said accused to the question of torture. [I ask] Your Majesty to condemn them to it and administer it robustly and detain them in it, until they manifest the truth in their declarations and declare the people who have been with them.”⁵¹ Ovando again drew the link between torture and truth seeking: torture, administered with vigor and persistence, will reveal the truth not only of their actions, but of their accomplices in evil-doing as well. Unsurprisingly, interrogative torture often yielded long lists of other witches, perpetuating witch trials and fanning the flames of witch panic throughout many lands in early modern Europe. Though not the case in Navarra, such a malady could have

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⁴⁹ AGN, 36180 (1539), 67r: “Mas pronto e fácil en condenar.”
⁵⁰ AGN, 21115 (1561).
⁵¹ AGN, 21115 (1561), 13r: “Convenga poner a cuestiona de tormento a las dichas acusadas. V. Mag. Las mande condenar en ello y dárselo recio y detener las en el hasta que manifiesten la verdad de los suso dicho y declaración y declara las personas que han sido con ellas.”

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easily plagued its villages if the court demanded denunciations and witch finding was vigorously pursued.

The court approved Ovando’s request and condemned “the said accused to be put to the question of torture,” to be executed by the alcaldes of the court with vigor.52 Graciana’s procurador, Pedro Larramendi, protested the court’s decision on the premise he had not been given an opportunity to respond to the allegations against Graciana, and was still awaiting a response from the Inquisition as to whether or not she should be transferred to their tribunal. Graciana’s sentence of torture generated a heated debate between Larramendi and Ovando, one arguing for restraint and patience, the other emphasizing the egregious crimes she had committed.

Graciana was questioned under torture twice, and maintained her innocence despite her subjection to the rack, the strappado, and several rounds of water torture.53 The scribe carefully recorded these sessions, the alcaldes’ questionings and her declarations and cries. These transcripts present the most haunting depictions found in the entire run of witch trials in the Archivo General de Navarra. What is most important to note, however, is not what the magistrates subjected Graciana to, but rather why they did.

52 AGN, 21115 (1561), “A la dicha acusada a que sea puesta a cuestiona de tormento.”
53 AGN, 21115 (1561), 65r-66r.
In the summer of 1561, in the 'chamber of torment', the secretary Hugarra noted Graciana’s interrogation under torture. First, she was warned that “if she did not tell the truth, they would put her to the questions of torture and they would administer it very sternly, until she declared the truth.” Graciana denied having any knowledge of witchcraft and having caused any harm. Thus, the magistrates ordered the following judicial torture:

So then they ordered the sticks tightened, and having been tightened, the magistrates told her to tell the truth...Asked if she knows the manner in which the spells and witchcraft is usually done, she said that she does not know. And so, the magistrates seeing her negativity, ordered to have the sticks tightened even more, and having been tightened, they told her to tell the truth in all she had been asked. She said she knows nothing they ask of her...And then, the magistrates ordered to give [her] a jug of water, and after giving the jug of water, they asked her to tell the truth in all she has been asked...And she always responded that she did not know anything.

Uncovering the truth was at the center of her interrogation, her torments were given with the goal of getting at that truth. By inflicting pain on her body, the court was coaxing her conscience to free itself of its guilty burden and admit her wrongdoing. The whole purpose of torture was to get at the truth, though a modern observer may question whether that truth was “true” or a product of pain. The “truth” as yielded by

54 AGN, 21115 (1561), 65r: “Que si no dijere la verdad le pondrán a cuestiona de tormento y se lo darán muy recio, hasta que declare la verdad...Y ella respondió y dijo que no sabe nada ni ha hecho mal ninguno, y que sus mercedes hagan de ella lo que mandaren.

55 AGN, 21115 (1561), 65r-66r: “Y así, luego, mandaron apretar los garrotes, y estando así apretados, sus mercedes le dijeron que diga la verdad...Preguntada si sabe de qué manera se suele hacer las hechicerías y brujerías, o si sabe que se pueden hacer, dijo que no sabe. Y luego, sus mercedes vista su negativa, mandaron apretar más los garrotes, y estando así apretados, le dijeron que diga la verdad de todo lo que ha sido preguntada, dijo que no sabe nada de lo que preguntan...Y luego, sus mercedes mandaron echar un jarro de agua y después de echar el jarro de agua, le preguntaron que diga la verdad de todo lo que ha sido preguntada particularmente. Y ella siempre respondía que no sabía nada.”
confession must be considered as what 'locally counted as truth.'

It was this form of truth that the queen of proofs offered, a key point when struggling to comprehend how confession equaled the “truth.” As Stephen Shapin explains of foreign epistemologies, “for historians, cultural anthropologists, and sociologists of knowledge, the treatment of truth as accepted belief counts as a maxim of method.”

Defining our terms of truth as a collective production situated in a specific cultural-historical context is crucial to our understanding of how and why confession was accepted as truth and “full proof” (and also to our understandings of witchcraft).

Graciana’s refusal to confess, to give the truth, resulted in a second order to torture her. The second session crippled Graciana and broke both her arms. Despite the lack of a confession, Graciana was found guilty and sentenced to one hundred lashings and ten years’ banishment. This trial demonstrates that sometimes, even when torture failed to yield a confession, a generous number of witnesses implicating a witch and extensive mala fama, prosecuted by an adamant prosecutor, could override its absence.

The usual pattern of witchcraft prosecution broke from traditional patterns during the serial trials of 1575-76. During this period of heightened fears, the Royal Tribunals ordered torture be used in almost fifty percent of these cases (seven of sixteen trials total). Of these trials, the magistrates followed through with the sentencing in two

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57 Shapin, A Social History of Truth, 4.
cases, torturing the three accused witches of Anocibar and Catalina de Yraneta of Villanueva. Only one accused witch was subjected to judicial torture outside of the panic trials of 1575-76, the abovementioned Graciana Belca in 1561. To be sure, the secular Court and Council, despite its autonomy and freedom from constraints by the King of Castilla and Viceroy of Navarra, exhibited a remarkable display of restraint in the orders of interrogative torture.

3.2 Imprisonment

Upon arrival in Navarra, accused witches were imprisoned in the royal prison adjacent to the Royal Tribunals. The royal jail, or Cárceles Reales, had its origins as a tower-prison housed within the royal castle (built in 1308), where it remained until the early sixteenth-century. Following the tumult of the conquest and annexation of the Kingdom of Navarra by Castilla in 1512, efforts to create a new chancellery and prison began, and in 1541 the Royal Tribunals and royal prison were constructed in the center of Pamplona (present-day “Casco viejo” where the Archivo General de Navarra is situated on the original foundations of the royal castle). This judicial-penal space, including the Council, Court, and, prison, remained in use throughout the early modern period.

58 AGN, 69853 (1575); AGN, 327295 (1576).
60 Olmo, Cárcel y Sociedad Represora, 93.
Accused witches were escorted to the royal prisons by a functionary of the Tribunals, though imprisonments sometimes began in the local town alcalde’s quarters while initial interrogations were made. Court records portray the walk from the outskirts of Navarra to Pamplona in bureaucratic terms of hours and receipts for the use of mules, horses, men, and time required to securely bring the accused to court. But it takes little imagination from the modern visitor to Pamplona to envision the impression of scaling the elevated passage upwards towards the imposing court, along the ramparts, crossing the drawbridge of 1533, and approaching the walled city of Pamplona. Accused villagers were brought from their rural spaces to the imposing judicial complex where imprisonment and interrogations by magistrates awaited them. These interrogations were produced in the Castilian language of legal text, yet all the accused spoke only Euskera. This experience, regardless of the magistrates’ sentencing, was likely an intimidating introduction to imprisonment for the accused.

Upon imprisonment, the value of the witches’ goods and worth was assessed and carefully noted in the court dossier. More often than not, her materials goods were minimal. A typical “list of goods” (bienes) included well-worn articles of clothing, old bedding, pots and pans, and a meager supply of grains; hardly enough to occupy one folio. There were several notable exceptions in the trials (all from 1576), and these accused witches’ goods included multiple houses, vineyards, plots of lands, bulls,
mares, goats, colts, and furniture and household items. The poverty of most witches and lack of goods to cover their expenses, often prompted their *procuradores* to petition for poor relief to fund their basic sustenance. Accused witches continually petitioned for food, while their *procuradores* often claimed they were ‘suffering from hunger.’ Though we cannot conclude with certainty that the court did indeed condemn its prisoners to endure hunger from meager rations, it is safe to assume that provisions were lacking and conditions were poor. It was not until 1567 that the extreme poverty and hunger of prisoners was finally addressed and an official public policy was created to provide rations for destitute inmates, but to qualify for this charity one had to “prove” they were indeed destitute. While conditions in the royal jail were not luxurious, it can be assumed that prisoners were at least minimally cared for. The possible exception to this may be noted in 1595, when severe hunger coupled with disease did play a strong role in a string of prison deaths. Their *procurador* repeatedly petitioned for food, and the trial record suggests these requests were ignored, or denied, for too long.

### 3.2.1 Death in Prison

Prison conditions in early modern Navarra were much like those throughout the rest of Europe: cold, dark, dank, and generally unhealthy. Prison deaths were common,

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61 AGN, 327744 (1576), 21r-24v. “Bienes de Juanes Isturiz and Teresa de Ollo.”
62 Olmo, *Cárcel y Sociedad Represora*, 123-24. Efforts were made to identify those in true need who would qualify for this beneficence.
63 AGN, 71319 (1595).
and the majority of deaths of accused witches (setting aside the first witch persecution of 1525 and the panic of 1609) occurred within the royal prison walls. The first recorded prison death was that of a *hidalga* (noblewoman) detained in the royal prison on a witchcraft charge. Teresa de Ollo was brought to jail on February 10, 1576, and within two months, she was dead.\(^6^4\) Her son, Juanes de Echauri, petitioned the court for her body for burial in the church in their town of Legasa. His attorney asked: “Being imprisoned in the *Cárceles Reales*, Teresa de Ollo his mother, has withered away from a grave illness [the jail has] given her and has died as a good and Catholic Christian, having confessed and received the sacrament of penance.”\(^6^5\) Her speedy death reflects poor prison conditions, while suggesting her privileged lifestyle rendered her ill-prepared for the cold and dampness of the public jails.

This suspicion is strengthened by the similar fate met by another *hidalga*, Maria Perez de Olalde, the very same year. On April 6, weeks before Teresa de Ollo’s death, Maria was brought to the royal prison on ambiguous charges of witchcraft emanating from the influential San Roman family. A woman of wealth, she was in a position to demand a more aggressive defense by her attorney and he petitioned the court for her immediate release, claiming the accusations were a clear case of revenge. Her wealth also afforded her the luxury of a medical examination by a doctor who visited her in the

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\(^6^4\) AGN, 327744 (1576), 166r.
\(^6^5\) AGN, 327744 (1576), 166r: “Estando presa en vras. Cárceles Reales, Teresa de Ollo, su madre, ha fenecido sus días de enfermedad muy grave que le dio y ha muerto como buena y Católica Cristiana, habiéndose confesado y recibido el sacramento de la penitencia.”
prison. The medic described her high fever, her black and dry tongue, and declared “she is in mortal danger” and he recommended her immediate release if she were to survive, as she was a woman of almost eighty. The doctor’s report attests to the influence of wealth, as it was not a common occurrence for doctors to visit accused witches in prison and advocate for their release. The Council denied her freedom and within thirty days of her imprisonment, Maria was dead. Her cellmate testified to her Christian death, saying “Maria Perez de Olalde had made acts of Christianity...and as a good Christian, she confessed with the vicar of the said Cárceles, saying “Jesus” and adoring the cross.” A testimony to Maria’s Christian manner of death worked in her favor as her son struggled with the magistrates to retrieve her body for burial within their village church.

The most disturbing string of prison deaths took the lives of nine accused witches from the Val de Araiz in 1595. Imprisoned and interrogated by the town alcalde, the Lord Andueza in his palace, twelve villagers confessed to maleficia and diabolic witchcraft. After several days’ imprisonment in the tower of Andueza, in February of 1595, the original twelve accused witches—ranging in age from nine to sixty—were transferred to the royal prisons in Pamplona. Seventeen villagers of Araiz were eventually imprisoned as witches, but less than half of the villagers (only eight) would survive.

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66 AGN, 294640 (1576), 65r: “Según todas estas señales la tiene por muy peligrosa mortal.”
67 AGN, 294640 (1576), 67v: “Maria Perez de Olalde ha hecho obras de Cristiana...y como tal habiéndose confesado con el vicario de la dicha cárcel diciendo Jesús, adorando un crucifijo.”
68 AGN, 71319 (1595).
Within two months of their imprisonment, the prisoners complained of
deplorable conditions in which they were literally starving to death. They petitioned the
court for their release, saying they were poor with no goods to support themselves, and
begged the court for mercy, claiming “they are suffering with dire need, so great that if
they if they eat, they have had to pawn their coats and other garments.” It is not
unheard of to find petitions from prisoners proclaiming their poverty and using the
expressing ‘they are dying of hunger,’ but this case is unique in the language used to
describe their intense hunger, their pawning of their coats off their backs (thus their
source of warmth), and their claims that the food rations were insufficient to sustain
their lives. By mid-March at least four accused witches had died, as evidenced within
this petition for release:

Micheto de Usarbarrena and his consorts...for one and a half months have been
incarcerated in your royal prisons...and [are] dying in the prison, as they have no
belongings. And what the fiscal gives them for food is not enough to sustain
them, especially for the diseases that are present, and from which four of them
have died and now three are in danger of dying.

Their procurador concluded by begging for their release lest they perish in that prison.

More petitions for release continued to bombard the court. Gravely ill, sixteen-
year-old Maria de Urrutia begged for her release to a hospital. Maria, “accused of being

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69 AGN, 71319 (1595), 108v: “Padecen extrema necesidad de tal manera que si han de comer han habida de
empeñar sus capotes y otras prendas.”
70 AGN, 71319 (1595), 111r: “Micheto de Usarbarrena y sus consortes...de mes y medio están presos en vras
cárcel reales...y mueren en la prision por no tener ellos bienes ningunos, y lo que se les da del fiscal para
sus alimentos ser tan poco que no tienen bastante sustento, en especial para las enfermedades que se
ofrecen. Por lo cual han muerto cuarto de ellos y ahora tres están en peligro de morir.”
a witch says that for many days she is sick in bed to such an extent she cannot move herself, nor can anyone touch her for the pain she feels. She begs the magistrates to give her liberty for a hospital to get help.”71 Just ten days later, on May 27, 1595, another plea for release was sent to the court from another four accused witches. They reported “that for many days they have been imprisoned...and [due to] the long imprisonment they have all fallen sick and are in danger of dying in the said prison, as so many others have died.”72 Unfortunately, nine villagers perished due to the royal prison conditions in Pamplona, including nine-year-old Mari Johan Chorro and her sixteen-year-old sister. They were all women; all died Christian deaths.

3.2.2 Dying a Christian Death

Dying a paradigmatic “good death” was of great importance to Christians in the medieval and early modern periods. Beginning with the Ars moriendi in the early fifteenth century, many manuals were dedicated to this crossing-over.73 Narratives of paradigmatic “good deaths” were widely published in early modern Spain, and Spanish Catholics met death with the hopes they would be met with God’s forgiveness, and

71 AGN, 71319 (1595), 134r: “María de Urrutia...acusada de bruja dice que a muchos días está enferma en cama de tal manera que no se puede menear por sí, ni nadie la toque por mucho dolor que de ello siente...Suplica al magistrado mande da le libertad para que se pueda llevar al hospital y curarse.”
72 AGN, 71319 (1595), 136r: “Dicen que a muchos días estas presos...larga prisión todos han caído enfermos con peligro de morir en la dicha prisión como se han muerto otros muchos.”
favor. Longing for salvation, they would have sought to die a Christian death, through confession, communion, and prayers. Unfortunately for Spain’s condemned prisoners, they were routinely denied their final rites, a defect that was not remedied until post-Tridentine efforts in the latter part of the sixteenth century. In the Royal Tribunals, it seems that efforts were made for gravely ill prisoners to be attended by a cleric in their final hours.

As evidenced by the attention the scribes devoted to recording accused witches’ behaviors at death and their conscientious inclusion in the trial records, one’s manner of death was almost as important as her manner of living. A Jesuit priest, the Father Paolo de Sanesteban, provided a vivid and powerful portrait of the final hours of the group of dying villagers from Araiz in 1595. Father Sanesteban testified that “María Miguel de Oreja and her consorts, those who died in the Cárceles Reales, all [died] having confessed...All received the sacraments of the church...they died adoring the cross and saying prayers and confessing to the Catholic faith.” These women, though accused of witchcraft and being mala Cristianas, died good deaths: they confessed, received the sacraments, adored the cross, and died with prayers and Jesus’s name on their lips. Dying a Christian death secured their access to a Christian burial and ascension to the

74 Eire, From Madrid to Purgatory, 525.
75 Eire, From Madrid to Purgatory, 31.
76 AGN, 71319 (1595), 199v: “María Miguel de Oreja y sus consortes, las que fenecieron en las cárceles reales, habiéndose confesado...todas recibieron los sacramentos de la iglesia...adorando la cruz y diciendo oraciones y confesando la fe Católica.”
Kingdom of God.\textsuperscript{77} After confessing to the Father and asking pardon for their sins from God, the dying turned to their fellow prisoners and asked for their forgiveness for the false testimonies they had raised. Father Sanesteban painted a scene of the dying witches pleading forgiveness from the other prisoners for the false testimony they gave against them. They admitted: “For the record, they were not witches nor were the persons they accused in their depositions” and had raised false testimony.\textsuperscript{78} After their admission of perjury, the dying women:

\begin{quote}
Asked forgiveness from God and from those offended, and the deceased witches did this in the presence of [Father Sanesteban] and other persons in the prison. And they also asked forgiveness from those who were absent that they had also falsely accused.\textsuperscript{79}
\end{quote}

Moved by contrition for their false testimony, they confessed to and asked forgiveness from God, while begging their fellow accused witches for pardon. The witches charged the Jesuit with the task of serving as their last witness, imploring him to notify the court of their innocence and the false accusations produced by coercion and intimation from the Lord of Andueza. Father Sanesteban took this charge seriously, as Jesuits received

\textsuperscript{77} Unlike Teresa de Ollo and Maria Perez de Olalde, the record does not indicate whether or not their bodies were claimed by family members for burial. It is possible they were and the record simply omitted it due to the unusually large volume of witches for Navarra. Also possible is they were rejected by their families due to the dangerous stigma of witchcraft, or, since many of them were related, their kin were otherwise tied up in this witch trial themselves.

\textsuperscript{78} AGN, 71319 (1595), 200r: “Diciendo que por la cuenta...Que ellas ni las personas a quienes acusaban en sus deposiciones eran brujos, y que en ello les habían levantado falso testimonio.”

\textsuperscript{79} AGN, 71319 (1595), 200r: “Y que pidan de ello perdón a Dios y a los ofendido, y en cumplimiento de esto actualmente algunas de las dichas difuntas en presencia de este testigo y otras personas de la dicha cárcel. Y que también lo pedían a los ausentes a quienes como dicho tiene habian acusado falsamente.”

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special training in the art of dying. By hearing their final confession, the Jesuit permitted them to face death with a clean and purged soul. One can imagine the emotions of these dying prisoners as they awaited their deaths, the anguish of seeing the consequences of their false depositions, and the guilt of issuing a death sentence to their families and neighbors.

Not all accused witches who perished in the Royal Prisons were afforded a Christian death. Graciana de Yraicoz, the wife of Miguel de Zubiri caught up in the initial witch trial of Anocibar in 1575, was in acute pain in the prison. Too exhausted to “make tears,” she knew she was going to die and kept repeating Jesus’s name. Her cellmate, Maria Xandua, summoned the prison chaplain, but his arrival came too late; Graciana was dead. Her death was attributed to a severe illness. Ironically, most of the negative testimony about Graciana centered on her claims that she was sick and thus unable to go to Mass, a sickness the villagers doubted, insisting she was just a mala Cristiana, and therefore, a witch. Though she had Jesus’s name on her lips at the hour of her death, Graciana died unconfessed. The denial of her final confession and absolution condemned her to face death with an unclean soul.

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80 According to Carlos Eire, Ignatius Loyola emphasized meditations on dying and the afterlife in his text Spiritual Exercises, in 1548. Eire, From Madrid to Purgatory, 28.
81 AGN, 69853 (1575).
82 AGN, 69853 (1575), 100r: “tirar aguas.”
83 Her husband, Miguel Zubiri, followed her in death on November 28, 1575, when he was executed by hanging and then burned.
In total, twelve accused witches died while jailed in the royal prison of Pamplona. Most were fortunate enough to receive a Christian death, attended to by prison chaplains in their final hours. But not all accused witches were imprisoned in the royal jail. Intensified witch fears in the period of the witch panic, from 1609 and into the next several years, removed centralized power from the Royal Tribunals and created conditions that led to vigilante justice. It is in this time span that a group of women were imprisoned by village officials, subjected to extra-legal torture. Two died at the hands of their keepers.

3.2.3 “El delicto de privato carcere”

In the interim between the witch panic of 1609-10, and the new guidelines set forth by the Inquisitor Salazar de Frias in 1614, a series of small witch scares rippled throughout 'Las Cinco Villas' (The Five Villages) in Navarra in 1610. A group of eight women in Arrayoz were suspected of witchcraft and the alcalde Joanes de Perochena and his functionaries imprisoned them within the walls of the palace of Jaureguizar. Their jailers mimicked legal practices of interrogative torture, subjecting them to illicit

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84 AGN, 72090 (1613): “The crime of private incarceration.” Miguel Navarte was accused of the crime of “privato carcere” and the homicide of Graciana Barrenechea within his house.

85 Henningsen briefly mentions this, referring to it as “the little witch panic” in the Cinco Villas. Henningsen, The Witches’ Advocate, 141.

86 AGN, 720902 (1613).
torments including the submersion of their bare feet in freezing water, tight shackling with irons, and starvation.

In a fascinating twist, it is the Lady of the palace of Arráyoz, Catalina de Iturbide, who valiantly fought to release them from her own home where they were being detained. With the backing of the alcalde Perochena, and the support of Miguel de Narvarte (a scribe of the Royal Court and a commissioner for the Inquisition) several local authorities requested the use of the Lady Iturbide’s cellar rooms to secure the accused witches, suspected of kidnapping children and taking them to the aquelarres (Sabbaths). She obliged, but was soon troubled by the treatment the women received at the hands of these men. The local officials held them for days “without wanting to give them anything to eat or drink. And so, moved with compassion for them... [she] gave them [food] to eat at night and at hours the officials nor any other neighbor could see.” These accused witches were imprisoned “in the rigors of the winter...Sabadina de Cocoya and her daughter [Beatrice]...who recently gave birth, [were chained] with a pair of irons...so they could not move except together and at the same time.” The Lady Iturbide testified to a disturbing scene of starvation and cruelty at the hands of the

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87 The word *aquelarre* is not used before the trials of 1609, but became synonymous with the witches’ gathering after this date and its publication by the Spanish Inquisition.
88 AGN, 720902 (1613), 19r: “Sin que les quisiesen dar de comer ni beber. Y así, esta testigo, movida de compasión de ellas...les daba de comer de noches y a horas que no le pudiesen ver el dicho jurado ni otro vecino alguno.”
89 AGN, 720902 (1613), 19r: “En el rigor del inverno...Sabadina de Cocoya y a su hija...recién parida...con un par de yerros...que no se podían mover sino juntas y a un tiempo.”
alcalde and several others. Supported by the royal scribe and the Abbot of Urdax, a familiar of the Inquisition who was central in the affairs of the recent witch panic, the local authorities were imbued with the power that she, as a woman and a widow, perhaps felt reticent to question. Despite the serious accusations leveled against these accused witches, the Lady Iturbide “was troubled that important people of such high opinion” would treat these prisoners so poorly, especially Beatrice who had given birth only six days prior to her arrest, but her sense of humanity overpowered whatever hesitations she may have had, and she boldly suggested to them: “Gentlemen, take them to the Inquisition, because there they will not treat them as bad and have mercy on the new mother and the other, who is a very old woman.”\(^9\) The local officials ignored her requests, and so the Lady of the Palace of Jaureguízar brazenly took an axe down to the room where the mother and daughter were chained and broke their shackles. Though the new mother’s milk dried up, and her newborn nearly died, she returned home and had survived her ordeal. Sadly, two other prisoners would not be so lucky.

The Lady of the palace of Jaureguízar also attempted to rescue another accused witch imprisoned in her cellar. Miguel Xuito and the alcalde brought Maria to her cell and, having bound her tightly with rope and twine and attaching a feed box to her back, they removed her shoes, exposing her bare feet to the bare earth to “the torment of the

\(^9\) AGN, 720902 (1613), 19v: “Se vio atribulada en ver que gente principal y de tan buena opinión”, “Señores, llévalos a la Inquisición porque allí no les tratarán tan mal y tengan piedad de la recién parida y de la otra, que es mujer muy vieja.”
winter.””\(^9\) After that, they “bound her wrists tightly above her head to a post...and brought a large jug of water to freeze her feet. With all this, they left her to suffer from these torments.””\(^2\) The Señora of the Palace demanded the alcalde cease this “extraordinary torture” and release these women from her palace, but she was ignored. She then sought intervention from Miguel de Narvarte, commissioner of the Inquisition, and asked that he free Maria de Mendi from the torture they were subjecting her to. He did so, but Maria de Mendi was inconsolable, “She bawled, calling God and all of the Saints, and asking for confession as if she was about to expire.””\(^3\) This was on January 1, 1611. Though released from the palace, she was by no means free. She was taken to the private residence of the royal scribe Narvarte, where she would soon die. Eight days after her release from the palace of Jaureguízar by its brave Lady, “Maria de Mendi died in the house of the said Narvarte, scribe, of the torments she was given. And the day before, she [was seen] with complete health.””\(^4\) Though Maria left the palace alive, she did not survive the torments inflicted upon her within those subterranean chambers, or any mistreatments that may have occurred after her release. Not having been given the opportunity to confess before death, her soul was damned to purgatory.

\(^{91}\) AGN, 720902 (1613), 20r: “Y el tormento del invierno...”
\(^{92}\) AGN, 720902 (1613), 20r: “Ataron de las muñecas fuertemente por la cabeza arriba, le ataron a un palo firme que había...trajeron un jaro grande de agua y congelarle los pies. Con todo esto, la dejaron que padeciese con los tormentos.”
\(^{93}\) AGN, 720902 (1613), 20v: “Voseaba, llamando a Dios y todos los santos, y pidiendo confesión como si fuera espirar.”
\(^{94}\) AGN, 720902 (1613), 20r-v: “Tormento tan extraordinario; murió en casa del dicho Narvarte, escribano, de los tormentos que le dieren. Y el día de antes, la vio con salud entera.”
Maria was not the only accused witch to die under private incarceration by Narvarte. Seventy-year-old Graciana de Barrenechea was perhaps the most unfortunate woman affected by this vigilante justice of 1610, and it is her death that the magistrates of the Royal Council focused on once this case reached them in Pamplona. After being accused of witchcraft and taking children to the *aquelares*, Graciana de Barrenechea was imprisoned within the palace of Jaureguízar for eight days, but her true suffering did not occur until she was psychologically and physically tormented by Narvarte, the royal scribe and inquisitorial commissary. This situation reveals how witchcraft accusations could have tragic consequences if issued at a time of heightened witch fears (the year following the panic), while simultaneously landing into the hands of local villagers in power who felt entitled to adjudicate accused witches privately, without referring their suspects to the Royal Tribunals. The *fiscal* of the Council reported:

[In] the depth of winter, Graciana de Barrenechea, a widow of more than sixty-six years of age, was taken twice to the house of Miguel de Narvarte, royal scribe and familiar of the Holy Office and she was kept...[with] an iron chain on her shoulders...[they bound] her feet and put them in a pair of irons and a very large chain around her neck, and the grand weight [bent] her neck and shoulders down, and she cried for the said torments and prayed to God...and within a few hours she died, without confession.\(^6\)

Before her death, Graciana had been in the hands of several villagers where she confessed to witchcraft, was released and then recanted, only to be re-incarcerated.

\(^6\) AGN, 720902 (1613), 25v: “[En] el rigor del invierno a Graciana de Barrenechea, viuda de edad de más de sesenta y seis años, la llevaron por dos veces a casa del dicho Miguel de Narvarte, escribano real y familiar de Santo Oficio y que estuvo...[con] una cadena de yerro en los hombros...los pies y la metieron un par de hierros y una cadena muy grande por el cuello que el gran peso le había ... cuello y hombros para baja, y ella lloraba en los dichos tormentos y se encomendaba a Dios y...murió ella sin confesión.”
Graciana’s nineteen-year-old daughter, Joana de Barrenechea, noted her mother suffered “three months of imprisonment and release” but on the morning of her final imprisonment, Graciana prophesied her death. According to Joana:

On the morning of the day she died...her mother saw that the alcalde Juanes de Perochena came to take her prisoner, and since she was afflicted from the previous imprisonments, she said, 'Now, without any doubt, these are the [last] days of my life, if they torture me like the other times... if I die, take the blessed candle I have'.

Graciana’s private imprisonment did not afford her the final rites offered in the royal jail with the prison priest, and thus she died unconfessed and without ceremony. Even her burial was dishonorable, as villager Pedro de Iriartea stated in his deposition:

They returned her again to the house of Miguel de Narvarte, royal scribe and commissioner of the Inquisition, and she went on her feet, healthy. And that same day, she died...And by the mandate of the Abott of Urdax, she was buried secretly, without tolling the bells, in sacred ground.

Perhaps exasperated by her recantations, Narvarte pushed his forceful methods too far, and Graciana perished under the strain of the torments, coupled with her previous sufferings, and old age. The denial of a proper Christian burial made clear that she would be barred from salvation, a harsh punishment that was normally reserved for

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* AGN, 720902 (1613), 150r: “Tres meses anteriores prendiéndola y soltándola”;
* AGN, 720902 (1613), 150r: “Tres meses anteriores prendiéndola y soltándola”; “Y el día que murió por la mañana...vio la dicha su madre que el dicho jurado [Juanes de Perochena] acudía para llevarla presa, y como de antes estaba afligida de las otras prisiones, dijo: Ahora, sin duda ninguna, serán los días de mi vida, si me atormentan como las otras veces...le dijo, que si se moría, llevase la candela bendecida que tenía.”
* AGN, 720902 (1613), 12r: “Volvieron otra vez a la casa de Miguel de Narvarte, escribano real y comisario de la Inquisición, y fue por sus pies, buena. Y al propio día, sabe que murió...Y por mandado del abad de Urdax, fue enterrada secretamente, sin que tañiesen campanas, en lugar sagrado.”

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excommunicates, heretics, hardened criminals.\textsuperscript{99} Likely, she would have fared better under the watch of the royal prison or the Inquisition's prison, but this peculiar historical moment of heightened witchcraft fears led to her death that, fortunately, few other accused witches in early modern Navarra shared.

This case is singular in the witch trials of Navarra, but such scenes were commonplace in witchcraft persecutions in other parts of Europe, such as the Holy Roman Empire, where the absence of a strong centralized court, or the unchecked authority of a single ruler, sometimes allowed abuses of power to flourish. Such unsteady ground, coupled with legitimate witch fear, provided the perfect environment for the detainment and interrogations of suspected witches to take a turn towards the harsh and merciless, which is what led to this anomalous event in Navarra.

3.2.4 The Slippery Sorceress

Most prisoners exited the royal prison under one of three conditions: they were sentenced and released by the magistrates, they were absolved and given freedom, or they were freed by death. Yet the records hold for us, albeit by means of an underplayed and passing mention, the tantalizing tale of a prison escape, in the unique case of the enigmatic accused sorceress, Maria Esparza. Fifty-year-old Maria Esparza was accused

\textsuperscript{99} Eire, \textit{From Madrid to Purgatory}, 21.
of sorcery and brought to the royal prison in August of 1675. Maria's accusation of sorcery occurred at a late date, which afforded her a more exhaustive trial, one that included the learned opinions of four men of medicine. Asked to review the suspicious death of a man Maria was accused of killing by sorcery, they consulted the writings of Martin de Andosilla, Pedro de Ciruelo, and even invoked Hippocrates. The doctors then drew the conclusion that Maria Esparza had caused the man’s death with the help of the devil, asserting “We conclude [his death] clearly came from the hand of the devil...only the devil.” Their strong conclusion was reached without an examination of the corpse, a flaw vigorously protested by Maria’s procurador, Joseph Quadrado, to no avail. The fiscal sentenced Maria to public humiliation, two hundred lashings, and ten years’ exile on October 28, 1675. As Quadrado fought to convince the magistrates of the Council to remit her case to the Inquisition, Maria de Esparza escaped from prison.

A notice from the fiscal on February 6, 1676 related: “Having been imprisoned in our Royal Prison, Maria de Esparza without having a hearing or decree from our court that she could be freed, has left the prisons without notice.” This muted mention of

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100 AGN, 17176 (1675).
101 AGN, 17176 (1675), 25r-28v.
102 AGN, 17176 (1675), 27r-28v.
103 AGN, 17176 (1675), 28v: “Concluíse claramente venir por mano del demonio...Solo el demonio.”
104 AGN, 17176 (1675), 30v-31r.
105 AGN, 17176 (1675), 41r: “Estando presa en vuestras cárcel reales, Maria de Esparza sin haber auto ni decreto de vuestra corte para que fuera suelta, ha salido de ellas sin notificar.”
what would appear to be, in reality, the escape of a fifty-year-old suspected sorceress, was couched in terms of “she has left the building,” as a troublesome but almost unsurprising occurrence. The magistrates were far from easygoing about the escape of the suspected sorceress, however. They ordered: “this diligence [returning Maria] should be executed by the cost of the alcalde, since it is his obligation to guard the imprisoned, and he could not nor should have released the defendant without an order and mandate from our Court and Council.” Fortunately, for the alcalde of the prison, she was found and returned to the royal prison two days later.

This anomalous event invites the question of how an accused sorceress managed to escape from royal prison in 1675. Bribery was most likely not to be blamed, as she was a widow who sustained herself by asking for alms and had no goods whatsoever. The record also reveals financial friction over who should feed her, as her attorney begged the Inquisition to feed her, since the court had ceased to give her the “ordinary charity” and had essentially providing her provisions. The Inquisition squarely refused responsibility over her since she was not in their jail. Did the alcalde of the prison aid in her escape? It is possible, but the court did not formally charge him with any such crime. Furthermore, the ineffective alcalde, Diego Pilarte, proudly reported two days later that

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106 AGN, 17176 (1675), 41r: Y que esta diligencia la ejecute a su costa el que sirve el oficio de alcalde, pues es de su obligación y guarde de los presos, y no pudo y ni debió soltar a la dicha Rea sin orden y mandato de vuestra corte o consejo.”

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Maria Esparza had been returned to the prisons under “good and secure guard.” Following her return, Juan de Saturtegui by mandate of the Royal Council, took her on the journey to the border of the Kingdom of Aragon on horseback, and warned her not to break her sentence of ten years’ exile.

3.3 Sentencing Witches

Sentences handed down to accused witches in Navarra were mild compared to those issues by secular and ecclesiastical courts throughout parts of early modern Europe. The trial records do not reveal the decision-making processes of the magistrates, and sentences were decreed without legal justifications or arguments. The trial records reported legal sentences as short, simple decrees from the fiscal.

3.3.1 Banishment

Exile, either from their village, their greater region or valley, or the entire Kingdom of Navarra, was the most common punishment. This official expulsion of criminals was commonplace throughout the early modern period, and there was a therapeutic role for the community in purgation. Local authorities relied upon

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107 AGN, 17176 (1675), 41r: “Buena y segura guarda.”
108 AGN, 17176 (1675), last folio.
banishment in an attempt to cleanse the community by purging or ridding itself of unwanted people. Common sentences of banishment in Navarra ranged from as few as three months to perpetual exile. In the form of receipts from court personnel for their time and money spent feeding their ward, several cases offer the chance to imagine the moment of exile, when the sentenced witch was taken under “secure guard,” usually on horseback, to the outskirts of Navarra and deposited at the border with the Kingdom of Aragon. This round-trip usually took one week.

Though not as horrific as physical death, exile usually meant social death and, sometimes, did in fact equal physical death. Expulsion due to social deviancy often resulted in a social death. This could lead to physical death as stigmatized witches were cut off from access to resources, and their unsavory reputation prejudiced people from providing them even the most basic charity. With little or no possessions, the lack of support from kin or neighbors, and the stigma of being a convicted witch commanding their fama, exile to an unknown village held little prospects for these witches, most of whom were older, widowed women. It is hard to examine what happened to the accused after her exile, as the fiscal’s final sentence usually concluded the case and thus

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110 Coy, Strangers and Misfits, 122.
111 Albrecht Classen, Death in the Middle Ages and Early Modern Time: The Material and Spiritual Conditions of the Culture of Death (Berlin: DeGruyter, 2016), 137-138. Hans-Peter Hasenfratz (2002) has presented three cultural concepts of death—peaceful, powerful, and social. He defines the conditions of social death as the person is alive but is considered dead by his/her community.
information about the accused. One banished witch did return to Pamplona, however, and also to the records of the Royal Tribunals.

Following her torture sentences in 1561, Graciana Belca was sentenced to five years’ exile. Months after her sentencing, in the dead of winter, she broke her banishment and returned to Navarra and to the magistrates. Her procurador asked for their mercy, arguing:

She is an elderly woman and is crippled from the torture given her. She cannot vouch for herself, and with the fama she has that she is a witch, no one has wanted to take her in their house. And she was terribly lost, dying of hunger, and so for the extreme necessity that she was in, she has had to come to her village, where her children are, to her house.

Unable to find a means of supporting herself outside of Navarra, she chose to return to Navarra and petition the court for mercy, as her only other option was death by cold and starvation. For breaking the terms of her exile, the court doubled her original sentence: she received two hundred whippings and ten years’ of exile. We can assume that most witches left Navarra for their exile; whether or not they completed the entirety of their sentences could be questioned. Unless neighbors reported their infraction to the town alcalde or the court, it would have been possible, and often necessary, for them to return to their homes and families.

112 AGN, 211115 (1561), 81r.
113 AGN, 211115 (1561), 83r: “Como es mujer anciana y esta baldada por el tormento que paso, que no se puede valer de su persona y con la fama que tiene que es bruja, nadie ha querido a coger en su casa. Y la presente andaba muy perdida, muerta de hambre y de frío y por la extrema necesidad que pasaba, [ilegible] de venir a su tierra, a donde estaban sus criaturas, a su casa.”
114 AGN, 211115 (1561), 85r.
3.3.2 Public Humiliation

In several cases, public humiliation and whippings accompanied a sentence of banishment. Using the public space to display the sentencing served several functions. Primarily, public expulsion rituals helped define sanctioned and unsanctioned behaviors, and like *fama*, helped establish norms. Second, the exhibition of the sentence also, it was hoped, expanded its effect and warned the public against engaging in the crimes of the accused. As Michel Foucault analyzed:

> The body of the condemned man was once again an essential element in the ceremonial of public punishment. It was the task of the guilty man to bear openly his condemnation and the truth of the crime he committed. His body, displayed, exhibited in procession, tortured, served as the public support of a procedure that had hitherto remained in the shade; in him, on him, the sentence had to be legible for all.\(^{115}\)

The humiliation was purposefully crafted, designed to impact both the spectators and, of course, the guilty. It therefore did not only establish the accepted social order, but worked to transform it. Furthermore, these public rituals made the Royal Court and Council’s power tangible. While the Inquisition’s tribunal held its elaborate penitential ceremony, the *auto de fe*, the Royal Tribunals used their public penal displays “to project an image of the council as a divinely sanctioned magistrate, with the God-given duty and power to punish.”\(^{116}\)

\(^{115}\) Foucault, *Discipline and Punish*, 43.

\(^{116}\) Coy, *Strangers and Misfits*, 126.
In 1576, the Royal Tribunals sentenced Juan de Jenda, a carpenter, to public humiliation. Juan, a member of the agote class (an ostracized social group of Navarra), was accused of being a witch and meeting with “a large number of men and woman that made reverence to the devil and danced and the accused [Juan] did the same reverence as the others.” For his participation in the witches’ Sabbath, the fiscal issued this sentence:

Juan [was] to be taken from the prison where he is, riding horseback on a beast of burden, nude from the waist up, with the sound of the trumpet and the voice of the town crier publishing his crimes...and one hundred lashings...ten years' of exile.

The court drew attention to this ritual through the theatrics of partial nudity and loud pronouncements of guilt, used to publicly warn against the taint of witchcraft. Four months later, Juan’s sentence was reduced “to the humiliation only.” Juan's is the only sentence on record that was solely comprised of public humiliation, calling into question whether or not the court truly found him guilty, or simply chose to use him as an example to warn others against the practice, or attracting accusations, of witchcraft. This odd sentence was singular in one-hundred-and-fifty years of witch trials.

The fiscal folded public humiliation into the sentences of four other accused witches and sorceresses, though it is unclear as to whether or not these sentences were

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117 AGN, 11219 (1576), 24r: “Muy grande número de hombres y mujeres que hacían reverencia al demonio y bailaban y danzaban y el acusado hizo también la misma reverencia que los demás teniendo.”

118 AGN, 11219 (1576), 79r: “Juan de Jenda, acusado, a que sea sacado de la Cárcel donde está a caballo en una bestía de basto, desnudo de la cintura arriba con son de trompeta y voz de pregonero que publiquen sus delitos...cientos azotes...diez años de destierro.”

119 AGN, 11219 (1576), 80r: “A la vergüenza solamente.”
fulfilled, as the records only report their lashings and banishments. The witch trials in Navarra concluded with a sentence of public humiliation and exile. In the 1675 case of sorcery, Maria de Esparza was convicted of being a sorceress and using spells for *maleficia*. The court handed down a hefty sentence to Maria:

> To be mounted on a beast of burden, nude from the waist up, with a penitential cone hat on her head, and brought through the public streets and announced with the sound of trumpets and the voice of the town crier publishing her crimes, and to two hundred lashings, and to ten years of exile.\(^{120}\)

It is noteworthy that public humiliation continued to be called on for punishment, even though it most likely was not carried out in Maria's case. As a general rule, sentencing in Navarra was mild, and even its rituals of public humiliation (if they were even performed) were lax.

### 3.3.3 Absolution

The most desired sentence of all was absolution, a pronouncement that was bestowed upon ten fortunate witches: eight during the string of witch trials in 1576, one in the round-up of 1595 that left nine witches dead and yielded no guilty sentences, and a sorcery trial in Navarra, that of Maria Arguello in 1675 (paired with Maria de Esparza). In most of these cases, it is unclear why the accused witch was pardoned, as many of the reports and contours of the trials appeared no different than those of convicted witches.

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\(^{120}\) AGN, 17176 (1675), 31r: “Condenamos...en una bestia de basta desnuda de la cintura en arriba con una coroza en la cabeza y llevada por las calles públicas y acostumbradas con son de trompetas y voz de pregonero que publica sus delitos les condados de cientos/dos cientos azotes y en diez años de destierro.”

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For example, in the case of the three accused witches from Piedramillera in 1575, all named Maria, two Marias were absolved while one Maria was sentenced.\textsuperscript{121} After initially condemning all three Marias to banishment, the court issued the following sentence to the accused witches:

Maria de la Pena [sentenced] to exile for a time of only three years, and as for the said Maria de San Juan and Maria Lopez, we revoke the said sentence and absolve them of the said sentence and we absolve them of this affair, after they pay their rightful part of the costs.\textsuperscript{122}

This favorable sentence still did not guarantee their freedom, as Maria de San Juan and Maria Lopez remained in prison, begging for their release; they were too poor to pay their court costs. Several others trials also featured absolutions for some accused witches but not others, despite their similarities, with no clear explanations or clues as to how the fiscal decided upon his sentencing.

In the case of Maria Arguello, accused of using “evil sorcery” to kill a boy in the late date of 1675, her procurador’s solid defense may have influenced her absolution.\textsuperscript{123} Maria’s attorney, Joseph Quadrado, insisted that the magistrates dispatch the botanists and apothecaries of Pamplona to examine Maria’s bowls that were reported to contain illicit unguents. In a detailed procedural description that narrated the transfer of the bowls from the alcalde, to the court, and all under official supervision; we catch a

\textsuperscript{121} AGN, 11195 (1576).
\textsuperscript{122} AGN, 11195 (1576), last folio: “María de la Pena con que el destierro solamente por tiempo de tres años y en cuanto a las dichas María de San Juan y María López revocamos la dicha sentencia y las absolvamos de esta instancia con que paguen su recta parte de costas.”
\textsuperscript{123} AGN, 333121 (1675), 23r: “sortilegio maleficio.”
glimpse of something that might resemble a modern-day dossier—all the aspects are controlled, annotated, and signed. After much ceremony, the apothecaries declared that “there is no unguent at all.” Rather, there was “some mixture of oil” in one of the bowls, and “some little bit of grease or fat” in another. Most importantly, they concluded with surety there were no cures or harms she could do with these materials, they were completely innocuous.

Quadrado highlighted this tangible evidence, stressed the witness testimonies that doubted Maria had the power to heal or harm, and emphasized the natural death of the boy she was accused of killing. Though it may be tempting to attribute her absolution to the late date of this case (for the region of Navarra, at any rate), recall that this case ran concurrently with that of Maria de Esparza who was sentenced to public humiliation, two-hundred lashings, and ten years of exile. Furthermore, her sentencing was informed by the 'expert' testimonies of the four medical men, all who agreed that the man in question died by witchcraft—without ever having examined the body. These parallel cases confound the search for a trajectory of belief as one doctor said the death of the boy was natural, while another said it was caused by witchcraft delivered through his genitals. How fitting that the year which concluded witch trials in the secular court

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124 AGN, 333121 (1675), 75r+v: “No hay ungüento
125 AGN, 333121 (1675), 75r+v: “Alguna mixtura de aceite...algún poco de manteca o sebo.”
of Navarra continued to demonstrate the variability, and resistance to defined borders of witch belief and its prosecution.

### 3.3.4 Execution

Execution was the least common sentence to be handed down to a witch tried by the court from 1526 until its last trial of 1675. As discussed in Chapter I, approximately thirty to fifty accused witches were executed in 1525 under the magistrate Pedro de Balanza.\(^\text{126}\) Surviving correspondences between Balanza and the vicar, Juan Rena, and several Inquisitors also confirm a good number of witches were burnt. Within extant records from these trials, it is not possible to examine how the death sentences were discussed, decided upon, and executed. What is most important to note is that it was an anomalous event, directed by a passionate magistrate, and was not repeated in the history of Navarra’s witch trials. Executions were incredibly rare; the exception of the witch burnings in 1525 aside, the Royal Tribunals only sentenced three witches to death in the century and a half of extant trial records, and only carried out two of those executions.

Only three sentences of execution survive in the records of the Royal Tribunals: that of Maria Johan on October 25, 1575, and weeks later, her accomplices, Miguel de

\(^{126}\) AGN, 1525. 1525, Caja 113513/13, AP_Rena, Caja 94, N. 13.
Zubiri and Maria Xandua on November 28, 1575. The fiscal issued his fatal verdict for the latter pair of witches:

In the criminal case that is pending before us and the alcaldes of our Supreme Court....Miguel de Zubiri and Maria Xandua...accused of [being] witches and [making] spells and having committed other crimes...We find that we should condemn, and do condemn, the said Miguel de Zubiri and Maria Xandua, accused, to be taken from the cárceles reales where they are, ridden horseback, on separate beasts of burden, with the sound of the trumpet and the voice of the town crier publishing their sin. And taken through the accustomed streets of this city and to the Campo de la Taconera of this city, where we order to have two pieces of wood [erected], and on the wood, each given a garrote, until they are choked and die naturally. And then, their bodies burned in open flames until they have returned to ashes.¹²⁷

Their executions unquestionably had a profound impact on Navarre, as it set off a ripple of witch concerns and trials not seen in half a century. Note that they were sentenced to public shaming before the final act of execution, which then concluded with a prolonged burning until nothing remained of their bodies. This sentence illustrates the importance of performance as argued by Foucault, and to be sure, the impact was great.

Situated in the middle of Pamplona, the Campo de la Taconera was most likely a central and popular spot for early modern Pamplonans. In modern-day Pamplona, the Plaza de la Taconera features beautiful gardens, a playground, promenades, fountains, and functions as a central market for vendors during the annual San Fermines festival

¹²⁷ AGN, 69853 (1575), 117r: "En la causa criminal que es y pende ante nosotros y los alcaldes de nuestra Corte Mayor...Miguel de Zubiri y Maria Xandua...que los acusa de brujos y hechizos y haber cometido otros delictos...Hallamos que debemos de condenar y condenamos a los dichos Miguel de Zubiri y Maria Sandua, acusados, a que sean sacados de las cárceles reales donde están, a caballo, en sendas bestias de baste, con son de trompeta y voz de pregonero, que publican su delito. Y sean llevados por las calles acostumbradas de esta ciudad y el Campo de la Taconera de ella, donde mandamos se pongan dos maderos, y en ellos les sean dados sendos garrotes, hasta que sean ahogados y naturalmente mueran. Y después, sus cuerpos sean quemados en vivas llamas hasta que sean vueltos en ceniza."
(sometimes referred to as the “Running of the Bulls”). When the bodies of Maria Johan and Miguel Zubiri were burned in this central space, a half of a century had passed since the last witch had been burned in Navarra (1525), thus these sudden burnings set off a chain reaction of fear and aggression that would last for another year, and account for thirty percent of all witch trials in Navarra’s history. Navarra did not pursue its witches with great ferocity, thus making the executions of these two witches from Anocibar exceptional.

3. 4 Conclusion

The Royal Courts of Navarra enjoyed their independence and autonomy from Castilla for four centuries, until their dissolution in 1841 under the Law of Jurisdiction (Ley de Modificación de Fueros), which sought to consolidate all jurisdictions in Spain. It was these very well-established, centralized, and powerful tribunals that helped shape Navarra’s witchcraft and sorcery trials in the early modern period. Unlike the less centralized legal systems present in some parts of early modern Europe, the strong and structured courts of Navarra prevented local alcaldes and territorial lords from prosecuting accused witches and sorceresses. The local inquisitorial procedures that guided witch trials in Navarra leaned heavily towards the reports given by villagers, thus depositions were less reliant on the learned ideas of the Sabbath and diabolism. This feature precluded the devil from developing into the prime focus, and kept
witchcraft attentive to *fama* and other localized concerns. Further, the magistrates of the Royal Tribunals seldom engaged in judicial torture, and rarely actively sought witches and sorceresses, preferring to let villagers and town *alcaldes* supply the accusations without prompting. Together, these factors helped shape a relevantly mild approach to witchcraft prosecution under the remarkable royal Court and Council of Navarra (1484-1841).
4. The Christian Crux

Christianity created, defined, and supported early modern witchcraft, and it was only through a Christian cosmology and ontology that certain witchcraft tropes—such as the diabolical pact, the anal kiss, and the witches' Sabbaths—held meaning. Witchcraft was the inversion of Christianity, and witches were the Devil’s servants, just as real as the angels and saints were to early modern Europeans. To appreciate European witchcraft more fully, we must turn to the religious cosmos in which it flourished. Christianity informed the language of witch belief, and without its underpinning, early modern witchcraft would neither have held meaning nor even existed.¹ Witchcraft had all the aspects of religion inverted; it was a demonic copy. As with all religion, witchcraft was an expansive field of symbolism. Maleficia was the opposite of miracles, the Sabbath’s unholy rites and divinations were the inversions of religious services and divine visions. The church of the Devil was the inversion of the church of God.

Participation in Catholic rites and religious performativity was at the center of witchcraft accusations in Navarra. Villagers’ reports from the trial records reveal that those accused of witchcraft were perceived to be malas cristianas (bad Christians), and witch activities often parodied Catholic rituals. This chapter situates witchcraft in

¹ For an in-depth discussion of the devil as “God’s ape” and witchcraft as the inversion of Christianity, see Stuart Clark, Thinking with Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1997), 69-93.
Navarra within its religious context and seeks to answer: How did religion as understood and expressed in early modern Navarra shape witchcraft and its persecution?

While scholarship has treated the theological underpinnings informing witch belief, and examined the differences in persecution along confessional lines, this chapter seeks to locate religious understandings at the local level by turning to the villagers’ reports, their accusations, and the arguments of defense in individual witch trials. In its first section, this chapter situates the religious climate in Spain, one whose reform efforts were more prominently marked by the establishment of the Inquisition in 1478, and the expulsions of its Jews in 1492, than by Tridentine efforts in the sixteenth century. The second section turns to the villagers’ reports, arguments from the prosecution, and the counter-arguments by the defense, to show that poor Catholic performativity and being perceived as a “bad Christian” was central to witchcraft beliefs and often drove accusations. This section will also examine the religious inversions that sometimes emerged in the Royal Tribunals’ accusations. The third section examines the few Christian healers tried for sorcery by the Royal Tribunals, as well as the singular witch trial prosecuted by the ecclesiastical tribunal of Pamplona, that of the “witch priest” and his diabolical sect. This chapter concludes with an examination of the religious treatises aimed at reform that appeared in the witch trials, and suggests that Navarra’s restraint in witch-hunting is reciprocally connected to the relatively lax approach found in the
demonologies that were known in this region. These sections show that witchcraft in Navarra was informed by a Catholic understanding of “good” and “bad Christians,” and this conceptual framework, along with the mild religious reform efforts and the unpopularity of severe demonologies, helped shape witchcraft and trials in Navarra and prevented wide-spread persecutions.

4.1 Religious Landscape

Throughout the early modern period, Catholic and Protestant lands alike persecuted, prosecuted, and executed people accused of witchcraft. Overall, both confessions persecuted witchcraft at roughly similar rates, with Catholic rulers leading more ambitious prosecutions at times, and Protestant lands sponsoring greater witch-hunts at other times.2 Despite these similarities across confessions, Spanish religiosity had its own texture that influenced both witch belief and witch persecution. The Protestant Reformation never commanded a great presence in Spain, and Iberia remained a firmly Catholic country throughout the early modern period. Spain’s Inquisition, established in 1478, prevented the spread of Protestant thought, while its “Edict of Expulsion” expelled all practicing Jews in 1492.3 Further reform efforts began in the same year to convert Moorish populations in reconquered Iberian regions. These

events marked the beginning of reform efforts in Spain. Thus, by the time of Luther’s Reformation, Spain had already been enforcing religious homogeneity for forty years. The Catholic response to the Reformation, referred to as the Counter-Reformation or Catholic Reformation, was marked by the first meeting of the Council of Trent in 1545. Tridentine efforts sought institutional reform, such as limiting corruption within the church and among clerics, while also seeking to improve Catholic education and practices. As Spain had its own internal reform efforts in place for more than half a century, and jurisdictional battles between the Spanish monarchy and Tridentine efforts slowed change, scholars have argued that the Council of Trent had limited effects in Spain.

During the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, the Catholic Church did make efforts to standardize and improve the Church in Spain. The Church sought to secure more power and influence over the local side of religion and raise standards of orthodoxy among the Spanish people, while reinforcing its own central authority. Regular attendance at mass, strict observance of the sacraments of baptism, marriage, confession and extreme unction, all became core expectations of “good Christians” in

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4 Helen Rawlings, *Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Spain* (New York: Palgrave, 2002).
6 Rawlings, *Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Spain*, 74-76.
7 Rawlings, *Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Spain*, 74-76.
post-Tridentine Spain. Rather than combating Protestantism, Spain’s reformation devoted its efforts to raising standards among the leaders within the Church. To combat “Lutheranism,” a broad term used to define any religious belief that challenged the Catholic Church, Spain relied on its Inquisitorial tribunals, especially those on the frontiers with France, such as the Logroño which had oversight of Navarra. Though the Inquisition launched a vigorous attack on what it thought to be an infiltration of Lutheran influence in the mid-sixteenth century, in reality, Luther’s teachings had a minimal influence in Iberia. With the Inquisition leading the battle against Protestantism, Tridentine efforts turned their attention to the rampant clerical abuses, pluralism, and absenteeism practiced by church officials. According to scholar Helen Rawlings, Pamplona was a particular strong seat of papal nepotism.

Internal reform efforts in Spain were met with varying success rates. The religious experience of the Spanish people, as with many other rural European communities, was largely separate from the theologies and prescriptions of the official Catholic Church. Though not mutually exclusive, there were two levels of religion in early modern Spain: that of Catholic theology and doctrine, and a local one based on 

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8 Rawlings, *Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Spain*, 77.
9 William Monter, *Frontiers of Heresy: The Spanish Inquisition from the Basque Lands to Sicily* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990), 37, 143-146. For example, from 1565-1600, the Logroño tribunal executed twenty Protestants, another 28 in effigy, and sent some 100 to the galleys.
10 Rawlings, *Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Spain*, 37-42.
11 Rawlings, *Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Spain*, 52.
particular sacred places, images, and relics. The official Spanish Church centered around the sacraments, the Roman liturgy, and the Roman calendar; while the church at the village level relied upon locally chosen patron saints, local ceremonies, and a provincial calendar informed by the region’s own personal sacred history. Reform efforts sought to curb the frequent proclamations of false miracles and the traffic in “unofficial” relics, to control the confraternities (cofradias), which were well-established local organizations with a strong religious function found throughout Spanish communities. These cofradias formed centers of religious practice which organized and participated in local processions and celebrations, maintained their own chapels, chaplains and shrines, and scheduled masses to honor their patron saints. Offering an alternative spiritual life to its members, and one that increasingly operated independently of church control, they often competed with parishes. Despite efforts to limit both the independence and the following enjoyed by Spanish cofradias, reforms did little to weaken their popular appeal. Given that Spanish religious experience remained highly local and separate from the official church, and Spain’s Inquisition had combated Lutheranism and other heresies for decades before the Council of Trent, it is hard to identify what, if any, effect the Catholic Reformation had in early modern Spain.

13 Rawlings, Church, Religion, and Society, 95.
14 Rawlings, Church, Religion, and Society, 95.
Helen Rawlings suggests that “at least within the central context of Castile, the church, aided by the Inquisition, was successful in raising standards of doctrinal awareness among the people, in promoting adherence to the sacraments, in tightening clerical control over the practice of belief at local levels.”\textsuperscript{15} Despite these gains in Castilla, Tridentine efforts were incapable of removing long-established symbols of belief and popular expressions of religiosity, which carried as much significance—if not more—for the average Spaniard as those promoted by the orthodox church. In Navarra, for example, heterodox religious practices included carrying effigies of the saints to the rivers to bring about rain.\textsuperscript{16} Reformation efforts to centralize the practice of local religion failed to address the needs of lay people to be able to see, hear, feel and touch the fundamental elements of their belief system. In spite of the reform efforts of the Catholic Church and the Inquisition, Spanish Catholicism resisted a uniform religion, and retained its nuanced local and popular expressions.\textsuperscript{17} Religion provided a crucial bond of unity and identity in a local village life. Though the average Spaniard participated in the official rites and rituals of the liturgical calendar and sacramental observations, religion, 

\textsuperscript{15} Rawlings, \textit{Church, Religion, and Society}, 25.
\textsuperscript{16} In 1510, the canon of Pamplona composed a treatise in efforts to curb superstitious practices. See Martin de Arles y Andosilla, \textit{El tratado De Superstitionibus de Martin de Andosilla}, trans. Jose Goñi Gaztambide (Gobierno de Navarra: Institution Príncipe de Viana, 1971).
\textsuperscript{17} Much of what we know of religion in early modern Spain is derived from King Phillip II's printed questionnaire that was sent to towns and villages in New Castile from 1575-1580. It is unsurprising that these results reveal a religion in which the local was of primary significance William A. Christian's study, \textit{Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain}, is largely based on the finding of King Phillip II's questionnaire. While the information does not specifically pertain to Navarra, most of the findings can be extended to the greater Spain and even religious trends throughout early modern Europe. See William Christian, \textit{Local Religion in Sixteenth-Century Spain} (Princeton, NJ: Yale University, 1981).
as experienced and conceived of by villagers, transcended these official bounds. The outward performance of religion was inextricably interwoven with communal living, work, and outward devotional habits. More than a site for sacred group performance, the local village church hosted social and business transactions, and provided a core space necessary for community cohesion.

Overall, reforming efforts to homogenize these independent local practices of popular belief and centralize the Church’s official authority were not pronounced in Navarra. Similarly, reform efforts aimed at seeking out and persecuting witches were also not marked in Navarra, despite the region’s deep reservoir of witch belief. How, then, did religious understandings shape witch beliefs in a region that was not significantly affected by the Reformation or the Catholic Reformation? How did Catholic understandings inform the witchcraft beliefs of the average villager? How was the Royal Court and Council informed by a religious framework as reflected in their charges? The next section reveals that local witch belief in Navarra was thoroughly conceived of within a Christian construct, one that did not necessitate the protagonism of the Devil.

4.2 Mala cristiana =Witch?

Being a *mala cristiana* was the central understanding of what it meant to be a witch in Navarra. Religious performativity was crucial to cohesion of the social fabric, and those who weakened it were among the first to be labelled as witches. In a dozen
trials in Navarra, the term *mala cristiana* was used interchangeably with *bruja*. Similarly, without exception, the defense attorneys’ first and foremost defense was the argument that the accused was a *buena cristiana*, thus not a witch. The terms “*buena cristiana*” and conversely “*mala cristiana*” transcended religious connotations throughout the trials records, and were used to signify whether or not the accused could actually be involved in witchcraft. These signifiers resist translation; thus this chapter uses these terms in their original Spanish form.

Being marked a *mala cristiana* was often the result of weak Catholic practices, and did not demand elaborate rumors of infanticide, sacrilege, hung toads, or diabolical pacts among Navarra’s villagers. In 1576, when sixty-year-old Joanot Echeberria reported on which villagers were rumored to be witches, his first response was “Domingo de Echayde must be a witch because he has always gone very seldom to hear Mass and the Divine Services.”

The significance of being labelled a *mala cristiana* in Navarra, and its connection to witch belief and accusations, was ubiquitous and reflected throughout the entire trial record. In 1535, villager Pedro Etzeberena concluded Maria de Sagardoy must be a witch because she had “the reputation of a *mala cristiana*, and a poisoner.” The importance in this villager’s mind of a good versus bad Christian was revealed by his primary emphasis on Maria’s reputation as a *mala cristiana*. It also

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18 AGN, 11219 (1576), 7v: “Que Domingo de Echayde debe ser brujo porque suele continuar poco a misa y a los otros divinos oficios.”
19 AGN, 209502 (1535), 3r: “Estaba en reputación de mala cristiana y ponzoñera.”
underscored the fact that a witch was the inversion of a *buena cristiana*, and thus witchcraft was the inversion of Christianity.

As agents of evil, these *mala cristianas* brought misfortune and suffering to their communities. When the town of Piedramillera searched for its witches in 1576, thirty-two year-old Catalina de Artabia reported with certainty that “there are witches,” and she identified three reputed witches, accusing them of sorcery, infanticide, and hanging toads on their doors. Catalina’s long deposition reveals why she was convinced there were witches, and shows the religious framework informing her definition. Catalina reported to the scribe that she had lost all ten of her children, some were stillborn and others died shortly after birth. As a result, she concluded: “From having birthed so many dead children, and from her pains and tribulations, she knows…that some *mala cristianas brujas* have caused this.” Catalina used the term *mala cristiana*, which she elaborated upon with the word *brujas*, witches. To Catalina, a *mala cristiana* was a witch. Witches had caused her suffering and the deaths of all her children. She used the words “*mala cristianas brujas*” as one term—which in essence, they were. Her conclusion that witches were the cause behind her suffering is not surprising, it was understandable to ascribe misfortune to diabolical causes and to look for explanations where there

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20 AGN, 11195 (1576), 3v: “que hay brujas”  
21 AGN, 11195 (1576), 3v: “Y de haber salir así muerto tantos hijos, y de dolencias [y] pruebas, siempre está que declara ha vivido y vive con [ilegible] que algunas malas cristianas brujas han sido causado ello.”
seemingly were none. Still, it is worthy to remember that witches did not exist because bad things happened, rather, bad things happened because witches existed. Being labelled a *mala cristiana* often exposed villagers to accusations of witchcraft, especially in times of active witch-hunting. In the pivotal witch trial of Anocibar in 1575, the testimony against Graciana de Iraizoz centered on her as a *mala cristiana*, that is, she did not fulfill her Catholic duties.\(^{22}\) As a *mala cristiana*, Graciana refused to attend church, and even resisted her neighbors’ considerable efforts to assist her presence at Mass, preferring instead to remain in bed with a feigned illnesses. Her hostility and resistance to her neighbors’ good intentions bred resentment, and once her husband was imprisoned for witchcraft, villagers were quick to identify her as a witch. Based on the testimony of the villagers, the Court reported:

> The accused is a witch, and in opinion, reputation and *fama* of such and a *mala cristiana*. She has demonstrated this by not wanting to go to the church to hear the Divine Services and receive the sacraments. Especially the last five or six years, she has not had any illness, but stayed in her bed during the day and did not go to church.\(^{23}\)

Villagers in Anocibar reported their interventions, and would often send the priest to her home; other times neighbors would lift her out of bed, dress her, put on her shoes, and physically compel her attendance at church. But these charitable undertakings were

\(^{22}\) AGN, 69853 (1575).

\(^{23}\) AGN, 69853, 85r: “Y por ser como es la dicha acusada, bruja, y en opinión, reputación y fama de tal y mala cristiana, ha dado demostración de ello en no querer ir a la iglesia a oír los Divinos Oficios y recibir los sacramentos, especialmente de cinco a seis años a esta parte, que no teniendo enfermedad alguna en su persona, de día se echaba en la cama y estaba en ella por no ir a la iglesia.”
met with rejection rather than gratitude, no doubt damaging her social connections.

Opposing her neighbors’ efforts, Graciana would defiantly remove her clothes and shoes, wrestle them at the door, and return to her room. The Court included more damning depositions in its charges, ones which rested entirely on her being a *mala cristiana*:

> And the neighbors saw her *mala cristianidad* [bad Christianity] ...And for Easter, once a year, as they carried her to the church, she looked at the floor without lifting her eyes, nor looking at the altar where he said the Mass. And when the Mass finished and they left the church, she left and went home alone, walking quickly, like a person who was not ill. And for this, feigning illness and not having it, for being a witch and *mala cristiana*, she has in all this time not gone to church and to hear the Divine Services and receive the sacraments.24

The reports from these four witnesses reveal that Graciana had been viewed suspiciously by her neighbors for a long time due to her infrequency at church, odd behavior when she did attend Mass, and her defiant rejection of their interventions. This reveals that Catholic performativity shaped villagers’ reputations in Navarra, which at certain times, made them vulnerable to witchcraft accusations. Graciana defended herself against these accusations, maintaining she had been seriously ill for many years and was therefore unable to attend Mass. Still, her *mala fama* based on a failure to perform her duties as a good Catholic, coupled with her marriage to an accused witch,

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24 AGN, 69853 (1575), 85r: “Y los vecinos viendo su mala cristianidad...Y por Pascuas de Resurrección, una vez al año, cuando la llevaban a la iglesia, estaba mirando al suelo sin levantar los ojos ni mirar al altar, donde se decía la misa. Y acabada la misa, cuando salían de la iglesia, salía ella y iba a su casa a solas a paso tirado, como persona que no tenía mal. Y por esta orden, fingiendo enfermedad, no la teniendo, por ser bruja y mala cristiana, ha estado en todo el dicho tiempo sin ir a la iglesia e oir los Divinos Oficios y recibir los sacramentos.”
led to her arrest. She died in prison within a month of her incarceration, very thin and weak and with “Jesus’s name on her lips” according to her cellmates.25

The connections in Navarra between Christian performativity and witchcraft were supported within the legal sphere. In 1576, eighteen villagers of Améscoa accused Martin Lopez, Joan de Alduy, and Maria de Ecala of witchcraft, pointing to their weak performativity at the parish church.26 The Court and Council of Navarra, informed by these reports, formally charged them with witchcraft, and underscored this religious transgression among the many accusations of maleficia. The magistrates declared:

For many years they have not gone to church, nor heard the divine services...And the times they have gone, it was only to comply with their neighbors. They did not drink holy water, nor pray to the Sacred Sacrament. And before the priest said Mass and lifted the true body of our lord Jesus Christ and consumed it, they turned their faces and looked at the floor, and never looked at the altar nor the priest.27

The Court highlighted their poor Christian practices in its accusations of witchcraft, demonstrating that poor Christian performativity held great importance in judicial proceedings and legal definitions of witchcraft, and was a integral component of witch belief as understood by the magistrates. As villagers, priests, and the Royal Court levelled accusations of being a mala cristiana, the accused and their procuradores refuted

25 AGN, 69853 (1575), 100r:
26 AGN, 69261 (1576).
27 AGN, 69261 (1576), 56r: “Que a muchos anos que no van a la iglesia, ni oyen los divinos oficios... las veces que han ido, que era solo por cumplir con las gentes. No tomaba agua bendita, ni hacían oración al Santísimo Sacramento, antes cuando el sacerdote decía misa y alzaba el verdadero cuerpo de Nuestro señor Jesús Cristo, y cuando consumía, volvían el rostro y miraban al suelo, y jamás al altar ni al sacedote.”
these charges with pronouncements of being *buenas cristianas*, supported by declarations of good Catholic and Christian acts, and in one case, with material proofs.

### 4.3 Christian Defense

Without exception, the leading argument provided by defense attorneys was that the accused was a *buena cristiana*. The defense relied on proof of religiosity, demonstrated by public performances of Catholic acts—such as regular attendance at Mass, receiving the Eucharist, and almsgiving—as the supreme testament of innocence. In one particularly rich trial, the defense attorney provided five original indulgences treasured by the accused witch, as tangible evidence of her being a *buena cristiana*, and therefore, not a witch. To be sure, a *mala cristiana*, or witch, would not have owned and cherished such sacred objects. If a witch was a *mala cristiana*, what, then, was a *buena cristiana* in the early modern Navarra?

A *buena cristiana* was characterized by his or her religious performances, such as attendance at Mass, participation in Holy Communion, yearly confession of sins, observance of the religious calendar, receipt of the sacraments, baptism and marriage at the hands of the local priest, and a Christian mass at death. Helen Rawlings suggests that also important was “knowledge of the four essential prayers of the church (the Lord's prayer, the Apostles’ Creed, the Ave Maria, and the Salve Regina) and the Ten

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28 AGN, 69259 (1576), 99r-108r. These are original indulgences kept by the *Consejo Real* as proof of innocence.
Commandments."

Religion was more a body of believers more than a body of beliefs, and proof of membership in this community was enacted through performances of belief.

Early modern Catholicism was a religion of rituals, rites, visible works, action, observance, attending Mass, giving alms and money to the church, and community activities such as pilgrimage.

The procuradores of accused witches drew from this religious understanding to provide proofs of religiosity in their defense. The centrality of the buena cristiana defense is reflected in the 1575 trial of Miguela Villanueva, accused of witchcraft and infanticide in the village of Araquil. Pedro de Larramendi, her procurador, argued:

First, the accused has been and is a person of good living, fama, dealings, and habits. She is fearful of God, a good and Catholic Christian. And a daughter of parents, and grand-daughter of grandparents, who are principled, aristocratic, and buenos cristianos. As such, she was baptized as soon as she was born. And after a few years, she was confirmed, indoctrinated, instructed and taught the things and articles of the faith.

Larramendi’s arguments not only reaffirmed her own buena cristianidad, they also highlighted that she was an Old Christian. Being an Old Christian (cristiano viejo), free from the taint of Jewish or Moorish blood, held great significance during the period of Spain’s Inquisition. But the procurador did not rely on her ancestral credentials alone, but

29 Rawlings, Church, Religion and Society in Early Modern Spain, 79.
32 AGN, 327295 (1575), 32r: “Primeramente, que la acusada ha sida y es persona de buena vida, fama, tratos, y costumbres. Temerosa de dios, buena y Católica Cristiana. Y hija de padres y nieta de abuelos principales hidalgos y buenos Cristianos. Otrosí, que como tal, luego que nació fue bautizada. Y a cabo de pocos años, fue confirmada, adocinadada, instruida, y enseñada en las cosas de los artículos de la fe.”
her own, active role as a *buena cristiana*. Larramendi argued that Miguela had “Catholic understanding, she learned the Sunday prayers, the Creed and the articles of the faith and other devotions and prayers. And has always said them continually, and as such, has heard Mass, vespers, the holy services, always and continually, and with much devotion.”

Like witch-hood, Catholic ritual was not an occult practice, but rather public property. Thus he punctuated these attributes with the proof: “And this is public and common knowledge.” The attention Larramendi gave to Miguela’s Christian defense underscores its importance. He further illustrated her good Catholicism by continuing: “Additionally, she has always confessed once a year, and other times; at the time of childbirths and others hours of dangers, jubilees, and other occasions. And as such she has avidly tithed and [given] the first fruits of the earth, and other praiseworthy and voluntary acts.”

Miguela’s Christian defense characterized her as the very personification of a *buena cristiana*. Beyond her pure Christian blood, baptism, and confirmation, Miguela possessed knowledge of the prayers, attended Mass and confession with frequency, tithed, and gave alms freely. Even the quality of her performativity is noted, as she

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33 AGN, 327295 (1575), 32r: “Y como tal luego que tubo entendimiento, aprendió las oraciones dominicales, el credo y los artículos de la fe y otras devociones y oraciones y como tal las ha dicho siempre y continuamente y como tal ha oído misa vísperas, los oficios divinos siempre y continuamente y con mucho devoción.

34 AGN, 327295 (1575), 32r: “Como ello es público y notorio.”

35 AGN, 327295 (1575), 32r: “Otrosí, que como tal se ha confessado siempre y continuamente a la una vez en cada un año y otras veces al tiempo de partos y otras horas y peligros, jubileos, e otras ocasiones. Y como tal ha hecho vivamente diez más y primicias del fruto de la tierra y otras obras meritorias y voluntarias.”
enacted these practices with “much devotion.”\textsuperscript{36} Since religiosity was measured in terms of outward performances of Christian acts, \textit{how} devotional acts were performed often appeared in witchcraft defenses.

Clerics often testified on behalf of the accused, as they too were central in village affairs. In the trial of eighty-year-old accused witch Graciana Martinez, both the Vicar and the abbott attested to her Christianity.\textsuperscript{37} The vicar of more than forty years, declared he had always known her and she was a \textit{buena Christiana} and almsgiver. Highlighted in his report was her significant gift of a chalice to the church “valued as much as six or seven \textit{ducados}.”\textsuperscript{38} This generous donation was renowned among the villagers and mentioned by several witnesses. Echoing the vicar’s impressions, the Cleric of the Mass (\textit{Clérigo de la Misa}), professed: “He has seen the accused go to the parochial [church] and hear the divine services with devotion and receive the most sacred sacrament with \textit{much} veneration and devotion.”\textsuperscript{39} Graciana’s defense centered around her Christianity and acts of charity towards her neighbors. Even so, the prosecutor disregarded the seventeen witnesses who testified on her behalf, including two clerics, and sentenced the crippled,

\begin{footnotesize}
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\item \textsuperscript{36} AGN, 327295 (1575), 32r: “Con mucho devoción.”
\item \textsuperscript{37} AGN, 327215 (1576).
\item \textsuperscript{38} AGN, 327215 (1576), 25r: “del valor de hasta seis o siete ducados.”
\item \textsuperscript{39} AGN, 327215 (1576), 27r “Ha vista a la dicha acusada ir a la dicha parroquial y oir los divinos oficios con devoción y confesar y recibir el santísimo sacramento con \textit{mucha} veneración y devoción.” It is interesting to note that the scribe underlined “much.” The stress on the intensity of her devotion suggests that while a tepid performance of the Christian ritual may be enacted by anyone, her form of veneration was perceived by the priest as being great; the best defense against an accusation of witchcraft.
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bedridden, and feeble Graciana to perpetual exile.\textsuperscript{40} While a Christian defense was crucial, it did not guarantee absolution, especially in times of heightened witch prosecutions.

When Graciana Oroquieta was accused of witchcraft, supported by an extensive list of accusations including \textit{maleficia}, night flight, diabolism, and poisoning, her \textit{procurador} met this long list of accusations with a single rebuttal that underscored her religious devotion. Pedro de Larramendi argued:

She is a good Catholic Christian and person of good living and reputation, she confesses and receives communion as mandated by the Holy Mother church, and she hears Mass and attends the Holy Stations. And when entering the church, she has taken the Holy Water and has adored the cross and given alms and acts of charity. And she is separate from acts of sorcery and witchcraft, and this is held [to be true] and commonly reputed.\textsuperscript{41}

Larramendi intentionally argued first and foremost for the Christianity of his client. By proving Graciana was a \textit{buena cristiana}—as measured by attendance at Mass, participation in Catholic ritual, and confession—Larramendi disproved that she was a witch. To be both was an impossibility. Defense attorneys also asked their witnesses about the religious practices of the accused, to which villagers would respond that she was a good Christian, attended Mass with regularity, and had good \textit{fama}.

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\textsuperscript{40} She was unable to walk, use the chamber pot, eat solids, or feed herself, making this sentence a very difficult one for her to comply with. Unfortunately, we have no further records of Graciana Oroquieta.

\textsuperscript{41} AGN, unnumbered (1576): “Es buena Católica Cristiana y persona de buena vida y fama que ha acostumbrado a confesarse y comulgar cuando le manda la Santa Madre iglesia e a oír misa y los divinos oficios y en entrando en la iglesia ha tomado agua bendita y ha adorado la cruz y ha hecho limosnas y obras de caridad y ha sido apartada de hechicerías y brujerías y por tal tenida conocida y comúnmente reputada.”
Early modern litigators did not present arguments in witch trials that contemporary litigators could envision foregrounding. With the accused’s religiosity at the center, the questions of whether or not witches existed, or the physical possibility of certain acts of witchcraft, were seldom raised. Even so, procuradores for the accused did often refute specific allegations. Throughout the trials we find rebuttals to individual charges, though not as central to the articles of defense as one would anticipate. It is questionable whether or not the court considered these specific articles of defense when forging their sentences, as often there are no tangible differences between cases that resulted in absolutions versus those yielding harsh penalties.

One example of this is found in the defense argued by the Licenciado Martin de Aragon on behalf of the accused witch Graciana de Loizu in 1576. In addition to highlighting her Christianity and the well-known enmity between herself and her accusers, Aragon refuted specific points of her charges. A villager reported seeing Graciana feeding several large toads one night in a large open field when he put his mares to pasture. Martin de Aragon disputed this charge, not by arguing for the absurdity of “feeding three toads in the field,” but by questioning the time of year the witnesses claimed this event occurred. Aragon argued that the month Graciana was accused of feeding the domesticated toads was during “the big snows, which lasted in

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42 AGN, 98192 (1576).
43 AGN, 98192 (1576), 161r: “De comer a tres sapos en la endrecera.”
the said land...from February to the end of March...when the witness says the mares were in the field. And they could not have been, nor been able to walk in the countryside, because the land was covered in snow." Aragon did not challenge the peculiarity of the witchcraft accusation, but rather the impossibility of mares grazing in that field due to the heavy snows. These logical lines of defense were often used, though to what end is unclear.

While defense attorneys argued that the accused did not commit the act, or could not have, due to weather, limited health, and other logistical factors, the defense seldom reasoned that some acts—such as raising of toads, diabolical pacts, and turning into animals—did not happen because they could not physically occur. The absence of this form of defense demonstrates that it would have not held meaning in the court of Navarra, or perhaps not been well-received, and suggests that such skeptical thought was limited. The procuradores for the accused mounted arguments that would have resonated best within its legal system by drawing on proofs of being a buena cristiana.

In addition to arguing that the accused was a buena cristiana, defense attorneys could draw from the accused’s status as an Old Christian (cristiana vieja). In early modern Spain, being a buena cristiana also meant being an old Christian. Beginning in the mid-fifteenth century in Toledo, statutes of purity of blood (limpieza de sangre) were

44 AGN, 98192 (1576), 161r: “Los grandes nieves, las cuales duraron en la dicha tierra...de febrero hasta todo el mes de marzo...cuando dice el dicho testigo que estaban las dichas yeguas en la dicha endrecera y no se podían ni andar en el campo por estar la tierra cubierta de nieve.”
passed, aimed at restricting freedoms of those with any trace of Jewish or Moorish ancestry. By the end of the sixteenth century, the ideology of *limpieza de sangre* had spread throughout Spain and greatly impacted the lives and opportunities of anyone with Moorish or Jewish heritage.\(^{45}\) The notion of *limpieza de sangre*, at first deployed as a temporary tool to ensure the “purity of faith,” had been transformed into a means of exclusion, and those with “pure” or “clean” blood, used this designation to their benefit. *Limpieza de sangre* was a concept that *procuradores* could argue in their defense of the accused.

In 1661, fifty-three-year-old Maria Brigant was accused of sorcery and the murder of a magistrate from the Appellate Court, Bartolome Ximenez.\(^{46}\) Twenty-four villagers from her hometown of Lumbier testified against her *mala fama*, and various medical doctors declared that the magistrate’s death was caused by supernatural means.\(^{47}\) Confronted with so many accusations of *mala fama*, and the medical witnesses declaring sorcery, her *procurador* Joseph Quadrado mounted the best defense he could: he highlighted her religiosity and her purity of blood. Not only was Maria a good Christian, she was also an *old* Christian. Quadrado’s first article argued: “She is a “woman of honor and a *buena Cristiana*, fearful of God and of her conscience, and of good living and customs, and has not been involved with spells or acts of witchcraft or

\(^{46}\) AGN, 59308 (1661).
\(^{47}\) AGN, 59308 (1661), 3r.
illicit pacts or other actions condemned by our Catholic faith.” After asserting she was a *buena Christiana*, he invoked her blood purity to bolster his defense. Provisor Quadrado asserted:

> Her parents were people with honor and good birth, clean from a bad race of Jews, Moors, and those penanced by the Holy Office [of the Inquisition]. And *buenos cristianos*, fearful of God and their conscience and they were neither witches nor sorcerers; but rather very observant of God’s law.

With such damning reports and medical testimony against her, Maria’s defense relied upon her “proofs” of being a good Catholic, drawing on the notion of *liempza de sangre*. The use of purity of blood was not only seen within the secular court of Navarra, but also in the single witch trial held in the Ecclesiastical Tribunal of Pamplona 1569. When Pedro de Lecumberri was denounced for witchcraft and heading his own witch sect, his *procurador*, Sancho de Berrobi argued: “Pedro de Lecumberri is a presbyter of good living, a noble *hidalgo*, and an Old Christian in his origin and ancestry, and is a good and Catholic Christian.”

While the claim of being a *buena cristiana* was sometimes difficult to prove, the accused could draw on their ancestry as Old Christians in their defense. Neighbors and

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48 AGN, 59308 (1661), 58r: “Mujer honrada y buena Cristiana, temerosa de Dios y de su conciencia, y de buena vida y costumbres, sin que se había embarazado en hechizos ni brujerías ni pactos ilícitos ni otras acciones reprobadas por nuestra fe Católica.”
49 AGN, 59308 (1661), 58r: “Que los dichos sus padres fueron gente honrada y bien nacida, limpios de toda mala raza de judíos, moros, y penitenciados por el Santo Oficio, y buenos cristianos, temerosos de Dios y de su conciencia y no fueron brujos ni hechiceros; sino muy observantes de la ley de Dios.”
50 Archivo Diocesano de Pamplona (ADP), Cartón 13, n. 17 (Proceso de los de Burgui contra Don Pedro de Lecumberri, 1570).
51 ADP, Cartón 13, n. 17 (1570), 34r: “Pedro de Lecumberri es presbítero de buena vida, hidalgo noble y cristiana Viejo de su origen y descendencia, y bueno y católico cristiano.”
clerics could testify to the accused’s heritage, and outwards acts of Catholic rituals. But, given the elusive nature of religiosity, was it ever possible for physical evidence to support claims of *buena cristianidad*?

In one particularly rich trial from 1576, the defense submitted material proof that the accused witch, forty-four-year-old Sancho Yraycos, was a *buena cristiana*.52 When three villagers of Ulzama were accused of witchcraft, their *procurador*, Joan de Olaque, argued that they were *buenas cristianas* and that the accusations had “only been raised in the last few days...against them by their enemies and those who hate them and have bad intentions and want to hurt them.”53 On Sancho’s behalf, however, the *procurador* presented an extra article of defense: the material proof of *buena cristianidad* in the form of five indulgences from Rome. Indulgences offered tangible evidence that the owner had engaged in prayer, confession, and monetary contribution to the Church.54 These five indulgences, presented in small documents, remain neatly tucked within the witch trial for the “*Brujos de Ulzama*” at the Archivo General de Navarra, and all were printed in the sixteenth century.55 But, why would these slips of paper issued by the Catholic Church make their way into the dossier of a witch trial?

52 AGN, 69259 (1576).
53 AGN, 69259 (1576), 36r: “Le han levantado de pocos días...contra ellos serán enemigos suyos que les tienen odio y mala voluntad y por hacerles mal y daño.”
55 AGN, 69259 (1575).
The *New Catholic Encyclopedia* defines indulgences as “actions accompanied by prayer that have been specified by the Church as an acceptable remission before God of the debt of temporal punishment for sins.”\(^5\) In addition to payment, these indulgences would accompany some acts such as prayer, charitable works, and attendance at Mass and confession. There were similarities between the obtaining of indulgences and the obtaining of relics, and in the sixteenth century simple priests brought them back from visits to Rome. This is one way that local communities adapted official Church material culture for local use. Thus, when Sancho obtained these five indulgences he was tapping into official Church materiality of *buena cristianidad*. Not only offering financial support to the Church, Sancho was engaging in acts accompanied by prayer in order to obtain forgiveness. To be sure, a *mala Cristiana* or witch would not show concern for spiritual purity, penance, and prayer. Simply put, a witch would not be in possession of holy indulgences.

Knowing that indulgences were supposed to point to absolution of sins and purity before God, Joan de Olague, presented Sancho’s five indulgences as evidence. Two of the indulgences were *Bulas de la crusada*, an indulgence that enjoyed great popularity in medieval and early modern Spain.\(^5\) The granting of this indulgence would

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\(^{5}\) AGN, 69259 (1575), 103r: “Bulla de Cruzada confirmada y concedida por su Santidad y de nuevo ampliada con muchas y muy gran”; 104r: “Bulla de predicación de muy grandes indulgencias y facultades concedidas para los que se cruce signaren contra infieles enemigos de nuestra sancta fe Católica se añaden
have presupposed the person had already confessed their sins, and had “perfect charity,” thus proving Sancho’s financial support of the crusades against the Moors in Spain.\textsuperscript{58} The third indulgence was a \textit{Centenary Indulgence}, granted as part of the papal Jubilee of 1500.\textsuperscript{59} To obtain this indulgence Sancho would have either participated in a pilgrimage to Rome or, most likely, provided donations for the pilgrimage.\textsuperscript{60} Sancho’s fourth indulgence was a \textit{Papal Indulgence} granted by Pope Pius IV (1559-1565), as it was common practices by popes to issue indulgences.\textsuperscript{61} Sancho’s final indulgence was exceptional, he had obtained a \textit{Plenary Indulgence} issued by Pope Paul IV (1555-1559).\textsuperscript{62} The official requirements for a plenary indulgence were the most rigorous, as a plenary indulgence removed all the temporal punishment due for the sins committed up to that time.\textsuperscript{63} To acquire a plenary indulgence, it was (in theory more than in practice) “necessary to perform the work to which the indulgence is attached and to fulfill the following three conditions: sacramental confession, Eucharistic Communion, and prayer

\begin{flushright}
\textit{otras gras y facultades que la santidad manda conmutar a los que esta bulla tomaren y dieren la limosna que para ello abra batallada.”}
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\textsuperscript{58} Patrick J. O’Banion, \textit{The Sacrament of Penance and Religious Life in Golden Age Spain} (Pennsylvania: The Pennsylvania State University Press, 2012), 92-102. So popular was this bull, it accounted for a large portion of the royal annual income.

\textsuperscript{59} AGN, 69259 (1575), 106r: “\textit{Bulla de Jubileo plenísimo como se gana en Roma en el ano centésimo y otras muchas gracias indulgencias.”}

\textsuperscript{60} A special thanks to Dr. Thomas Robisheaux for his assistance in illuminating the requirements to obtain these indulgences.

\textsuperscript{61} AGN, 69259 (1575), 107r: “\textit{Bulla y confesionario de muchas y muy gracias e indulgencias plenísime e indultos concedidos por nuestro muy Santo padre Pio IV.”}

\textsuperscript{62} AGN, 69259 (1575), 108r: “\textit{Jubileo e indulgencia plenaria y remisión de todos los pecados: así para vivos como para difuntos: nuevamente concedido por nuestro muy Santo padre Paulo Papa Cuarto.”}

\textsuperscript{63} Palmer and Tavardi, “\textit{Indulgences},” \textit{New Catholic Encyclopedia}, 437.
for the intention of the Sovereign Pontiff.”64 It was further supposed that attachment to all forms of sin was absent. Given these strict requirements to obtain a Plenary Indulgence, it would have been impossible for a mala cristiana to have such a remarkable item.

Drawing upon this solid connection between religious purity, Catholic performativity, and the possession of these holy issuances, Joan de Olague presented Sancho’s five indulgences and argued:

On behalf of Sancho de Yraycos, currently imprisoned…and only on his behalf…I present four Bulls and one Jubilee [belonging to Yraycos] to the prosecutor so he can understand that Sancho is very Catholic, and a faithful Christian, and very religious, and devout.65

More tangible than the standard arguments verbally proclaiming buena cristianidad, the indulgences offered a physical testimony to Sancho’s Christianity. Though the Court initially sentenced Sancho to five years’ exile, five days later it “revoked the declared sentence” and he was released.66

Arguments and proofs made by the defense to refute witchcraft allegations centered around Catholic acts, attendance at Mass, regular confession, and charitable works, all of which pointed to being a buena cristiana. While not all malas cristianas attracted accusations of witchcraft, it was the principle perception of witchcraft from

65 AGN, 69259 (1575), 109r: “En nombre de Sancho de Yraycos preso…en favor de mi parte tan solamente…hago presentación de cuatro bulas y de un Jubilo del dicho Yraycos contra el fiscal para que se entiende ser el dicho Sancho muy Católico y fiel cristiano y muy religiosa y devoto.”
66 AGN, 69259 (1575), 137r: “Revocar la dicha sentencia.”

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which villagers drew when indicting their neighbors for witchcraft. The villagers’ reports in Navarra differ from common traits found in other early modern witch trials where accusations focused on the Sabbath and the diabolical pact. Though magistrates and villagers of Navarra did not fixate on diabolical understandings of witchcraft as reflected in other regions, the diabolical dimension of witch belief remained present in their deep reservoir of witch belief.

4.4 Christianity Inverted

The prevailing notions of witchcraft in Navarra were informed by a Catholic mentalité, a local one that understood witches as malas cristianas, the opposite of good Christians. Most villagers’ reports did not extend their accusations to the witches’ Sabbath, complete with demonic sex, a diabolical pact, and feasting on the bodies of murdered infants. Navarra, a region with minimal reform efforts, and little influenced by the more spectacular demonological writings, did not concentrate on the inverted rites of Christianity.\(^6\) The concept of inversion, however, sometimes was reflected in witch trials, as casual concerns for Catholic performance sometimes morphed into diabolical anxieties.

\(^6\) Only two demonologies are mentioned in the thousands of folios of witness testimony and summaries by the Royal Court and Council of Navarra. These will be addressed in the following section.
In the context of a Christian world ruled by God, witchcraft held meaning as a religion shepherded by the Devil. Demonic witchcraft made sense in this world composed of inversions and oppositions with God and the Devil at the forefront of the battle for souls. Just as God had his religion, so did the Devil, with witches as his parishioners. As Henri Montaigne stated in 1612: “God has His rites...the devil his...God has his shrines, the devil his...God his martyrs, the devil his.” Witches were the ultimate Christian inversion; they were the devils’ sect. Witches represented the most extreme form of religious deviance: they renounced God, their baptism, and had promised their bodies and souls to the Devil in a diabolical pact. Their specific inversions of Christian belief and worship were epitomized in the descriptions of the Sabbath, commonly found in learned treatises. Though perhaps largely produced by theologians and the learned, the Sabbath represented a fusion of learned and common notions, and was present, though not predominant, in the reservoir of witch belief in Navarra.

Reports of inverted masses, iconoclasm, and diabolism pepper the witch trials of the Royal Tribunals in Navarra. From the early trial of Lope de Esparza in 1540 and

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69 Prominent demonologies that described the reality of Sabbath are: *De la demonomanie* (1580) by Jean Bodin, *Daemonolatria* by Nicolas Remy, and *Tableau de l’inconstance de mauvais anges et demons* (1612) by Pierre de Lancre. See Clark, *Thinking with Demons*.
throughout the trials of the sixteenth century, villagers’ reports and official court accusations often featured accounts of religious inversions, and sometimes, even included the Devil.\textsuperscript{71} It is noteworthy, however, that witch trials in Navarra did not highlight diabolism and the Sabbath to the extent that many other regions of early modern Europe did. The most prominent proof of witchcraft was simply being a \textit{mala cristiana}. Still, diabolism appeared in half a dozen trials, though these reports peaked in the witch trials of 1575-76, and often did not reflect the villagers’ reports, but rather a formulaic definition offered by the Royal Tribunals.

The pivotal witch trial from Anocibar in 1575 featured the Sabbath, the diabolical pact, and acts of iconoclasm.\textsuperscript{72} The Royal Court began their charges with:

In the locale of Anocibar and other [villages] of this region, are many people who with sorcery and diabolical arts, go invisibly and through the air...and kill many children and destroy and lose all which is sown. And they enter into the temples and spit on the crucifixes and the figures of the saints that are in them. And they do this every day and night.\textsuperscript{73}

The Court uncharacteristically and emphatically declared these witches must be punished to the fullest extent for something so “abominable and debased.”\textsuperscript{74} Given that

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\textsuperscript{71} The first official report of a witches’ mass in the case against many witches in Ochagavía in 1539, featured a reneging ceremony of God and the saints, meeting in fields and the town square to dance, spread poisons, and use toad powders and blood to murder infants and adults. AGN, 63994 (1540).

\textsuperscript{72} AGN, 69853 (1576).

\textsuperscript{73} AGN, 69853 (1576), 1r: “En el lugar de Anocibar y otros de su comarca hay muchas personas que con hechicerías y artes diabólicas se meten invisible y en el aire...y matan muchas criaturas y destruyen y pierden todo lo sembrado y entran en los templos y escupen a los crucifijos y bultos de santos que hay hallan.”

\textsuperscript{74} AGN, 69853 (1576), 1r: “Cosa tan abominable.”
witches were believed to be the exact opposite of “good Christians,” it is unsurprising they were persecuted with such vigor throughout many early modern European lands.

Another parody of Christianity was presented in the witch trial of Maria de Buenca and Martin de Yracoiz’s in 1576. Twenty-year-old villager Martin de Echalde provided a vivid description of the witches’ Sabbath and the ingredients used there for “poison to kill the vineyards and grains…one made with the arm of a baby to baptize [it], and with toad water.” In the ultimate inversion of the Holy Mass, the witches used a dead baby’s arm to bless the poisonous concoction, and then spread it on the fields to kill people and children. In lieu of holy water, the witches used toad water. Toads were viewed as despicable, and were associated with death and witchcraft in Navarra. Every detail in Martin’s deposition was an inversion of what was good, right, and normal. It, like witchcraft, was a demonic copy of Christianity.

The most detailed account of an inverted mass emerged from the trials of multiple villagers who were imprisoned by the Señor of Andueza, the powerful alcalde (territorial lord and magistrate) of Inza, and his son in their palace of Andueza. The accused villagers, most of them family members including several children, confessed to attending a Sabbath, adoring the devil, and engaging in diabolical sex. Soon after their

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75 AGN, 69259 (1576).
76 AGN, 69259 (1576), 14r: “Ponzoña para perder las viñas y panes…hacían con un brazo de criatura por bautizar y con agua de sapo.”
77 Toads were the ultimate representation of witch-hood in Navarra and will be discussed at length in Chapter IV.
78 AGN, 71319 (1595).
transfer to the Royal Tribunals in Pamplona, they recanted their confessions, claiming the powerful Andueza had forced their confessions with violent threats and false promises. This complicated testimony problematizes whose voices are reflected, but offers notions of the inverted Mass nonetheless. It is remarkable this was one of the few times a well-developed Sabbath was described in the one-hundred-and-fifty years of secular trial records. The accused villagers reported:

"Arriving in the field...there were two figures that were sitting in golden chairs. And the one figure was like that of a man...with two horns on his head...everything was very black...And the other figure was like that of a woman that was seated on the golden chair, with a pretty appearance and white, and dressed in green, with the face, hands, and feet of a woman."

Everything in this depiction held great meaning, even the detail of the golden chairs parodied the gilded altars and relics of the Holy Mother Church. The dark man and his white female consort reflected an inversion, suggesting perhaps she was the diabolical counterpart to the Virgin Mary. It was in front of these figures that the witches declared: "Belzebut and his consort are the true gods and saviors of all creation. And as such, to them we owe adoration. And at that point Maria Hernando renounced God, our Lord

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79 AGN, 71319 (1595), 116v-117r: “Llegando en el dicho campo...delante de dos figuras que estaban asentadas en dos sillas como doradas. Y la una figura era como de un hombre...y dos cuernos en la cabeza...todo era muy negro...Y la otra figura era como de mujer que estaba asentada en la dicha silla dorada con parecer hermoso y blanco y vestida de verde con rostro, manos, y pies de mujer.”

80 This usage of the term Beelzebub is interesting. Beelzebub “appears in the old Testament in I Kings 1:2-6, and is translated varying as Lord of Ekrorn or Lord of the Flies. It is used throughout the New Testament, and the specific name is found in demonologies by Joan Weyer and Peter Binsfeld, and used in confessions by the possessed nuns in Aix au Provence.”
and his Holy Catholic Faith, and his sacraments.”

All of the witches at this mass adored Belzebut “as their god and Lord...and reneged their Christian faith.”

The female witches, in the ultimate inversion of the Holy Kiss, “went kneeling on their knees on the ground and...Belzebut with his own hands lifted their skirts and in sequence they kissed his behind...Belzebut took the women...and publicly had [sexual] access with them.”

This left Maria Hernando’s white under garment “very bloodied.”

Not only did the devil engage in illicit sexual intercourse with all the women, he left at least one bloodied, in the most profane inversion of Christ’s holy blood spilled on the Cross.

The Catholic theology that informed this particular unholy mass in Navarra is reflected in the religious practices they parodied. The report concluded with the following testimony of the witches’ Sabbath:

All the people who were in the field renounced God our Lord and his Holy Faith, and they recognized Belzebut for the god. And as such they adored him and gave him reverence, and that he gave them permission to enter into his temples...pray and fast and give alms and confess all their sins. But the adoration and reverence they gave to the said Belzebut they did as to their god and Lord. And renounced of God our Lord and his Holy Faith and sacraments.
To be sure, there could be no greater inversion of Catholic rites and rituals than this witches’ Sabbath. An understanding of the concept of inversion, its prominence in demonologies, its role in informing early modern thought, and its enactments during Carnival and other festivals of misrule, all imbued these descriptions with meaning in the body of witch belief.

This notion of inversion also gave meaning to the more fantastical accusations found within the trial records. When Teresa de Ollo was accused of witchcraft in 1575, thirteen-year-old Catalina de Ybero recounted “hearing a sound like the singing of toads” and witnessing Teresa feed several toads bits of masticated bread.85 She also reported hearing “the other younger Teresa, [say] that those toads were her saints, and not the ones that were in the church.”86 Even this young witness couched subversive witch activity in terms of the inverse of Christianity. She reported Teresa, the mother, then gingerly picked up the toads and carried them in their kerchief. These toads represented more than unlettered, folkloric beliefs: they were grotesque manifestations of the diabolical church.

Taking the notion of mala cristiana to its extreme end in the witches’ Sabbath, shows the flexibility of witch belief. While the term mala cristiana usually implied weak Catholic performativity and infrequent attendance at Mass, it could also entail sacrilege,

85 AGN, 327744 (1576), 6r: “Oyeron un sonido como canto de sapos.”
86 AGN, 327744 (1576), 6r: “La otra Teresa, menor de días, que ellos sapos eran sus santos y no los que estaban en la iglesia.”
the diabolical pact, and unnatural sex with the devil. Regardless of its manifestation, from common villagers to the magistrates of the Royal Tribunals, the Catholic cosmos in early modern Navarra informed notions of witchcraft on every level.

4. 5 Christian Healing

Within prescribed limits, the Spanish church permitted healing in God’s name. The unique role of saludador demonstrates the fluid boundaries between the fields of medicine and religion in early modern Spain. The term saludador comes from “salud” meaning health, and saludadores were believed to possess healing powers and “bring health” to the sick, especially those affected by rabies.87 To be a saludador one had to possess special qualities that, according to popular understandings, were a divine gift from God bestowed upon a select few.88 Saludadores had the ability to not only cure ailments, but to also identify their cause, especially if an evil spirit or witchcraft was at play. It was generally accepted that saludadores also had the God-given ability to cure disease, detect witches, and to “drive away storms, combat plagues of locusts, stop fires from spreading, and even transform beings and things in the manner of the sages of pagan times.”89 This paid position provided a valuable function in a society that lacked an adequate number of trained physicians. For example, a report from 1625 noted: “

the Province of Guipúzcoa for the most part they have lived without doctors, but with simple medicines of herbs and ointments."90 Thus, *saludadores* accompanied and complemented untrained folk medicine in preserving the villagers' health. Nevertheless, this accepted power to heal was not completely without Church skepticism, and opinions among theologians were varied and unclear.

Despite their general acceptance, *saludadores* were also regarded with suspicion, as demonstrated by the arguments of the Spanish theologians Martin de Castañega and Pedro Ciruelo. Castañega felt their powers could be explained by their “virtue, which came from their natural complexion, itself the result of the balance of the four humors”91 Ciruelo, on the hand, condemned *saludadores*, calling them, “men of superstition, sorcerers and ministers of the Devil...'cheaters of simple folk', 'cursed deceivers of the world', 'contemptible drunks who travel the world proclaiming themselves *saludadores*.”92 Despite this harsh critique, he allowed for the existence of some “true” *saludadores*, provided they were examined and certified by a bishop, Inquisitor, or in some cases, a local official charged with this specific task. If the *saludador* was confirmed to possess these God-given powers of healing, he would be issued a license that allowed him to travel and perform his miracles. Even though this masculine power to heal was recognized, *saludadores* at times found themselves before the court for financial

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90 Aguirre Sorondo, “Los saludadores,” 315: “En la Provincia de Guipúzcoa por la mayor parte se han conservado sin médicos, con medicinas simples de yerbas, unciones”
92 Tausiet, “Healing Virtue,” 49.
deception, or the threat they posed to the authority of the Church and the world of learned medicine.

The official Church did not sanction female healing practices of any kind, but female healers were employed with frequency by villagers along all social strata. Though not formally endorsed by the church, feminine curative powers—even those that invoked the sacred—were also not aggressively attacked by clerical or secular authorities in Navarra. It is true that most cases involving heretical practices were tried by the Inquisition in Navarra, thus those cases did not appear before the Royal Tribunals. Still, deviations from religious legitimacy could expose healers to suspicions and accusations of sorcery or witchcraft, which could lead to prosecution within the secular court. There are only three extant cases of healers in the trials for sorcery brought before the Royal Court and Council of Navarra, two of which occurred in 1675, the last year the Royal Tribunals processed a trial of sorcery.

The trial of Milia de Otano in 1590 highlights how healing practices could lead to a sorcery trial, and how a Christian argument could be used in its defense. A well-known healer in the village of Ezquinoz, Milia had the “public voice and fama...that she knows how to unbind, conjure, and remedy such impediments.” She possessed the skills to improve fertility in people and animals, bring forth mothers’ breast milk and

\[\text{AGN, 148294 (1590).}\]
\[\text{AGN, 148294 (1590), 26r: “Publica voz y fama...que sabe desatar, conjurar, y remediar tales impedimentos.”}\]
help offspring nurse, and even pinpoint the cause of the ailments, usually by placing the blame on an “enemy.” Her healing practices were not restricted to herbs and poultices, though. Milia regularly incorporated Christian prayers and orders to attend Mass into her curative rituals.

Villagers turned to Milia with frequency. When twenty-four-year-old Maria de Biurran could not have sexual relations with her husband for many years, she and her family, including her father and husband, called upon Milia’s art of healing. Maria described Milia’s ritual healing in which her husband knelt and turned his face towards the sun, while Milia said “the Our Father and the Hail Mary three times.” Milia then ordered him to go to mass in the morning, and pointed to the culprit of their ligation: a cleric. Her curative efforts did not work, however, and left Maria with a “bad opinion” of her, which subjected Milia to the accusation that her cures were mere “deceptions.” Unfortunately, this sentiment was shared by many of Milia’s disgruntled clients.

It was not Milia’s heterodox healing, however, that brought her to the Court’s attention, but rather her “bad opinion of being a sorceress and charlatan and that she does not heal due to holiness or any particular grace.” Further, she was imprudent

95 AGN, 148294 (1590), 26r: “Tres veces el Pater Noster y la Ave María.”
96 AGN, 148294 (1590), 26r.
97 AGN, 148294 (1590), 17v: “Mala opinión”, “debe ser engaño.”
98 AGN, 148294 (1590), 22r: “Mala opinión de hechicera y engañadora y no que haga las dichas cosas por santidad ni gracia particular.”
when she accused reputable villagers of being the source of her clients’ ills. Interestingly, despite Milia’s heterodox healing rituals, not a single villager accused her of witchcraft.

The Royal Court’s first article underscored the importance of religion and charged: “She does not attend church on holidays, not even sometimes, and has the reputation of being a mala cristiana.”99 Not only did she have mala fama, she made the error of blaming “principled people, in quality and in virtue and in life, honest and exemplary and very Catholic.”100 When Milia blamed the buena cristiana Catalina de Bigunia for another villager’s illness, it exposed Milia to suspicions. This was further complicated by her reputation for causing impediments to reoccur or worsen if she was not satisfied with her payment. The ability to heal also implied the ability to harm, an aspect of healing that presented many dangers. Fortunately for Milia, healers were not actively persecuted in Navarra, and she was not subjected to accusations of witchcraft. Milia was never sentenced and was, presumably, released. Not all healers in Navarra were so lucky, however.

In 1647, two healers in Pamplona were accused of being “witches and sorceresses...[and] having caused many evils to many people... and children with their

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99 AGN, 148294 (1590), 1r: “No acude a la iglesia los días de fiesta, a lo menos pocas veces, está en reputación de mala cristiana.”
100 AGN, 148294 (1590), 1r: “No acude a la iglesia los días de fiesta, a lo menos pocas veces, está en reputación de mala cristiana.” “Personas principales en calidad y en virtud y en vida honesta y ejemplar y muy Católica.”
spells and superstitions.” Dozens of witnesses testified to the healing practices of Maria de Ollo and Maria de Yrisarri, but these were paired with their ability to harm. Neither Maria denied her curative powers, but rather framed their abilities in terms of their Christian origin and influence. In her confessions, seventy-eight-year-old Maria de Yrisarri confirmed she was a healer, but did so within a Christian framework. Maria confessed, “It is true and I confess that...I was called to heal some sick person, I healed them saying the words of the Father, the Son, and Holy Ghost.” She did not conceal her healing practices, which included performing prayers and blessings, a heterodox practice for a woman. Rather, she justified her practice by relying on masculine legitimacy, explaining:

And the reason for saying the prayers and healing them has been because the Abbott of the town of Atondo, now deceased, looked at the lines of her hands one day, and told her that she possessed a particular Grace of God. And by saying these prayers and giving some blessings, with this she would remedy the sick and others, and with this, he said she could do much good.

She claimed she began curing when the Abbot told her she possessed a gift from God and as such, she was called to cure in God’s name. Her willingness to openly confess this

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101 AGN, 16058 (1647), 97r: “Opinión de brujas y hechiceras...han hecho muchos males a muchas personas...y a criaturas con sus hechizos y supersticiones.”
102 AGN, 16058 (1647), 45r: “Que es verdad e confiesa que en las ocasiones que ha sido llamada a santiguar alguno enfermo, los a santiguaba diciéndoles las palabras del Padre, Hijo, y Espíritu Santo.”
103 AGN, 16058 (1647), 45r-v: “Que es verdad e confiesa que en las oraciones que ha sido llamada a santiguar alguno enfermo, los a santiguaba diciéndoles las palabras del Padre, Hijo, y Espíritu Santo...y que la causa de hacer dicho las oraciones y santiguado ha sido porque el Abad del lugar de Atondo, difunto, le dijo un día mirándole a la raya de las manos, que tenía particular Gracia de Dios y que diciendo las dichas oraciones y haciéndoles unas bendición con eso se remedirían los enfermos y demás de esto le dijo que podía hacer mucho bien.”
suggests that local religion in Navarra allowed for lay participation in activities typically reserved for clerical officials. Maria Yrisarri saw no wrong in her healing practices and denied all *maleficia*.

Maria Yrisarri’s colleague, Maria de Ollo, reluctantly confessed to healing, but eventually described her healing practices as resting on Divine prayers and invocations. Maria admitted that she had cured a little girl with “herbs and whale grease” with the following ritual:

She confessed and declared that she cures by virtue of the words: “Our Lord Christ was born, died, and was resurrected. Saint Ann gave birth to our Lady. And our Lady to Jesus Christ our Lord and Saint Isabel and Saint John”...in virtue of these words this person shall be without any more pain.104

Though she did employ some medicinal ingredients, the efficacy in her healing was of a divine nature, through the words and entreaties of her Christian prayers. Prayers appear to have been a common accompaniment to herbal and medicinal forms of healing, and thus cannot alone explain why some healers, though few, attracted sorcery accusations. The various testimonies suggest that these women had the misfortune of offending or upsetting disgruntled customers, or carelessly accused the wrong people of being the

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104 AGN, 16058 (1647), 84r: “Con hierbas y aceite ballena. Y más confeso y declaro que cura en virtud de las palabras: ‘Nuestro Señor Cristo, nació, murió, y resucito. Santa Ana parto a nuestra señora. Y nuestra señora a Jesucristo nuestro Señor y Santa Isabel a San Juan y así Jesucristo nuestro Señor---que en virtud de las palabras esta persona sin quedar más dolor ni palmo que quedo en el---de nuestro Señor Jesucristo de la lanea que se dio conjuros se cure de esta enfermedad.”
source of curses and ills. Their cases were transferred to the Inquisition due to their “heretical” nature, and both died in prison as they awaited sentencing.\footnote{This will be further discussed in Chapter V.}

The last case of sorcery in the secular court of Navarra involved Maria Esparza, a healer from the village of Esparza.\footnote{AGN, 17176 (1675).} In 1675, Maria de Esparza was accused of “using spells and superstitions,” and imprisoned by the Royal Court.\footnote{AGN, 17176 (1675), 1r: “Sospecha que usas hechizos y supersticiones.”} During her interrogation, Maria admitted to saying prayers for the ill in exchange for alms, as she was a poor widow without material goods. When asked exactly what prayers she said over one of her ill clients, Maria de Ciriza, Maria testified: “She said ‘Three Our Fathers and three Ave Marias and three Gloria Patris; and to all the Saints of the Heavens, three Credos and three Gloria Patris. And to the spirits of purgatory, five Our Fathers and twenty Ave Marias and as many Gloria Patris.’”\footnote{AGN, 17176 (1675), 13r: “Dijo que tres Paternostres y tres Ave Marias y tres Gloria Patris y a todos los Santos y Santas del cielo tres Credos y tres Gloria Patris. A las ánimas del purgatorio cinco Paternostres y veinte Ave Marias y otros tantos Gloria Patris y diciendo las dichas oraciones.”} She went on to underscore the necessity of divine favor for her healing to work, clarifying: “As she said the prayers...she was always pleading to God...And by means of these prayers, and with God’s favor, she has cured [people], without any of them dying.”\footnote{AGN, 17176 (1675), 13r: “pidiendo a Dios siempre... las dichas oraciones con el favor de dios, los ha curado sin que se le haya muerto ninguna.”} The prayers worked by God’s divine favor, not through her own efforts. Similar to Maria de Yrisarri, when questioned about the roots of her ability to heal, she invoked the authorization bestowed

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\textsuperscript{105} This will be further discussed in Chapter V.
\textsuperscript{106} AGN, 17176 (1675).
\textsuperscript{107} AGN, 17176 (1675), 1r: “Sospecha que usas hechizos y supersticiones.”
\textsuperscript{108} AGN, 17176 (1675), 13r: “Dijo que tres Paternostres y tres Ave Marias y tres Gloria Patris y a todos los Santos y Santas del cielo tres Credos y tres Gloria Patris. A las ánimas del purgatorio cinco Paternostres y veinte Ave Marias y otros tantos Gloria Patris y diciendo las dichas oraciones.”
\textsuperscript{109} AGN, 17176 (1675), 13r: “pidiendo a Dios siempre... las dichas oraciones con el favor de dios, los ha curado sin que se le haya muerto ninguna.”

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\textsuperscript{105} This will be further discussed in Chapter V.
\textsuperscript{106} AGN, 17176 (1675).
\textsuperscript{107} AGN, 17176 (1675), 1r: “Sospecha que usas hechizos y supersticiones.”
\textsuperscript{108} AGN, 17176 (1675), 13r: “Dijo que tres Paternostres y tres Ave Marias y tres Gloria Patris y a todos los Santos y Santas del cielo tres Credos y tres Gloria Patris. A las ánimas del purgatorio cinco Paternostres y veinte Ave Marias y otros tantos Gloria Patris y diciendo las dichas oraciones.”
\textsuperscript{109} AGN, 17176 (1675), 13r: “pidiendo a Dios siempre... las dichas oraciones con el favor de dios, los ha curado sin que se le haya muerto ninguna.”

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\textsuperscript{106} AGN, 17176 (1675).
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\textsuperscript{108} AGN, 17176 (1675), 13r: “Dijo que tres Paternostres y tres Ave Marias y tres Gloria Patris y a todos los Santos y Santas del cielo tres Credos y tres Gloria Patris. A las ánimas del purgatorio cinco Paternostres y veinte Ave Marias y otros tantos Gloria Patris y diciendo las dichas oraciones.”
\textsuperscript{109} AGN, 17176 (1675), 13r: “pidiendo a Dios siempre... las dichas oraciones con el favor de dios, los ha curado sin que se le haya muerto ninguna.”

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upon her by a masculine religious figure. She explained that her uncle, the Abbott of Antaiz, had taught her the prayers and gave her a rosary some forty years before and told her, “with the Grace of God, she would cure all the sick ones.” Maria confessed to healing, while denying she had ever caused harm through her practices.

Maria de Esparza’s unusually thorough interrogation yielded details about her healing practice that demonstrated the centrality of Christian ritual while also showing the dangerous line between the sacred and the superstitious. For example, she admitted to curing a woman who failed to produce breast milk with only her rosary around the mother’s neck, some prayers, and holy water. Maria credited these religious objects exclusively with the woman’s immediate and successful lactation. However, when questioned why she “chose” to heal this mother but not an ill boy from the village, she responded it was because the boy’s curse was “deeper” than the mother’s. She then accused Maria de Senossaiyn of the curse, with the explanation that Maria’s face resembled a witch’s. In a surprising twist, Maria then launched into a detailed accusation of her deceased husband. While she maintained she did not know how to curse, Maria recounted a long history of maleficia committed by her husband, including weather magic, a diabolical pact, and attendance at the “aquelarres,” a Basque word for

\[\text{\footnotesize 110 AGN, 17176 (1675), 13v: “Con la Gracias de Dios curara a todos los enfermos.”}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize 111 AGN, 17176 (1675), 13v: “Muy adentro.”}\]
\[\text{\footnotesize 112 AGN, 17176 (1675), 13r-14r.}\]
the Sabbath that no trial record had referenced in fifty-years. Unfortunately for Maria de Esparza, her accusation against her husband backfired and the Court found her complicit in his *maleficia*, and a group of medical doctors surprisingly declared a death she had been blamed for as caused by sorcery. Maria was sentenced to ten years of exile. This trial suggests that it was not Maria’s healings practices that were problematic, but that the healer was Maria de Esparza, a problematic woman and neighbor.

4. 6 The Priest-Witch

Church officials, from parish priests to Vicars and Bishops, participated in trials of witchcraft in a variety of capacities. In addition to relaying accusations, and testifying in the proceedings, they also delivered the last rites to witches dying in prison, and in one case, acted as an exorcist during a torture session. While two trials were instigated by priest accusations, it is common to find testimony *on behalf* of the accused within the trials. Clerical voices were present in the records, but not overly represented or necessarily privileged over other testimonies. Many witches were still sentenced despite impeccable defenses from clerics. Given all these clerical roles in witch trials, were clerics ever themselves accused of witchcraft?

The single trial of witchcraft that fell to the ecclesiastical court of Pamplona was that of the witch-priest, Don Pedro de Lecumberri, from the village of Burgui (in the

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113 AGN, 17176 (1675), 13r-14r.
This complex witch trial began with the local *alcalde* of Burgui in July of 1569, was then referred to the ecclesiastical court in Pamplona, transferred to the curia of Zaragoza, referred to the Inquisition (where it was rejected), and was ultimately reintroduced to the ecclesiastical tribunal of Pamplona, where it was finally concluded in December of 1570. This unusual trial lasted over a year and a half, passed through several jurisdictions, and involved a priest who was loved by some, and hated by others. This long trial could be the subject of its own study, but for the purposes of this chapter, this section focus only on the religious inversions emerging from the testimony.

Thirty-five-year-old Pedro Lecumberri, a popular cleric in Burgui, a village of some one hundred hearths, was denounced to the *alcalde* for witchcraft and having a small sect of female witches. Three other members of his supposed sect were accused alongside him: Maria Gracieta, age sixty; her daughter Maria Garat, and her granddaughter, seven-year-old Gracieta. The reports against them relied heavily on child testimony, a feature in witchcraft accusations that was common to varying extents throughout early modern Europe. The first accusations came from Andella Garat, eight years’ old, who declared that she was asked to join the accused in a field while she was

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114 This differs from the ecclesiastical court of Aragon which treated eight trials of witchcraft. See Maria Tausiet, *Urban Magic in Early Modern Spain* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014). Though several other trials are listed as “brujería” in the *Archivo Diocesano de Pamplona* (ADP), only this trial reflects a true trial of persons fingered as witches.

115 This section draws from several sources: the original 235 folio trial dossier in the ADP, the section on this case found in Idoate, *La brujería en Navarra y sus documentos*, 74-87, and new local work dedicated to this fascinating case, Felix Sanz Zabalza, *Las brujas de Burgui* (Navarra: Editorial Evidencia Medica, 2013).

116 ADP, Aguinaga, Carton 13, n. 17 (1570), 27r.
tending her father’s sheep. They offered her some food, but instead “they gave her to eat a roasted toad with bread …and they disavowed God and Santa Maria and their mother and father and godparents.” In an inversion of all that is good, the little girl was given vile meat and told to join them in adjuring God, Holy Maria, and her kin.

Transcending the inversion emerging from other trials in Navarra, the accusations in the case of Burgui included the Devil, desecration of sacred objects, and the obscene kiss (an inversion of the kiss of peace in the Christian Eucharist). Sixty-year-old Sebastian Baldan, the grandfather of one of the young girls who had been induced to participate in these inverted masses, reported seeing “something black had emerged like a goat with horns…and Gracieta walked over to it and kissed it under its tail.” Similarly, seven-year-old Catalina Bront reported the anal kiss and other diabolical acts she engaged in as part of Lecumberri’s witch sect. Catalina reported that they assembled along the river and while Lecumberri danced with the other women and girls, she and Maria Garat “tried to catch live toads from the water and they killed them with a knife to the throat.” Afterwards, Maria Garat instructed the girls to: “Disavow, little girls, God and our Holy Mother Saint Maria and all the male saints and female saints.”

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117 Idoate, La brujería, documento 57: “Les dieron de merendar un sapo asado con pan…y renegasen de Dios y de Santa María y de sus padres y de sus madres y de sus padrinos y madrinas.”

118 ADP, Aguinaga, Carton 13, n. 17 (1570), 42r: “Ha salido una cosa negra con cuernos a manera de cabra…y andando la dicha Gracieta la beso debajo de la cola.”

119 ADP, Aguinaga, Carton 13, n. 17 (1570), 48r: “Solía traer sapos vivos del agua y los mataba con un cuchillo por la garganta.”

120 ADP, Aguinaga, Carton 13, n. 17 (1570), 48r: “Reniega, niñas, a de Dios y nuestra Señora Santa María y de todos los santos y santas.”
then feasted on toad flesh, which was black and had an odious flavor. Catalina reported that on another occasion “after dancing…they collected manure and with some little sticks they anointed the feet of [Jesus on] the cross…and they made obscene gestures to all the crosses.”\textsuperscript{121}

These reports demonstrate that both malas cristianas and toads held great meaning for the ecclesiastical tribunal of Pamplona. Andella Garate reported seeing the accused witches, Gracieta and Maria Garat by the river and “they had in their skirts three toads with little bells on them, and they were shaking them with their hands.”\textsuperscript{122} The accused witches were making music with the toads in an inversion of the sacred choral sounds of the church. As the women and girls sat there, shaking their belled toads, Andella was shocked when “and then out of the pond emerged something like a toad with horns,” at which Maria point said “Jesus” and it disappeared.\textsuperscript{123} This toad with horns, emerging from the lake like Excalibur, is only one of the many references made in this trial to horned toads.

Pedro de Lecumberri denied any involvement in a witches’ sect, as did his female accomplices. The bulk of the testimonies came from young girls, and it is possible that Lecumberri was engaged in inappropriate relationships with one of the women,

\textsuperscript{121} ADP, Aguinaga, Cartón 13, n. 17 (1570), 84r: “Después de danzar…cogieron estiércol y con unas ramillas untaban el pie de la cruz…y les daban higas a las cruces.”\textsuperscript{122} ADP, Aguinaga, Cartón 13, n. 17 (1570), 55r: “Tenían entre sus faldas tres sapos con sus cascabeles, y con los manos los meneaban.”\textsuperscript{123} ADP, Aguinaga, Cartón 13, n. 17 (1570), 60v: “Salía de una balsa una cosa como un sapo con cuernos.”
and perhaps other parishioners, as questions about his carnal acts emerged throughout the interrogations. The Inquisition rejected this case due to the young age of the witnesses, an irregularity that was also noted by the accused witches’ procurador, the Bishop of Saragossa, and the Vicar General of Pamplona. In the end, Pedro de Lecumberri and the three generations of women (grandmother, daughter, and granddaughter) were all absolved. Lecumberri, however, was to have no interactions with any of them again.

Though this trial featured inversion and gross sacrilege, at no point did it spiral into a witch-hunt or widen its net. As the trial passed through various jurisdictions, the reports were met with skepticism as to the realities of the accusations, concerns about the tender age of the key witnesses, and general incredulity about the entire scenario. The ecclesiastical tribunal, much like the Inquisition’s tribunal at Logroño and the Royal Tribunals, approached witch trials with moderation and restraint. This overall atmosphere in Navarra was reflected in, and perhaps influenced by, the religious treatises that spoke of witchcraft in the region.

\[\text{124 Sanz Zabalza, } \textit{Las brujas de Burgui}, 149-150.\]
\[\text{125 Idoate, } \textit{La brujería}, 78-82.\]
\[\text{126 ADP, Aguinaga, Cartón 13, n. 17 (1570), 234r.}\]
4. 7 Religious Writings and Witchcraft

Throughout the fifteenth and eighteenth centuries, intellectuals published a large corpus of witchcraft literature, relating their beliefs, doubts and debates about witchcraft. Housed in these writings, often called demonologies, are the doctrines of early modern European theologians, clergymen, natural philosophers, jurists, and intellectuals. These demonological writings were by no means limited to theologians, but reflected a common Christian theology, offering invaluable insights into the world of demons, the devil, and, witches. Though religious reformers composed dozens of demonological treatises, this section will focus on the four demonological writings, composed by theologians, that relate to the witch trials of Navarra. Three of these writings were composed before the Council of Trent’s first meeting in 1545, reflecting that Spain’s concern for unorthodox beliefs predated Tridentine reforms.

The witch trials in Pamplona only mentioned two writings: Reprobación de las supersticiones y hechicerías (1537) by Pedro Ciruelo, a theologian from Aragon, and Disquisitiones magicæ (1608), by the Jesuit theologian Martin del Rio. To these, this section adds De superstitionibus (1517), composed by the canon of Pamplona, Martin Arles y Andosilla, and Un tratado muy sotil y bien fundado (1529), a treatise composed by

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127 Clark argues that there is no “pure” demonology, but these writings were embedded within intellectual debates about religion, nature, science and politics. Witchcraft theory was not written in isolation and relied upon a whole range of intellectual commitments to make sense. Clark, Thinking with Demons, viii.
128 Rather oddly, they were cited by medical doctors arguing that a death was caused by to death by sorcery. See the case of María de Esparza, AGN, 17176 (1675).
the Jesuit Martin de Castañega, and inspired by the magistrate Balanza’s trials in 1525. All of these theologians conceived of witchcraft within a religious framework, and while they believed in the reality of *malas cristianas*, witches, they did not fixate on the demonological aspects featured in many other popular demonologies, such as Heinrich Kramer’s popular *Malleus maleficarum* (1478). This lack of sensational demonological writings and thought, produced by local theologians and read by the learned magistrates and doctors, contributed to Navarra’s relatively mild witch-hunting.

In 1517, the canon of Pamplona, Martin Arles y Andosilla, composed *De superstitionibus* (1510), a treatise aimed at warning against the prominent superstitious beliefs and practices found throughout the mountains of Navarra.\(^{129}\) As is the case with many other demonologies, his work was situating within a broader concern for correcting unorthodox behaviors, such as the folk practice in Lumbier of carrying an effigy of Saint Paul to the river to induce rain.\(^{130}\) Andosilla also cautioned against belief in witches, the evil eye, the ability of evildoers to bind couples, tricks of the devil, and even non-maleficent magic.\(^{131}\) Andosilla’s work differed sharply from the diabolical trend of demonologies such as the *Malleus maleficarum*, argued against the reality of witchcraft, and claimed that such beliefs of night flight were “false opinion.”\(^{132}\) Drawing


from and citing the *Canon episcopi*, Andosilla’s treatise, *De superstitionibus*, cautioned Navarra’s population against belief in witchcraft, sorcery, and other superstitions.

The witch trials led by Judge Pedro Balanza of Navarra’s Royal Council inspired the first demonological treatise composed in the vernacular, *Un tratado muy sotil y bien fundado* (1529), composed by the Franciscan friar Martin de Castañega. A theologian and reformer, Castañega often relied upon biblical quotes, and cited church fathers such as St. Augustine and St. Thomas Aquinas. Compared to other demonologists, Castañega maintained a skeptical position regarding possession, bewitchments and conjurations. While Castañega confirmed the existence of witchcraft and the diabolical church (as was the case with most all demonologies,) he omitted many of the fantastical and sexual tropes of works such as the *Malleus Maleficarum*. Despite his moderate and skeptical thinking, Castañega unquestionably believed in witchcraft and his work reflected the view of the world of witches as the inversion of the world of the faithful. He argued “There are two churches on earth: the Catholic and the diabolical...As in the Catholic Church there are sacraments ordained and established by Christ, so in the diabolical church there are execrations ordained and fixed by his ministers.”

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134 While Heinrich Kramer’s *Malleus maleficarum* has been credited with being the most influential demonology, it was not widely read in Spain. The *Malleus* was not mentioned in any of the witch trials of Navarra, under any of the three jurisdictions.
witchcraft as the inversion of Catholicism, and he called the Devil’s rituals “excrements” in opposition to the Church’s sacraments. Castañega’s treatise offered a real, yet skeptical understanding of witchcraft, and while it enjoyed some popularity, in part because it was the first independent book on witchcraft composed in a vernacular language to reach print (earlier books were translated from Latin), it was surpassed by the work of his colleague, Pedro Ciruelo.

Pedro Ciruelo composed Reprobación de las supersticiones y hechicerías in 1537, warning Christians to avoid superstitions, sorcery, and things that only “God could and should know.” The first section was dedicated to the arts of divination, while the second part concerned itself with sorcery, both which is warned against, urging true believers to avoid these arts. Ciruelo’s treatise condemned all forms of divinations, including necromancy, predictive astrology, augury, palmistry, and dream interpretation. In his second section on superstitions, he condemned using spoken or written curses, charms, superstitious prayers, and the evil eye, denouncing the activities of unofficial healers. As with Del Rio’s work, Ciruelo’s main concern was encouraging

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137 Darst, “Witchcraft in Spain,” 308.
proper Catholic practices, and discouraging seduction by knowing things that are occult to humankind for a reason.

The Jesuit theologian, Martin del Rio, composed *Disquisitiones magicae* (1608), which adamantly warned against all magic. Reprinted more than twenty times, it enjoyed the second greatest popularity of any demonological treatise after the *Malleus Maleficarum* (Heinrich Kramer, 1486). He admonished Catholics against the lure of magical studies, and sought to prevent them from falling into heresy. Del Rio confirmed the crimes committed by witches were not mere fantasies, but occurred in reality, but did not launch into sordid details of diabolism and the Sabbath as did Pierre de Lancre, for example. Catholic propriety was his main focus, and his emphasis rested on the hope and legitimate succor that only the Holy Mother Church could offer people.

Demonologies were, in many regards, reforming texts aimed at correcting unorthodox Christian behaviors. Demonologists often learned from the courts about the possible activities of witchcraft, while simultaneously developing a rational doctrine of evil, and reaffirming that diabolical powers were real. They reflected established common witch beliefs, while also forming and shaping new notions of witchcraft. They influenced judicial procedures, and created a learned body of witchcraft literature; one as varied and nuanced as witch beliefs were themselves. Regardless of where they are

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positioned in terms of skepticism, fantastical focuses, or goals of Christian reform, all these demonologies held one truth in common: witchcraft was the inversion of true Christianity. The demonologies emerging from the records in Navarra, however, all approached this fact with a restrained pen, one that focused on Catholic propriety and the avoidance of the seductions of the occult, and did not draw out the witches’ Sabbath in its grotesque depictions.143

4. 8 Conclusion

Witch belief in Navarra was informed by and understood within its particular religious’ contexts. Unlike other regions of early modern Europe that experienced aggressive religious reform efforts, Spain’s reformation had a long and moderate history, and clashes among the confessions were absent due to Spain’s Catholic homogeneity. Religion in Spain was localized and centered around Catholic acts and participation in the local church, outward demonstrations of being a buena cristiana and a good neighbor. Though not all malas cristianas were witches, all witches were malas cristianas. Operating under this conceptual framework, accusers sought to discredit the religiosity of the accused, and pointed to their deficits in Catholic performativity and Christian responsibilities. Meanwhile, procuradores defended their clients with

143 Though Pierre de Lancre was inspired by witchcraft in the Basque region when he composed his fantastical demonology, Tableau de l’inconstance (1614), it is improbable that it had any impact on the population of Navarra.
declarations of their *buena cristianidad*, and turned to proofs found in their ancestral heritage, their Catholic knowledge, attendance at Mass, and in one richly documented trial, the possession of Catholic indulgences. While this was the predominant manifestation of the Christian world of witchcraft, more sinister notions of religious inversion, the witches’ Sabbath, and diabolism existed within the deep reservoir of witch belief in Navarra. As reflected in several trials, including the witch-priest of Burgui, the witches’ Sabbath was well-known in Navarra. But the magistrates, neighbors, and theologians in Navarra did not exhibit great interest in pursuing that strand of witch belief. Though demonological writings were produced in, inspired by, and read in Navarra, none of them fixated on the more nefarious witchcraft tropes, as did many demonologies in the early modern period. These factors, that were reciprocal and related, shaped both witchcraft, and the mild and restrained persecution of witches, in Navarra.
5. The Village Voices

In the early spring months of 1576, the small village of Piedramillera, nestled in the northernmost corner of Navarra, searched for witches. The villagers of this tiny town of only eighteen hearths had little difficulty with this task. Sixty-eight-year-old Martin de Ansín was quick to identify the village witches: Maria de la Peña, Maria de Arana, and Maria de San Joan. He was cautious to report, however, that he could neither accuse them of any particular act of witchcraft nor relate details about suspicious activities. He could only report that “the people suspect them and say that they are witches, but beyond that, he knows nothing.”¹ While Martin’s report was vague, sixteen other villagers furnished the court with a hefty list of accusations against the Marias.² In addition to their notoriety, or fama, the villagers accused the three Marias of a total of fourteen different transgressions. Maria de la Peña was accused of taking the life of Juana Locana following an altercation, while at the same time, suspiciously sparing the life of a grotesque toad.³ Maria de San Juan was reportedly spotted in her white dressing gown in the countryside at midnight, causing neighbors to suspect she was sprinkling “poisonous venoms throughout the fields and crops.”⁴ Finally, Maria de Arana, it was

¹ AGN, 11195 (1576), 8r: “No sabe declara auto ninguno en particular y de ninguna de ellas sino solo lo que se dice que son brujas y las gentes tienen sospecha de que los son y que más no sabe.”
² AGN, 11195 (1576), 1r-17r.
³ AGN, 11195 (1576), 27v.
⁴ AGN, 11195 (1576), 28r: “Echando polvos venenosos por los campos y sembrados.”
said, notoriously cherished a corpulent toad, measuring in at four fingers’ wide, hanging from her door for all to see.\(^5\)

The Royal Tribunals of Navarra issued a separate set of charges against the three Marias. The formal accusation charged the Marias with attending “witches’ assemblies at night in the fields with many other male and female witches” where they used poisonous powders to destroy the fields and crops, and murder their neighbors, especially children, causing “great harm to the republic of this kingdom.”\(^6\) Though the Tribunals’ charges did not always faithfully represent the depositions given by the villagers, they reflected a fusion between the concerns of the peasantry, and the stereotypes forged by judges and clerics. It was this very diversity, texture, and malleability of the accusations—observable only through an intimate examination of records at the local level—that supported the world of witch beliefs and imbued it with meaning.

The cache of witch trial records found in the archives of the Royal Court and Council of Navarra offers an exceptionally rich glimpse into how villagers conceived of, crafted, and adapted, witch beliefs.\(^7\) While the Inquisition usually treated crimes of witchcraft in Spain, the fiercely independent Royal Tribunals of Navarra deftly

\(^5\) AGN, 11195 (1576), 6v.
\(^6\) AGN, 11195 (1576), 18r: “Juntos en compañía de otros brujos y brujas en ayuntamientos de brujos en noches en los campos”; “se han hallado muy grande daño de la republica de este Reino.”
\(^7\) The records of the Royal Court and Council of Navarra are housed in the Archivo General de Navarra (referred to as AGN), in Pamplona, Spain.
appropriated dozens of witch trials over one-hundred-and-fifty years, yielding thousands of folios of depositions from a large spectrum of the population. The village voices found in these sources represent those of farmers, fishermen, net-makers, magistrates, clerics, fathers, mothers, children, cobblers, servants, and town mayors, permitting an intimate exploration of everyday witch belief at the village level. The Tribunals’ legal procedures differed sharply from the more standardized inquisitorial process favored at the time. Produced under the older interrogation procedure, these records allowed for open-ended statements and discursive depositions from villagers, and did not favor the testimonies of the jurists, doctors, and the elite. These exceptional sources, rare for early modern Europe, invite an extraordinary glimpse into everyday witch belief.

This belief system becomes occluded in studies privileging areas or episodes of intense persecutions, thus making the depositions in Navarra a superb source-base to research quotidian witch beliefs. As noted by witchcraft scholar Erik Midelfort, “historians have usually focused on the worst cases, the chain reactions, the ‘panics.’ We now have a growing library of books...(conference volumes and collections of essays) that follow this model more or less faithfully.” 8 Similarly, scholarship on witchcraft in Spain has fixated on the single witch panic of 1609, and on witch trials treated by the

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Spanish Inquisition. My work seeks instead to understand the more commonplace world of everyday witch beliefs by treating witchcraft in terms of its relationship within the religious, legal, and social structures that supported it.

This chapter seeks to answer the question: What was the nature of everyday witch belief as it was expressed by common villagers? The diverse and lengthy testimonies command hundreds of folios of text, making a treatment of every concept of witchcraft shared by every witness impossible. Given this extensive source base, I confine my analysis to the most prominent themes reflected in the sources. The first section analyzes the most common ideas about witches and witchcraft: the central role of *fama* and reputations; the corollary of kinship; the centrality of toads in witch belief; and the formulaic definitions promoted by the Royal Tribunals at times during times of increased witch prosecutions. The next section examines the functional role of witchcraft as a tool for revenge that, on occasion, emerged from the records. I conclude this chapter with a belief almost absent from the depositions: the few, soft voices of skeptical thought. Bringing these villagers’ voices together, I argue that witchcraft and witch belief was multifaceted, variable, and impervious to strict definitions; and villagers eclectically drew from a vast reservoir of witch belief to craft their witches.
5.1 Mala fama, voz publica

Though witness testimonies varied and even contradicted one another, common notions of what a witch did, and most importantly—who the witch was—prevailed. The collective designation of the specific witch lay at the heart of witch trials. The trial record of Navarra elucidates how village voices created their witches by relying on common opinion and reputation. The language used to designate a witch: “mala Cristiano,” “bruja,” “hechicera,” combined with mala fama and voz publica, are found throughout the individual accusations. A witch accusation was usually provoked by a bad reputation (mala fama), and promoted by the public voice (voz publica). This combination of mala fama and voz publica was echoed throughout the witness testimonies, and elucidates how the language of witchcraft (mala fama, voz publica) was employed to designate witches and how this stigma in turn reinforced its designations. The identifying pair of signifiers fama and voz was self-evident, and many witnesses responded to interrogations seeking witches with the simple report that the accused had mala fama, suggesting that, at times, witches were defined by fama alone. Mala fama as the principle identifier of the witch is found in a quarter of witch trials in Navarra, revealing its importance. Informed by behavioral norms and expectations, performativity in Catholic practice, and kinship and social ties, mala fama was crucial—and palpable—to villagers of a social strata.

The mala fama of some accused witches was often long-lived and ubiquitous. In 1560 the voices in the village of Vidángoiz spoke in almost unanimous agreement:
Graciana Belca was not only a witch, she single-handedly orchestrated each and every misfortune that befell its inhabitants. The sixty-eight-year-old widow had almost twenty villagers testify to her thievery, craft for using herbs to damage all life (plant, animal, and human), and murder. Voices resoundingly designated her a “mala cristiana, sorceress, witch.”\(^9\) Plentiful and detailed accusations against her yielded an official list of alleged deeds that commanded over three folios. Every kerchief missing from a drying rack, every failed crop, animal death, and even several human deaths, were attributed to Graciana’s maleficia. Voice after voice echoed similar though not exact accusations; though all agreed: “She has caused great ill and death with sorceries.”\(^10\) The village voices had created its witch; repetition of this utterance, and an unending supply of misfortune, supported this status.

Exact conformity among village voices was not the typical pattern in testimonies, and even Graciana’s case presents differing levels of suspicion. Several witnesses acknowledged their awareness of her mala fama, but did not know “anything more”, and one witness outright defended the notorious witch. The parish priest, sixty-year-old Joan de Echinede, asserted that he had known Graciana for more than thirty years “and he regards her as a person of good living, fama, dealings, and reputation.”\(^11\) Such a disconsonant voice demonstrates that the language of witchcraft, though understood by

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\(^9\) AGN, 211115 (1560).
\(^10\) AGN, 211115 (1560), 21r: “Mala cristiana, hechicera, bruja.”
\(^11\) AGN, 211115 (1560), 12r: “Ha hecho mucho mal y ha muerto con hechizos.”
\(^12\) AGN, 211115 (1560), 51v: “Y tiene por persona de buena vida, fama, tratos, y reputación.”
villagers at all levels, was not necessarily shared uncritically by all; at least not at the individual level. But the court dismissed the cleric’s voice, and citing the thunderous roar of her accusations, the fiscal (prosecutor) ordered her to be interrogated under torture.

Drawing on the power of mala fama to support the torture, the fiscal Licenciado Ovando argued: “The [torture] sentence should be confirmed and executed because...the evidences against the accused of many and diverse and atrocious crimes that she has committed and done, and the witnesses that bear witness to them are many and very legal and sufficient.” 13 The Licenciado Ovando even elaborated on the validity and merit of the fama, pointing out that if any of the witnesses were seeking revenge through their accusations, this would be public knowledge as well. But rather her fama was confirmed “with the large number of witnesses who bear witness against her of many differing things, and especially considering the fact that all of the witnesses are people of good living, customs, and fama, and good Christians.” 14 Ovando centered his arguments not on her atrocious crimes, but on her mala fama and the consonance among the village voices that pointed to her wickedness. He then confirmed the legitimacy of these voices

13 AGN, 211115 (1560), 61r: “Se debe confirmar y ejecutar la dicha sentencia porque son muchos...los índices que hay contra la dicha acusada de muchos y diversos delitos muy atroces que ella ha cometido y hecho y los testigos que sobre ello deponen son muchos y muy legales y suficientes.”

14 AGN, 211115 (1560), 61r: “Se debe confirmar y ejecutar la dicha sentencia porque son muchos...los índices que hay contra la dicha acusada de muchos y diversos delitos muy atroces que ella ha cometido y hecho y los testigos que sobre ello deponen son muchos y muy legales y suficientes...y si alguno de ellas hubiese tenido alguna enemistad con la dicha acusada otro defecto se publicara...con el mucho número de testigos que contra ella deponen de varias y diversas cosas, en especial que los dichos testigos y cada uno de ellos han sido y son personas de buena vida, costumbres y fama y buenos cristianos.”
by invoking their good *fama*—in stark contrast to Graciana’s *mala fama*; and their standings as good Christians. *Fama* thus relied upon quality as well as quantity. His concluding remark ordering her torture was succinct: “The accusations and witnesses are too many.”

The vigor of Graciana’s torture paralleled the intensity of her accusations. Water torture and several sessions on the rack left her crippled and with two broken arms. Despite her harsh torments, she maintained her innocence, declaring herself a faithful Christian who knew nothing of witchcraft. The court nonetheless harshly sentenced Graciana Belca to one hundred lashings followed by ten years’ exile. With two broken arms, she petitioned for an extension of the standard six days given to depart in sentences of exile. Her request was denied. Surprisingly, Graciana reappears in the archival record several months following her exile, begging the court for mercy as she was dying from hunger and cold since her *mala fama* restricted charity from others. Again, the court denied her mercy and doubled her original sentence, exiling her for twenty years after two-hundred lashings.

The Royal Court and Council of Navarra continued to privilege the court of public opinion throughout the seventeenth century. In Maria Yrissarri’s in 1647, the

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15 AGN, 211115 (1560), 61r: “Que son tantos los índices y testigos.”
16 AGN, 211115 (1560), 83r.
17 AGN, 211115 (1560), 85r.
volume of witnesses who mention their *mala fama* was duly noted by the Court, which reported:

Witnesses numbers 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, and 11 [say] that throughout this city the accused is in the reputation and common opinion of everyone that she is a witch and sorceress and that with her spells and diabolical arts she has done and does much harm in the republic...Witnesses 4, 7, 8 said she...has the opinion, *fama*, and public reputation in this city that she is a sorceress and a witch and she has also done and does great harm with her spells.18

The indictments underscored the number of witnesses, and highlighted her *fama* of witchcraft and sorcery. The legal language itself rested on this *fama*, demonstrating that the language of witchcraft (created in the social sphere) was understood and supported within a legal one.

The last trial for sorcery at the end of the seventeenth century highlighted the significance of *mala fama* and *voz publica*. Fifty-year-old healer Maria de Esparza was blamed by villagers for everything from insufficient breast milk to spoiled grapes to illnesses. Though her case was complex—featuring four medical experts and their “expect testimony”, her own admission to heterodox healing practices, and the surprising declaration that her deceased husband *was* a witch and attended “aquelarres,” her *mala fama* figured prominently in the language used by both witnesses and the court. The Royal Court’s preliminary summary stated that Maria was imprisoned because:

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18 AGN, 16058 (1647), 6v: “Los 1, 2, 4, 5, 8, 9, y 11 testigos que la dicha acusada esta en toda esta ciudad en reputación y común opinión de todos que es bruja y hechicera y que con sus hechizos y artes diabólicos ha hecho y hace mucho daño en la república...También contestaban 4, 7, 8. testigos que [es]una mujer que...esta en opinión, fama, y reputación publica en esta ciudad de que es hechicera y bruja y ella también ha hecho y hace grande daño con sus hechizos.”
“The ten witnesses of this Inquest all agree that the accused is in opinion, *fama* and reputation that she is a sorceress, and that her husband also was, and that this has been and is the public voice and *fama* and commonplace saying.”¹⁹ So intense was their *fama*, a troubled farmer concluded that “the accused and her husband were those who destroyed [my grapes] by means of spells *because* they always have been and are at present in the opinion, *fama* and reputation that the accused is a sorceress and her husband was also.”²⁰ It was the town witches’ *fama* and reputation that provided the most obvious explanation for his agricultural catastrophes.

Maria’s *fama* was so palpable villagers paid to prevent her *maleficia*, a situation that no doubt bred resentment. Villager Pedro de Cubeldra reported that neighbors gave Maria de Esparza and her husband money and charity to avoid their *maleficia*. He testified “they always have had and have the opinion of being witches, sorcerers, and for that reason all the people were...full of fear and dread and for that reason many people assisted them, giving them what they wanted, as to do contrary would result in

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¹⁹ AGN, 17176 (1675), 11r: “Los diez testigos de esta Información convienen que la dicha acusada esta en opinión, *fama* y reputación de que es hechicera y que también lo fue el dicho su marido y que tal ha sido y es la publica voz y *fama* y común decir.”

²⁰ AGN, 17176 (1675), 8r: “La acusada y su marido serán los que por hechizo lo habría consumido *porque* siempre han estado y están al presente en opinión, *fama* y reputación la acusada de que es hechicera y que lo fue también su marido.” Italics mine.
greater harm.”21 This was an unforgivable blemish in the social fabric, and earned Maria the harsh sentence of two-hundred lashings and ten years’ exile.22

The legitimacy of *mala fama* relied on its entrenchment within the social fabric. Its merit was greater when it was uncontested, as reflected in the cases of Graciana and Maria. *Mala fama* lacking in identifiable or established origins was subject to question and sometimes disregarded in the legal sphere. In the incomplete trial of Pedro Sanz and thirteen accused witches in 1576, the villagers of Ciga provided a lengthy list of witches with *mala fama.*23 Seventy-year-old witness Joanot de Majaferrero offered some insights into the varying degrees of the fourteen accused witches’ *fama,* testifying:

> For forty years he has lived in Ciga and in all that time, Maria de Estermiguel the said *serora* and her sister Catalina de Echeberria have had and have the *fama* that they have been and are witches. He does not know for what cause or reason, as this witness has not seen them do or say anything about witchcraft.24

Maria and Catalina’s *fama* was established and ubiquitous, but then he added, “the others who have had the *fama* did not have it before Maria de Echadi, the niece of the abbot of Ciga, publicized and named the two sisters and [many other names], and other

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21 AGN, 17176 (1675), 21r: “Siempre han tenido y tuvieron opinión de brujos hechiceros y por la causa toda la gente estaba...llena de temor y miedo por esta causa les asistían muchas personas dándoles lo que pedían porque de lo contrario no le resultase en mayores danos.”
22 AGN, 17176 (1675), unnumbered.
23 Only fragments of this trial survive. It was among the thirteen witch trials rediscovered by Miriam Etxeberria in 2013 in the Archivo General de Navarra. AGN, Pedro Sanz, un-numbered.
24 AGN, Pedro Sanz sin número, 19r: “Por cuarenta años a que reside en el lugar donde ha visto en todo tiempo, el dicho María de Estermiguel el dicho serora, y su hermana Catalina de Echeberría han tenido y tiene fama que han sido y son brujas, no sabe porque cause y razón, porque este testigo no les ha visto hacer ni decir cosas algunas de brujería.”
people who at present he does not recall.” Joanot’s testimony presented the combination of an established town witch with a clutch of newfound witches, unsurprising in 1576, a time of heightened witch fears in Navarra. The lengthy “roll of witches” included many faceless names he did not even recall. Though these appended witches did not share the established mala fama of the two sisters, in times or regions with heightened witch concerns, new suspects could be attached to established witches.

The power of mala fama was so great that it could be transferred to the associations of those with tainted reputations. In 1539, Fortuno Legaz was accused of killing half a dozen young bulls with poisoned salt in his village of Ochagavia. Though multiple witnesses saw him feeding the bulls salt, a common practice in early modern Navarra, this evidence was neither the focus of the villagers’ testimony nor the court’s main concern. Rather, it was his associations with two notorious witches, Maria Goyena and Maria Egybel, both imprisoned for witchcraft, that galvanized suspicions he had caused the cattle’s sudden death. From the first witness onwards, neighbors highlighted Fortuno’s fama resulting from his association with the disreputable women. More than a dozen witnesses declared: “That in all of the town of Ochagavia it is publicly known

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25 AGN, Pedro Sanz sin número, 19r: “A otras personas que al presente no se acuerda y como la dicho muchacha hacia el dicho nombramiento este testigo le dijo como había nombramiento de las dichas personas y he de otras en el dicho lugar y que mirase tratas.”
26 In several cases, there is a reference to the “roll of witches,” “rol de” brujas.
among the neighbors that the said Fortuno Legaz is a witch.”27 Many villagers simply report that ‘they knew nothing more than he was reputed to be a witch’, but it was a testament the court regarded with significance.28 The Court’s official charges underscored the origin of Fortuno’s *mala fama*, declaring:

> The bulls died from poison and [this witness] suspects and presumes that the accused [Fortuno] killed them like that because of what is said, as he has been hanging around with the other witches, and he keeps them in his company and council.29

The Court then invoked the *fama* of Fortuno’s associations to further substantiate their charges, declaring: “The above-said [witches] are each one known and noted in the *publica voz y fama* and common speaking in the said town of Ochagavía and in the other nearby areas.”30

More than his interactions with the suddenly dead livestock, it was his association with the notorious witches that propelled accusations. His comradery with the town witches sufficed for the Court to sentence him to three years’ exile.31 To be sure, villagers often shunned those with such *fama*, thus reinforcing the *fama* itself. Informed

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27 AGN, 36180 (1539), 10r: “Que en todo el lugar de Ochagavía está publicado públicamente entre los vecinos de aquel que el dicho Fortuno Legaz es brujo.”
28 AGN, 36180 (1539), 10r.
29 AGN, 36180 (1539), 23v: “Que los dichos bueyes murieron se conoció e sintió que morían de ponzoña y se sospechó e dijo y presumió que el dicho acusado los había muerto así por lo que está dicho como por haber el andado y andar con los otros brujos y brujas por conocer los de la dicha villa en su compañía y ayuntamiento.
30 AGN, 36180 (1539), 23v: “Las cuales sobre dichas cosas en cada una de ellas haber sido y ser así ha sido y es notado en publica voz y fama y común decir en el dicho lugar de Ochagavía y en los otros lugares sus circunvecinos y bordas.”
31 AGN, 36180 (1539), 77r. It was later reduced to three months.
by religious doctrine and expectations, supported by legal systems, and shaping into form in the social sphere, *fama* was to be nurtured and safeguarded.

*Fama* lacking in evidence or established origins was subject to question and often disregarded within the legal sphere. In the absence of agreement among the collective voices, or at least the willingness of villagers to report this reputation to the court, accused witches could and did charge their accusers with slander. In 1560, Juana de Azparren, from the País Basco (her native French Basqueland), brought charges against her sole accuser, Johan de Villanueva. Johan, a prominent councilman of the court, had spread a rumor that Juana had allegedly been imprisoned for witchcraft in the País Basco, a menacing charge Juana wisely responded to with denunciations for harassment.32

Multiple witnesses testified to her good character, voicing their absolute conviction that she was neither a witch, nor had ever been imprisoned as one. Opposing the councilman’s lone denunciation, eight witnesses testified to her *buena fama* (good reputation). In addition to noting her unwavering church attendance, one witness suggested that since he had not heard the fama, it simply could not be true. He reasoned: “He always known her to be a *buena cristiana*, and if it had been another way, [he] would know or would have heard. But he has not heard this before.”33 Asked if she

32 AGN, 66473 (1560).
33 AGN, 66473 (1560), 9v: “Siempre lo ha tenido y tiene por buena cristiana y porque si fuera mujer de otra manera, este testigo lo supiera o lo oyera decir. Lo que tal no ha sabido ni oido decir.”
had been imprisoned for witchcraft in the past, he answered in the negative, adding “if she had been imprisoned there for that reason...he would have known. And this is certain since they are both natives of that town of Azparren.”34 His words illuminate the reliance on, and sophisticated pathways of, village gossip.

Similarly, the friar Miguel de Cubieta, argued against the allegation saying he had never heard of it, and as a priest, he would have known. He explained: “He confessed Joana de Azparren just last week....and as such he knows that she is a buena cristiana...and knows that she is not a witch nor a mala cristiana, and if she was one, [he] would know as her confessor.”35 From confessors to neighbors, the central argument among witnesses was: ‘If she was a witch, we would know.’ Witch-hood was not an occult practice; it was public property. It was created by, supported by, and perpetuated by the voz publica. It was a truth made by the social body and the transmission of this fama imbued it with life. This demonstrates the complexity and gravitas of the village voices, voices whose unanimity could and did create its witches.

Villagers like Juana recognized the power of the language of witchcraft and the dangers of a witchcraft accusation, and the court records show several other villagers who charged their accusers with slander. In 1583 Graciana de Aycanoa accused Maria de

34 AGN, 66473 (1560), 10r: “Si hubiera estado allí presa por la dicha razón...este testigo lo hubiera sabido y no pudiera ser menos por ser como ambos son naturales del dicho lugar de Azparren.”
35 AGN, 66473 (1560), 13r: “Fray Miguel de Cubieta, fraile del monje del Carmen de esta ciudad...en la semana pasada se confesó la dicha Joana de Azparren...y así sabe que ella es buena cristiana...que sepa que ella sea ni bruja ni mala cristiana, y si lo fuese, que el testigo lo sabría cómo su confesor.”
Gorritti of false testimony, charging: “Maria de Gorritti has intentionally damaged and offended and injured [Graciana]...by saying all over town that she is a witch and she has killed a small child of Maria de Gorritti...causing great scandal.”36 Multiple witnesses testified to the good life, *fama*, habits and conversation of Graciana, leaving Maria de Gorritti imprisoned for slander. This case further exemplifies the role of *fama*, both good and bad, in designating witches.

The records in Navarra reveal that *fama* was the most commonly used signifier in accusations of witchcraft. Transcending mere village gossip, *fama* had a normative function as well. It helped the community establish and reify behavioral expectations for itself, while communicating the repercussions for transgressions.37 In Navarra, these expectations centered on Catholic performativity, attendance at Mass and frequent confession, and being a *buena cristiana*. Good *fama* was further supported by having honorable parents and descending from an Old Christian lineage. More than idle talk, *fama* was a formalized, legalized form of knowledge, and was a recognized legal concept in medieval and early modern jurisprudence.38

36 AGN (1583), 212327, 1r: “Graciana de Aycanoa viuda vecina de Aycoayin, queja criminalmente contra Maria de Gorriti, mujer de Martin de Ollo, vecino de Aycoayin....la dicha Maria de Gorritti con ánimo dañado de ofender e injuar a la suplicant sea dejarlo dicir en diversas partes u lugares que la suplicant es una bruja y que ella habia muerto una criatura de la dicha Maria de Gorritti teniéndola en su pecho y cama siendo la verdad.”


38 An in-depth study of the role of *fama* in medieval jurisprudence can be found in Thelma Fenster and Daniel Lord Small *Fama; The Politics of Talk and Reputation in Medieval Europe*, (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2003).
Fama stood at the intersection of social contexts and the legal realm, and had a long legacy of influence in judicial understandings. Governing Iberia’s legal practices in the sixth and seventh centuries, the Visigothic Code drew on the concept of *infamia*, one of its many legal concepts borrowed from Roman law.⁴⁹ As in Rome, persons marked as *infames* (having legally been declared *mala fama*) under the Code were not offered the same legal protections and privileges as those with good *fama*. Though the Visigothic Code dedicated more than twenty statutes relating to *infamia* and *mala fama*, it did not clearly define the differences between these concepts.⁴⁰ In the thirteenth century, the *Sieta Partidas* replaced the Visigothic Code, and from it borrowed the legal concept of *fama*, which it addressed in the seventh *partida* entitled *De los enamados* (Concerning the infamous).⁴¹ Unlike the Code, the Partidas provided a legal definition of *fama* as the “good state of a man who lives justly according to law and good customs, having no defect or mark.”⁴² While *infamia* was a legal disqualification from participation in certain legal proceedings, *fama* served as a recognized form of legal proof.⁴³ Rumors and reputation were transformed into legal facts, and this was accepted by the magistrates of

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⁴⁹ Jeffrey Bowman, “Infamy and Proof in Medieval Spain,” *Fama*, 98-99. Roman law marked certain people who committed social crimes (such as prostitutes, pimps, homosexuals) as *infames*. *Infames* were unable to serve as witnesses, were not guaranteed the same legal protections given to other Romans, and could be tortured.


Navarra. Understood in the legal sphere, "fama", created in the social sphere, was the provocateur and proof of witchcraft accusations in Navarre.

5. 2 Hereditary Witchcraft

The power of mala fama in the language of witchcraft transcended the boundaries of the body of the accused, and left relatives of suspected witches vulnerable to accusations. The link between witch accusations and familial antecedents emerges in both the number of accused witches with familiar relations, and in the defense against witchcraft offered by their defense attorneys. This was especially true during times of heightened witchcraft prosecutions, as Gustav Henningsen has shown through his analysis of "witch dynasties" during Navarra’s witch panic in 1609. Though the connection between families and accusations of witchcraft has been noted in scholarship, this link was particularly strong in the minds of Navarra’s villagers, suggesting that the concept of witch-hood was closely tied to blood. The notion that blood was the carrier of traits such as Judaism or Muhammedism, was prevalent in Spain and defined much of the discussions of purity of blood and “race thinking” promoted by Spain’s Inquisition. This Spanish concept heightened the importance of hereditary bonds in

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Navarra, and persons charged with witchcraft in Navarra often had kin ties to other accused witches.

Surviving testimony from the records of 1525 suggest that an unsavory parentage could lead to and support witch accusations. In its official accusation of the witches from the villages of Ituren and Lasaga, the prosecutor for the Royal Council reported: “That each and every one of the accused witches have had and have the inheritance of being male witches and female witches, because their fathers and mothers, grandfathers and grandmothers, have also been male witches and female witches, and some of them were burnt by the justices [for it].” 46 Their tainted blood was a key component to the Court’s understanding—and proof—of witch-hood. Similarly, when Lope de Salazar, the alcalde of the Valle de Salazar, was fingered as a witch in 1539, the prosecutor highlighted the legacy of Lope’s father in its initial accusation, charging: “His father, having been a witch, was imprisoned and condemned for it by the Inquisition,” and concluded that Lope must also be a witch. 47 The villagers, too, readily recalled his unsavory lineage in their reports. Sixty-year-old witness Juanot Ochoa stated that Lope’s mala fama was the fruit of his father’s legacy, while the prosecutor

46 AGN, 35728 (1525), 26v, in Idoate, La brujería, doc. 22: “Que los dichos acusados y cada uno de ellos han tenido, y tienen de herencia, de ser brujos y brujas, porque sus padres y madres, abuelos y abuelas, también fueron brujos y brujas, y aun algunos de ellos fueron quemadas por justicia.”
47 AGN, 63994 (1540), 59v: “Su padre del dicho acusado fue brujo y preso por la Inquisición y condenado por ello.”
Licenciado Ovando reiterated his tainted ancestry.\textsuperscript{48} The court punctuated its verdict of banishment with the reminder that Lope “has been and is from a lineage of witches.”\textsuperscript{49} Though an unconventional witch (male, \textit{hidalgo}, town \textit{alcalde}), the mayor’s tainted bloodline earned him a sentence of two months’ exile from his own town.

The connection between genealogy and witchcraft was supported within the legal sphere. This is clearly demonstrated in the interrogation, conducted alongside judicial torture, of the aforementioned Graciana Belca in 1560.\textsuperscript{50} The first question in the inquest by the magistrates \textit{Licenciados} Ollarizqueta and Ibero, pertained to Graciana’s parentage. Graciana was asked her name, directly followed by the question: “If her father and mother had been accused of things of witchcraft or suspicions in matters of faith.”\textsuperscript{51} She answered in the negative, explaining they passed away from natural causes. Realizing the connection between ancestry and witchcraft, she added “that never in her lineage had there been witches or people with suspicious faith.”\textsuperscript{52}

The importance of lineage in ideas about witchcraft, and in contributing to accusations at the village level, was evident during Navarra’s cluster trials in 1575-76. The Valley of Larraun drew from its witch dynasty when the \textit{alcaldes} searched the area for witches. Villagers provided a long and varied list of deeds assigned to the infamous

\textsuperscript{48} AGN, 63994 (1540), 25r; 67v: “Que tenga parientes brujos.”
\textsuperscript{49} AGN, 63994 (1540), 59r: “Ha sido y es de línea de brujos.”
\textsuperscript{50} AGN, 211115 (1560), 64r-66r.
\textsuperscript{51} AGN, 211115 (1560), 64r: “Si los dichos sus padre y madre fueron acusados de cosas de brujerías o sospechas en la fe.”
\textsuperscript{52} AGN, (1560): “Que nunca en el linaje de esta que declare ha habido brujas ni personas sospechas en la fe.”
Graciana de Oroquieta, painting the picture of a condemned woman, one whose mother shared her *fama*. Among the serious and diverse charges against her, the Court’s formal accusation against Graciana included the origin of her contemptible *fama*. It reported:

Graciato de Oroquieta, mother of the accused, also has lived in common opinion, *fama*, and reputation of witchcraft and sorcery for years and for all time. And this being public and notorious, the neighbors of Oroquieta did not want to eat anything that her hands had touched, not even the Holy Bread, which they did not pass to Graciato de Oroquieta nor did they did take to her daughter, the accused.53

So grave was her mother’s *mala fama*, neighbors displayed their disdain by prohibiting her mother’s participation in the Christian ritual of passing the Host. By extension, Graciana, too, was not able to partake of the Host. This tangible reinforcement of Graciana’s unfortunate maternal legacy was conspicuously performed in a sacred space. Such a grave slight as denying a fellow parishioner the Host, visibly perpetuated the taint of witchcraft across generations.

In the same year of 1576, the Valley of Roncal drew from the contaminated legacy of Joana Larrimpe’s family in its search for witches. Multiple witnesses attested to Joana’s *mala fama*, one inherited from her mother and grandmother—both tried by the Inquisition for witchcraft. The Court highlighted this wicked inheritance in its summary:

53 AGN, sin número, 21r: “Graciato de Oroquieta madre de la acusada también en todo el tiempo y años que vivió en común opinión, fama, y reputación de brujería y hechicería y por ser esto público y notario, no querían comer cosa ninguna que hayan tocado sus manos los vecinos del dicho lugar de Oroquieta, ni aun para pan bandito no consintieron que llevase pan la dicho Graciato de Oroquieta no consienten tampoco llevar a la dicha acusada su hija. En todo el tiempo y años que vivió en común opinión fama y reputación de brujería y hechicería y por ser esto público y notario, no querían comer cosa ninguna que hayan tocado sus manos.”
Per all the witnesses Joana Larrimpe has been and is in fama of being a witch by reason that her mother was sanbenitada (forced to wear a penitential garment called a sanbenito) and her sanbenito is in the parish church of the said town, [she was] reconciled. And also her maternal grandmother was killed by a garrote as her sentence for being a notorious witch.\footnote{AGN, 327775, 9r-10r: “Por todos los testigos que Joana Larrimpe presa ha estado y está en fama de ser bruja en razón que su madre fue sambenitada y su sambenito está en la iglesia parroquial del dicho lugar reconciliada y su abuela materna también fue muerta de un garrote que le dieron por ser bruja notoria.”}

Joana’s predecessors left her vulnerable to witchcraft accusations, and her fama in turned stigmatized her own daughter, Madalena Soria. The hereditary potential of witchcraft thus condemned four generations of women to mala fama. Witch belief in Navarra supported a hereditary tendency towards witch-hood, one that was easily transmitted from mother to daughter given its feminine nature.

This ingrained connection compelled villagers to mention witch legacies, even if they did not agree with a particular witch’s accusation. In 1576 in the town of Burutayn, sixty-year-old Joanot de Echeberria, did not think that Miguelico, “infamous for being a witch,” was guilty because he had “not seen him do, or say, anything of witches.”\footnote{AGN, 11219 (1576), 8r: “No le ha visto hacer ni decir cosas algunas de brujas.”} Still, when asked about the town’s witches, his was compelled to mention Miguelico because “he has heard that his mother and grandmother, now deceased, had fama that they were witches.”\footnote{AGN, 11219 (1576), 8r: “Ha oído decir que su madre y abuela, ya difuntas, tenían fama de brujas.”}

Drawing from this connection between blood lines and witches, attorneys for the accused could invoke their clients’ purity of blood as a witchcraft defense. In 1661, Maria
Brigant was accused of witchcraft, sorcery, and murder by twenty-four villagers. Her procurador, Licenciado Quadrado, countered these damning depositions by invoking her purity of blood. Quadrado argued:

> Her parents were people with honor and good birth, clean from the bad race of Jews, Moors, and those penanced by the Holy Office (of the Inquisition). And buenos cristianos, fearful of God and their conscience and they went neither witches nor sorcerers; but rather very observant of God's law.

With so many accusations against her, Maria’s defense relied upon her “proofs” of being a good Catholic, drawing on the notion of liempza de sangre, or purity of blood. This notion of pure blood took root in mid-fifteenth-century Toledo, when statutes of limpieza de sangre were passed. This legislation aimed to persecute those with any trace of Jewish or Moorish ancestry, and conversely, strengthen the position of those with “clean blood”, that is, Old Christians. By the end of the sixteenth century, the ideology of limpieza de sangre had spread throughout Spain and greatly impacted the lives and opportunities of anyone with Moorish, Jewish or “heretical” heritage. If Judaism and Muhammadism corrupted blood, so too could witchcraft.

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57 AGN, 59308 (1661).
58 AGN, 59308 (1661), 58r: “Que los dichos sus padres fueron gente honrada y bien nacida, limpios de toda mala raza de judios, moros, y penitenciados por el Santo Oficio, y buenos cristianos, temerosos de Dios y de su conciencia y no fueron brujos ni hechiceros; sino muy observantes de la ley de Dios.”
Witchcraft in early modern Europe was not purely hereditary, as it is in African societies. It was learned, whether from a relative or the Devil himself. But the concept of polluted blood prominent in Spain (and later in its territories) heightened the connection between bloodlines and witchcraft. From villagers’ reports to the Royal Tribunals’ indictments, witchcraft legacies tainted *fama* and was used to support accusations of witchcraft, a concept strengthened in Navarra by the Spanish preoccupation with *limpieza de sangre*. A local, close-up examination of witchcraft accusation reveals that witches were often carefully crafted over time, tapping into the *fama* of generations past.

5.3 Troublesome Toads

Second only to reports of *mala fama*, toads were central to witchcraft belief in Navarra. Toads were ubiquitous in the Royal Tribunals’ witch trials, materializing in over half of the archival records. From burnt toad skins used in poisonous concoctions, to unguents of toad fat used for transvection, the toad’s physical properties imbued witchcraft with a tangible and material reality and understanding of how witches could execute their deeds in the physical realm. The importance of toads was also trumpeted more broadly by the Spanish Inquisition during Navarra’s witch panic of 1609 when it issued a formal report of dressed toads—clothed in exquisite velvet—serving as witches’

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familiars. This is an unexpected feature, as familiars have traditionally been understood by scholars as a purely British phenomena. Toads also appeared in the famous demonological treatise, *Tableau de l’inconstance de mauvais anges et demons* (1614), a text written by the French magistrate Pierre de Lancre, who was simultaneously fascinated with and repulsed by the Basque witches. While the toad was no stranger to European witchcraft, the pervasive emphasis on toads is a noteworthy feature of witch beliefs in this region, and invites an intimate examination of witchcraft beliefs that may appear absurd or irrational, but upon closer examination, are replete with inner logic and meaning.

Since Roman times toads have been connected to evil and witchcraft, and related to both the feminine and the grotesque. As early as the first century CE, the Latin author Juvenal mused over the venomous virtues of toads. In his first Satire, he lamented the maleficent wife who “mixes toad blood with [her husband’s] old Calenian” and teaches her craft to other women, who also bring “to burial the blackened corpses of their...”

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61 AGN, Inquisición, Lib 835, f. 346r. “Y da a la maestra ciertas monedas en precio del nuevo brujo presentado y un sapo vestido para él, que es un demonio en la figure de sapo con cara como de hombre, vestido de terciopelo y de paño muy ajustado al talle de su cuerpo, el cual sirve al nuevo renegado desde allí adelante como de ángel de guarda para le acompañar e industriar en los males que ha de hacer.”


husbands.”

This ancient connection between toad blood and death was reflected in the depositions by several accused witches in Navarra. From Pliny to Aristotle, and in medieval and early modern natural histories and bestiaries, the toad’s venomous property was mentioned with regularity. The religious world also exploited the toads’ poisonous legacy, as medieval art and literature employed the toad’s imagery as an ominous reminder of sin and death. This further established its notoriety as a deadly and abominable creature. Thus, as early modern Navarrans reported toads in their depositions, they tapped into a rich and established historical understanding of the toad as the embodiment of evil, poison, and death.

The Christian context of the toad’s legacy can be traced back to the Old Testament. Both biblical scriptures that invoke frogs (a distinction between frogs and toads was not made in early texts, nor is it in scientific taxonomy), cast these creatures in a loathsome light. God elected frogs as the protagonists in his Second Plague on Egypt. The Book of Exodus proclaims: “So Aaron stretched out his hand over the waters of

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65 AGN, 1525; AGN, 327295 (1576), AGN, 98192 (1576).


68 All toads are frogs. Outside of folk taxonomy there is no taxonomic justification for their distinction in name.
Egypt and the frogs came up and covered the land of Egypt. And the magicians did so with their enchantments, and brought up frogs on the land of Egypt.”

The repugnance of these creatures who cloaked the land and all upon it epitomized filth and horror. This episode was situated among other monstrosities: water turned to blood, painful boils that colonized people’s bodies, and the death of all firstborn sons. Frogs made a second appearance, in the New Testament, as unclean spirits and demons. The Apostle John wrote in his book of Revelations: “And I saw three unclean spirits like frogs come out of the mouth of the dragon, and out of the mouth of the false prophet...For they are the spirits of devils.”

Cast as plagues and demons, there is little wonder why the Christian world hated toads.

The toad’s noxious physical properties reinforced these spiritual manifestations and cultural connections. All members of the Bufo genus have parotid glands, a pair of well-defined skin glands behind the eyes which excrete a poisonous venom. The skin secretions of toads have been used for centuries as Galenic cardiac and diuretic preparations. If the toad’s venom was able to get into the blood stream (through teeth for instance), it would have deadly effects. No doubt the toxic effects of toad venom on...

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69 Exodus 8:5-7, King James (1611), www.kingjamesbibleonline.org
70 Revelation 16:13-14, King James (1611), www.kingjamesbibleonline.org
71 The toad was not universally met with fear and loathing. The Egyptians, for instance, associated toads with fertility, and the goddess of fertility and birth was Heqet, a frog-goddess. Robert H. Wilkinson, *The Complete Gods and Goddesses of Ancient Egypt* (UK: Thames and Hudson, 2003), 229.
small animals would have been observable to early moderners in Navarra. If toad venoms yielded palpable results in the material world through cardiac inhibitions and irritations to small animals, why could their boiled grease not also influence the physical world of witchcraft? Their wicked legacy, coupled with their septic potential, made them perfect assistants for witches and their *maleficia*. Centuries of anti-toad propaganda combined with an awareness of their toxic anatomical properties, endowed toads with endless unholy possibilities.

The testimonial fragments from the missing trials of 1525 show that witches were accused of using flayed toads and toad blood for *maleficia* and transvection from the very first witch trial in Navarra. Situated within lengthy testimony recounting the witches’ Sabbath, including tropes of sexual lasciviousness, renunciation of God, and *maleficia*—Martin de Zaldaiz from the village of Burguette shared a very tangible recipe for the concoction used to “waste the grains and kill people.”\(^\text{74}\) In Martin’s deposition from June 1525 he explained: “To go to the witches’ gathering, they anointed themselves with an unguent using their right hand…And to make this unguent they used dead and flayed toads and burned them on the embers, mixing this with the hearts of children.”\(^\text{75}\) Similarly, the accused witch Maria de Ituren confessed to using toads to attend the Sabbath and to commit acts of *maleficia*. In October of 1525 she admitted to:

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\(^\text{75}\) AGN, (1525), in Idoate, *La brujería*, documento 11.
Using an unguent with flayed toads, and they took it in the fields, and there they roasted [toads] and mixed the roasted toads with water to make powders mixed with an herb called *usaynbelarr*. And they wasted the mountains with the powders of those toads.\footnote{AGN, (1525), in Idoate, *La brujería*, documento 11.}

Villagers echoed this specific recipe in their reports, situating this nefarious concoction in the material world. Far from peasant foolishness, the belief in the powers of the toad had scientific understandings, and was supported by religious and cultural thought.

Over a decade later, Maria Sagardoy from the Valley of Salazar was accused of being “a bad Christian and poisoner,” her *maleficia* assisted by the powers of the toad.\footnote{AGN, 209502 (1540), 3r: “Mala Cristiana y ponzoñera.”}

Villagers testified that she had poisoned people and crops for a decade using this technique:

> She compounded and mixed venom and venomous poison and poisonous powders and drinks with all deadly [things]. And she mixed it with burnt, flayed toads and big, black spiders, and the livers of children, and other deadly things. And she ground everything and made a poisonous powder.\footnote{AGN, 209502 (1540), 7r: “Compuesta y ordenado veneno y venenos ponzoña polvos y bebidas todo mortífero y venenoso. Y lo componía con materiales venenosos conviene a hacer con sapos desollados quemados y con arañas, grandes negras y con hígado de criaturas, y con otras cosas mortíferas y así todo lo molía y hacía de ello polvo ponzoña.”}

This recipe for evil was echoed throughout the village reports. Depositions against other witches, including the town mayor, Lope de Salazar, centered around this noxious concoction. Villagers from the Valley of Salazar reported:

> They have killed and poisoned children...and have disinterred them and removed their hearts, and with them they mixed animal hearts and with filth and...
Villagers in Navarra believed that burning toad skins yielded chemical reactions with deadly potential. This understanding situated witchcraft on the physical plane, available to those “bad Christians” who knew how to manipulate the toad’s ingredients. The sophisticated materiality to this testimony emerges once toads are understood within their religious, cultural, and even scientific contexts. The association between toads and witchcraft was situated within a web of sophisticated belief.

Toads were a dominant feature of reports during the string of witch trials in 1575-76. One trial in particular, in the village of Burguette, illuminates the salient role of toads in this heightened period of witch trials. Like many of its neighboring villages in 1576, Burguette had little difficulty identifying its witches when they were sought. Graciana Loicu had mala fama as a witch, a charge that rested on the diverse and detailed accusations of her intimacy with toads. The village community, even those testifying on her behalf, was familiar with the rumors of her suspect interactions with toads. Burguette’s shoemaker, thirty-one-year-old Juanes de Zuncarren, reported that he did not know if Graciana was a witch, but confirmed that she is in the “public saying and opinion” of being a witch, adding “there was the rumor in the village of Burguette that

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79 AGN, 209502 (1540), 2v: “Han sido en ahogar y emponear criaturas y desenterrar las y sacarlas corazones y con ellos y con otros corazones de animales y con suciedad y polvos de sapos quemados y otras ponzoñas y... para matar hombres y mujeres.... un sapo atado por una la pierna...así tomando las dichas personas del...con el....sapo por todo la cara e pechos e piernas e cuerpo...y con la sangre de los sapos.”

80 AGN, 98192 (1575), 12r.
one time Martinot de Vitoria…saw Graciana Loizu giving food to some toads in the field.”  

Witness after witness echoed Martinot’s story of having witnessed “Graciana Loizu giving food to two or three toads in the pastures.” Though their depositions were not identical, this was a well-circulated tale that had traveled the sophisticated pathways of village gossip.

Drawing from the reports given by twenty witnesses, Graciana was formally charged with “using many spells and witchcraft, and harm and maleficia, and she has raised toads and she has been seen in the countryside and solitary places raising these toads.”  

She was also accused of keeping “the skin of a flayed toad in the hood of her coat.” Other witnesses reported seeing toads loitering around her as she washed her clothes in the creek. It is noteworthy that none of the witnesses elaborated on why she would be feeding toads or wearing toad leather, nor did any explicitly state that toad interactions signified witch-hood. There was no need to, as the connection between toad and the witch was well-established by this point. The toad had become a signifier of witchcraft in Navarra.

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81 AGN, 98192 (1575), 15r: “Diciendo y opinión…que ha habido rumor en la dicha villa de Burguette que Martinot de Vitoria y Esquiroz que es del consejo de la dicha villa hallo una vez en el término a la Graciana Loizu dando de comer a unos sapos.”

82 AGN, 98192 (1575), 17r: “Entre unos prados a la Graciana Loizu que estaba dando de comer a dos o tres sapos.” Interestingly, the scribe underlined this bit of this witness’s testimony.

83 AGN, 98192 (1575), 44r: “Muchos hechizos y brujerías y daños y males ha criado sapos y ha sido vista en campos y lugares apartados criar sapos.”

84 AGN, 98192 (1575), 8r: “En la capilla de su capote un cuero de sapo desollado.”
Martin de Aragon, her procurador, offered Maria a robust defense. He argued that her main accuser, Martinot de Vitoria, was the “capital enemy” of Graciana’s daughter, a counter-change he demonstrated by presenting their previous legal battles. His most striking line of defense, however, addressed her pastoral care of the clutch of toads. He argued against Martinot’s testimony that he has witnessed Maria “feeding three toads in the field.” Aragon maintained that this accusation was simply not possible. He did not call into question the plausibility of an adult feeding toads in a field, but rather questioned the weather at the time of the alleged crime. He argued:

The year Martinot claims [he saw her] was the year of the big snows, the likes of which lasted until throughout March and all through Lent, when the said witness says the mares were in the pasture. But they could not have been…nor could anyone walk in the countryside for the land was so covered with snow.

This defense is telling, for it does not discount the possibility of the act of toad feeding, but rather the timing of the act. Thus, in addition to their religious, and cultural contexts, toads were supported in their legal context as well.

Toads did not surrender their relevance in the seventeenth century. They played an important and demonic role in the witch panic handled by the Spanish Inquisition in 1609. In the Inquisitors’ official summary of the witch sect, they reported that the Devil gave the witches “a demon in the form of a toad, with its face like a man’s, and it is

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85 AGN, 98192 (1576), 158v: “Dice [que dos años antes] vio a la dicha acusada daba de comer a tres sapos a la endrecera…las yeguas apacentando…”
86 AGN, 98192 (1576), 158v: “Porque en el dicho año fue el año de las grandes nieves las cuales duraron en la dicha tierra…hasta pasar todo el mes de marzo y toda la cuaresma, cuando dice el dicho testigo que estaban las dichas yeguas en la dicha endrecera y no se podían…ni andar en el campo por estar la tierra cubierta de nieve.”
clothed in velvet or luxurious cloth that fits close to its body." The Inquisitors took the local belief about witches to a more sophisticated level. No longer merely used in maleficía, toads actively helped orchestrate it. The Inquisition’s toads were dressed in splendor and served as witches’ familiars, telling them when it was time to attend the Sabbath, newly referred to as the aquelarre. The Spanish Inquisition had reinterpreted the regional importance of toads in Navarra, and transformed it within their demonological framework.

Toads made their final appearance in the Royal Tribunals in the 1647 sorcery trial of Maria Yrisarri. Forty-year-old Joan de Ybiricu testified that some twenty-eight or twenty-nine years before, Maria had taken him one night to a valley in countryside, where he was left “guarding some toads while the accused went around dancing to the beat of a drummer, and he saw her kissing a large man.” The witness had guarded this secret for almost three decades out of fear Maria would kill him should he tell anyone about the toads at the aquelarre. Joan’s testimony speaks to the depth of the reservoir of witch belief, and offers clues as to how tropes of witchcraft were drawn from lasting folkloric beliefs and childhood fantasies.

The persistent presence of toads imbued witchcraft in Navarra with a physical and tangible reality. Far from irrational or illogical, the belief in the power of toads for

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87 AHN, Inquisición, Leg. 838, ff. 301r.
88 AGN, 16058 (1647), 2v.
malefica had its own, undeniable inner logic revealed by an inspection of the toad’s legacy in Europe over centuries. Furthermore, the early modern cosmos incorporated magical and religious explanations alongside physical ones with ease. The mingling of toads, a loathsome animal with poisonous abilities, with accusations of maleficia and fantastical tropes, gave witch belief in Navarra great flexibility and meaning.

5.4 Formulaic Definitions

From accusations of mala fama and hereditary witchcraft, to transvection and toad familiars, the multifarious testimonies reveal that individual notions of witchcraft varied among villagers in Navarra. The Royal Tribunals, likewise, presented their own understandings of witchcraft in their summaries; ones that did not always reflect the villagers’ reports. Systems of belief in witchcraft were fluid and created by a reciprocal exchange of ideas and influences, drawn from a common reservoir of belief. Still, there were moments when the Court and Council folded attendance at a “witches’ gathering” ("ayuntamientos de brujas") into their charges despite its absence from the villagers’ accusations. The reports of these witches’ gatherings in Navarra reflected a hybrid mix of villagers’ concerns, and the Tribunal’s understandings of what witches sometimes did. Differing from other regions in continental Europe with convulsive persecutions, the

89 Carlo Ginzburg has dedicated much scholarship to the folkloric origins and influences of the Sabbath as it came to be constructed. See Carlo Ginzburg, Ecstasies: Deciphering the Witches’ Sabbath, (New York: Pantheon Books, 1991).
witches’ gatherings (sometimes referred to as the *witches’ Sabbath* in other parts of Europe) was not a crucial component of witchcraft as understood by the magistrates of the Royal Court and Council. The accused were neither encouraged to confess to attendance at these nefarious soirees, nor denounce other villagers for participation. Further distinguishing Navarra’s relationship with the *witches’ Sabbath*, the Devil had a relatively understated role at these *witches’ meetings*. The Sabbath throughout continental Europe usually focused on the pact with the Devil and diabolical sex. But the Devil was peripheral to the Navarran witches’ gathering ("*ayuntamientos de brujas*”). The reports of the Sabbath in Navarra reflected established common witch beliefs, fused with new notions of witchcraft, influenced by demonological writers.

The *ayuntamientos de brujas* first appeared in the Tribunals’ earliest witch trial in Navarra of 1525, demonstrating that a composite of witches’ deeds was already understood. The Royal Tribunals’ summary included tropes that were often found in testimonies: acts of *maleficia*, the prominent use of toads, and the *ayuntamiento* itself. Though only fragments of this early case survived, it appears that the legal summary parallels the reports given by the villagers. In the next set of trials in 1539, the Court again issued a summary that reflected a cohesive notion of a witches’ Sabbath, and

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90 Diabolical sex was only mentioned in a handful of cluster trials from 1575-76, the 1595 trial inspired by the Lord Andueza (AGN, 071319), and the witch panic of 1609.
91 Idoate, *La brujería*, 262-266.
foreshadowed the formulaic definitions used in the 1575-76 wave of trials. The Royal Tribunals accused the witches of Valle de Salazar of renouncing “God and our Sacred Lady and of his Holy Mother and His Saints”, and charged they “have smothered and poisoned children and disinterred them and removed their hearts and with them, and other hearts of animals.” Drawing from poisoning in the material world, the Court added: “Using filth and burnt toad powders and other poisons...they kill men and women...with the blood of toads...at their gatherings and dances they have on Wednesday and Friday nights.” This reflected an integration of witness testimony and pre-conceived notions of the witches’ Sabbath culled from both folkloric and demonological sources. These early accounts of the formulaic definition in Navarra suggests that the reservoir of witch belief was already developed, and shared by villagers before the wave of witch trials in 1575, and the witch panic in the early seventeenth century. Sometimes the villagers tapped into this belief, and at other times the magistrates did. Its inconsistency demonstrates the plasticity of witch belief, as witch tropes emerged in some trials but remained absent in other.

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92 This is the first reference to the witches’ Sabbath in the records, the term Sabbath, however, is not used. The current term for the Spanish Sabbath, aquelarre, is not used until 1609, so it is anachronistic to apply it to gatherings before this term was incorrectly created by the language of the Spanish Inquisition.

93 AGN, 63994 (1540), 2r-3r: “Y son brujos e ponzoñeras y renegado de Dios y de nuestra Señora Santísima/2v/y de su bendita madre y de sus santos...Y han sido en ahogar y enpoñar criaturas y en desenterrar las y sacar las corazones.”

94 AGN, 63994 (1540), 2r-3r: “Y con suciedad y polvos de sapos quemados y otros ponzoñas y...para matar hombres y mujeres...con la sangre de los sapos.../3r/dichas personas estuvo en sus ayuntamientos y danzas que han hecho en los miércoles y viernes en la noche.”
The stock accusation sometimes issued by the Royal Tribunals, which I refer to as “formulaic notions,” reached its zenith during the episode of witch-hunting in 1575-76. It is also at this time that the Court and Council’s formal indictments deviated most from the reports given by villagers. In fact, the Tribunals utilized this formulaic definition against the accused witches in all thirteen witch trials of 1575 and 1576. This suggests that when witchcraft fears were heightened, or guided by a court-led search for witches, the language of witchcraft privileged preconceived notions of witchcraft over specific accusations or regional, commonplace witch beliefs. The formulaic notion as presented by the Royal Tribunals of Navarra was clear in its charges against the accused witches of Ciordia in 1575. From the meager testimonies presented by a mere seven witnesses, the magistrates forged a lengthy list of accusations.

This three-page-long “formulaic definition” would be echoed in the other trials of this time period in both substance and wording. The Royal Tribunals accused witches throughout Navarra as follows:

The male witches and female witches have, for much time and years, with little fear of Our Lord God and of Royal Justice, made deals with the devil and have gone from their houses many nights, flying through the air, though their doors and windows are closed. First they anoint themselves on the head and behind the ears. with certain unguents the devil makes. [They go] to a field where a great number of men and women joined, gave reverence to the devil that was in the figure of a cow and they danced…and they got on the ground on top of one another…[to] know each other carnally, some from the rear and bottom parts and others from the front. And not being content with the abovementioned, they have also wasted crops of the earth and mountains every year, in such a way that
many years there have almost been no crops...they have also harmed children, smothering them and killing them.\textsuperscript{95}

This formulaic definition was in stark contrast to the reports made by villagers. Not a single voice from the village of Ciordia mentioned night flight, unguents, diabolism, crop failures, or multiple infanticides. While one witness cited the death of a baby, and another spoke of group sex in an open field, most villagers simply echoed who was “in opinion and reputation of being a witch and sorceress.”\textsuperscript{96} This illustrates that legal systems were more apt to employ a preconceived and elite construction of witchcraft in times of heightened witch fears.

It is telling that the Royal Court and Council never again depended on a formulaic definition following the wave of witch trials in 1575-76.\textsuperscript{97} At times reflecting witness testimonies and at times drawing from the generic pool of beliefs, the Royal Court and Council of Navarra’s “formulaic definition” was a synthesis of actual testimony, established witch beliefs, and concerns with the diabolic. Witchcraft beliefs in Navarra fused folkloric beliefs with demonological theories, creating the syncretic

\textsuperscript{95} AGN, 327214 (1576), 33r-v: “Son brujos y brujas y como tales ha mucho tiempo y anos con poco temor de dios nuestro señor y de la real justicia, tratan con el demonio y han ido de su casa por muchas y diversas veces de noche y en el aire estando cerrada todas las puertas y ventanas de sus casas, untándose primero con ciertas ungüentes que tenían y les hacia el demonio, en la cabeza y tras los oídos a un prado donde se juntaba muy grande número de hombres y mujeres que hacían reverencia al demonio que estaba en figura de vaca y bailaban y danzaban...Y se echaban en el suelo unos sobre otros...[a] conocer carnalmente unos por los traseros y parte bajas y otros por delante. Y no se han contentado con los suso dicho, han también perdido todos los anos los frutos de la tierra y la montaña de tal manera que casi no se ha cogido fruto muchos años...Ha también hecho danos en los criaturas, ahogándolos y matándolos.”

\textsuperscript{96} AGN, 327214 (1576), 17r: “En opinión y reputación de hechicera y bruja.”

\textsuperscript{97} Though the villagers accused of witchcraft by the Lord Andueza were charged with diabolical acts, including sexual relations with the Devil, their accusations were not formed at the level of the Royal Court, but rather within the Palace of Andueza.
element of the *ayuntamientos de brujas*, or the Sabbath. What is particular about the Sabbath in Navarra is that it is not fixated on the Devil, except during the witch panic, which was an anomalous break from everyday systems of witchcraft (and treated by the Spanish Inquisition). Over the course of one-hundred-and-fifty years of witch trials in the secular court of Navarra, the Devil appeared in few trials. Even when villagers gave reports of witches’ gathering, a diabolical presence was minimal. Rather, their depositions centered around gathering, feasting, and causing *maleficia* with poisoned powders, not through diabolical powers.

### 5.5 Village Vengeance

This section shifts its focus from the primary ideas about witch belief at the village level, to a secondary effect of this belief: the function of witchcraft accusations as a form of retributive justice among villagers. The very plasticity of the definition of witchcraft invited it to function in various capacities. While witch belief did not exist because of its functional nature, individuals could utilize witch belief to exact revenge. An accusation of witchcraft could have catastrophic results. Even the threat of denunciation was a powerful tool. With an accusation as their weapon, villagers could settle old scores on the legal stage. It was not uncommon for defendants and their *procuradores* to argue that revenge and ill will (mal voluntud) was the driving force behind an accusation. These counter-accusations are usually difficult to confirm as few
written records detail the squabbles of common villagers. Court costs alone would have precluded the average villager from hashing out a feud in the presence of a magistrate. Thus, it is a remarkable to encounter the trials of two wealthy, aristocratic women accused of witchcraft whose claims of revenge motives can be confirmed by decades of litigation with their accusers. Their exceptional cases demonstrate that the belief in witchcraft could be, and sometimes was, exploited and used for vengeance at the village level.98

Maria Perez de Olalde, a hidalga woman, was accused of witchcraft in 1576.99 In contrast with the usual meager material goods of the accused, Maria’s “list of goods” occupied several folios of possessions including multiple houses and properties.100 Further diverging from other witch trials, the fifteen witnesses who testified against her were all related—not only to each other—but to Maria Perez by marriage. The San Roman family, relations through her daughter’s matrimony, all accused Maria of murdering three small children as they slept. The witness testimony was conspicuously polarized: members of the San Roman and de la Guerra families denounced her for infanticide, while eighteen non-related witnesses countered this claim, alerting the court of this enduring feud with the San Romans.

99 AGN, 294640 (1576).
100 Hidalgos and hidalgas were people of nobility, and enjoyed legal and social privileges in their position. Five hidalgos are accused of witchcraft in the run of documents.
The Royal Court and Council imprisoned Maria and charged her with its stock formulaic definition of witchcraft. Given the year was 1576, it is unsurprising Maria’s defense focused on the enduring animosity between Maria’s family and her accusers, one created when Maria’s husband murdered the patriarch of the San Romans. This bad blood intensified when Maria allegedly sought to oust his son, Don Pedro de San Roman, from his position at the frontier’s customs post (at the French-Spanish border).\textsuperscript{101} Maria’s attorney highlighted the history of legal battles between the families and the San Roman’s publicly sworn promise of revenge. He argued that Don Pedro de San Roman was currently holding Maria’s son, Gregorio de la Calle, prisoner and intended to imprison Maria as well. A number of witnesses corroborated that the San Romans had publically declared revenge, and sought it through their false accusations of witchcraft.

The archival records in Navarra confirm decades of family feuding, most likely instigated by the 1556 murder of Juan de San Roman by Maria Perez’s husband, Pedro de Calle.\textsuperscript{102} Two court cases support Maria’s defense of revenge as a motive for her witchcraft accusation: Pedro de Calle’s trial in which he is found guilty for Juan de San Roman’s death and sentenced to ten years’ exile in 1556; and the San Roman’s lawsuit against the de Calles for financial restitution for the murder of their patriarch in 1557.

\textsuperscript{101} AGN, 294640 (1576), 52r: “Y también porque la dicha Maria Perez de Olalde y sus hijos han prendido de hacer de quitar justicia al dicho Don Pedro de San Roman el cargo de la tabla.”

\textsuperscript{102} AGN, 066043 (1556): “El fiscal, Gracia de Olejua, viuda de Juan de San Román, y otros vecinos de Mues, contra Pedro de Calle, preso, sobre agresión a Juan de San Román, vecino de Mues, y resultado de muerte.”
Pedro de San Roman used the court to settle scores with some frequency, as he appears in several more court cases spanning more than twenty years. In 1569 he was accused of abuse of power in his position as custom’s officer by the Valle de la Berreaza. In 1586 he battled family members over inheritance disputes. In 1593 he accused someone of attempted murder, little surprise given his contentious relationships with neighbors and family members. To be sure, his familiarity with the court system may have emboldened him to use it for personal vengeance. Using the language of witchcraft and its legal support, he astutely seized the opportunity in 1576, a time when a witch accusation could be an effective tool for revenge.

This revenge accusation took a fatal turn when Maria Perez perished in jail within one month of her arrest. Interestingly, Maria’s witch trial continued for many months, occupying over one hundred folios. Hers is the only trial that continued post mortem suggesting that a hidalgo could and would go to great lengths to clear her name from the taint of witchcraft, despite its cost. While mala fama was perilous for all villagers, a witch reputation would damn the legacy of the hidalgo, having marked financial and social consequences. Thus Maria’s family continued the case for many

103 AGN, 027831 (1569): “El valle de La Berrueza contra Martin de Santestaban, arrendador de las tablas reales, Pedro de San Román, Pedro Rodríguez, clérigos de la misa, tablajeros de Mues, sobre cobro abusivo de derechos de la tabla.”
104 AGN, 148115 (1586): “Gregorio de Guerra, vecino de Mues, contra Martin de Erralde, vecino de Muez, sobre salir a la causa litigada con Pedro de San Roman, presbítero, y Diego de la Calle relativa a posesión de 3 heredades en los términos de El Arco y Murillo por estar obligado a la evicción de la permuta de dichas heredades e indemnización por los danos ocasionados.”
105 AGN, 176366 (1593): “Pedro de San Román y Galdeano, presbítero, vecino de Muez, contra Juan Sanz, vecino de Sorlada y otros, sobre intento de muerte.”
months after her death, paying for the re-examination of witnesses. It was through this rich testimony that a long story of murder, loss, and revenge was revealed. The court neither absolved her nor found her guilty, and her children were held responsible for court costs. This case illustrates how under the right circumstances the language of witchcraft could be used for personal vendettas; and during times of heightened witch concern, was.

The trial of Teresa de Ollo from the same year mirrors that of Maria Perez in haunting ways. It is the trial of another wealthy *hidalga* woman with a long history of feuding enacted in the legal sphere. A disproportionate number of witnesses emerge from a single family, the Ubanis. Like Maria Perez, a long list of goods, featuring three houses, and nine vineyards confirmed Teresa de Ollo’s *hidalga* status. Teresa was also accused of infanticide, including the murder of her own grandchild; an accusation launched by the child’s maternal grandmother, Graciana de Labayen. Like Maria, Teresa also died in prison shortly after her arrest.

It is through her attorney’s defense and the village voices a complicated web of family secrets and contention unfolded. Teresa’s daughter was married into the Ubani family, while her son Juanes was married into the Labayen family. While embroiled in litigation with the Ubani family, Juanes and his mother Teresa angered the vicar of

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106 AGN, 327744 (1576), Ir.
Legassa, Martin de Subica, and Juanes’s mother-in-law, Graciana Labayen, by
advertising their adulterous relationship. Teresa’s provisor argued:

It is public and notorious that in the town of Legarda and in all of the kingdom
that Graciana de Larayen and Martin de Ubani...and Don Antonio de Ubani and
Joan de Hubani, all brothers, and Don Martin de Subica, vicar of the said town
are capital enemies of my client and of her son Joanés de Echarri for the cases
and differences...treated in various royal audiences, both criminal and
civil...Thus they have sought to have her accused of being a witch.\textsuperscript{107}

Teresa’s attorney concentrated his defense on the motive of revenge, highlighting the
animosity between her family and the Ubani family (connected by marriage); and the
Vicar Subica’s anger with her son for publicizing his sexual relationship with Graciana
Labayen, his mother-in-law. The defense was thoroughly devoted to claims of revenge
and as with Maria Lopez, the accusers were all related to one another and to the
accused. Transcending mere village quibbles, this animosity was so profound that
Teresa’s attorney argued the vicar “Don Martin de Subica will say anything even if it is
contrary to the truth...they want to see her dead.”\textsuperscript{108} This wish was granted. Teresa de
Ollo died in prison within two months of her arrest.

Like Maria Lopez, Teresa was a wealthy hidalgia woman and unaccustomed to the
cold and crude conditions the prisons offered, similarly she died quickly. Unlike Maria,

\textsuperscript{107} AGN, 327744 (1576), 146r: “Es público y notorio que en el lugar de Legarda y en todo el Reino que
Graciana de Labayen y Martin de Ubani su hermano...y Don Antonio de Ubani y Joan de Ubani, todos
hermanos, y Don Martin de Subica, vicario del dicho lugar son enemigos capitales de mi parte y de su hijo
Joanes de Echarri por los pleitos y diferencias...tratan en varias audiencias reales así como criminales como
civiles...han procurado que sea acusada de bruja.”

\textsuperscript{108} AGN, 327744 (1576), 146r: “Don Martin de Subica que dirá cualquier cosa aunque sea contra la
verdad...la desean ver muerte.”
Teresa was absolved by the court two months following her death in the absence of further proceedings. Much like Maria Perez, the long-standing feud between Teresa and her accusers left behind a legal trace. In 1563, Teresa de Ollo’s husband had a case against Martin de Urbani over disputed land, a fight that erupted into the destruction of property (a stone wall). In 1572, Teresa’s son was accused of assaulting and attempting to murder his mother-in-law, Graciana Labayen, and stabbing his wife. Two years later, Teresa’s son was in litigation against his brother-in-law, Martin de Ubani over an inheritance. The following year, he litigated with his mother-in-law, Graciana Labayen over goods and exchanges, a case which involved nearly every person in the witchcraft case.

The rich trials of the _hidalga_ women accused of witchcraft in the absence of _mala fama_ illustrate the versatility of witch belief. In the years 1575-76, the court was particularly receptive of witch trials, and astute villagers seized this moment to exact revenge. While a well-timed witchcraft accusation had the potential to be used for

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109 AGN, 324661, 1563: “Proceso de Pedro de Echauri contra el lugar de Legarda sobre la propiedad a un sitio.”
110 AGN, 010981 (1572).
111 AGN, 326734, “Proceso de Juanes de Echauri contra Cathalina Labayen sobre unos bienes, 1574: Juan de Echauri, vecina de Legarda, contra Martin de Ubani, su cuñado, y Teresa de Echauri, su hermana, vecinos de Legarda, sobre restitución de la mitad de bienes de Pedro de Echauri y Teresa de Ollo, sus padres, alegando minoría de edad al hacer la cesión.”
112 AGN, 327323, 1576, “Proceso de Juanes de Echauri contra Graciana Labayen y cons. Sobre nulidad de ciertas permutas: Juan de Echauri y Catalina de Labayen su mujer, vecinos de Legarda, contra Teresa de Ollo, su madre, viuda, Martin de Ubani, su yermo, Teresa Echauri su mujer, sobre nulidad de permuta de bienes alegando lesión, restitución de bienes.
personal reasons, it required legal systems that would support and process these claims. To be sure, functional uses of witchcraft were the result of ingrained witch belief, not the cause.

5.6 Skepticism

This last section turns toward what was largely absent from the trial records: voices of skepticism. Skeptical views that questioned the reality of witchcraft and sorcery were held throughout the medieval and early modern periods, and usually focused on whether these deeds occurred corporeally, in dreams, imaginations, or by means of diabolical delusions. Writers often presented probing questions and doubts about certain components of witchcraft in their demonological treatises, which served to both nuance the body of witchcraft literature and also to reify witch belief, as the reality of demons most certain was not questioned.113 Writings such as the Canon Episcopi (906 CE), Johannes Nider’s Formicarius (1437), Gianfrancesco Picodella Mirandola’s Strix (1523), and Johann Weyer’s De praestigiis daemonum (1563), drew from religious and scientific arguments to probe the reality of various aspects of witch belief.114 Similarly,

113 See Clark, Thinking with Demons, 195-213.
the Inquisitor Alonso Salazar de Frias would reach his own set of skeptical conclusions as he toured the villages of Navarra after the region’s great witch panic.\footnote{Henningsen, The Witches’ Advocate, 280-360.}

The villagers’ reports in Navarra did not reflect learned skepticism, though likely, many villagers held skeptical opinions as to the legitimacy of specific accusations of witchcraft, the reality of the witches’ gatherings, or perhaps the reality of the deeds assigned to witches. To be sure, it is plausible that the written record does not fully reflect all doubts, and witnesses were perhaps reticent to voice their skepticism or apprehensions. Similarly, the scribes may have chosen to omit testimonies that spoke to neither the guilt nor innocence of an accused witch. Even with these considerations foregrounded, it is worthy to note the scarcity of skeptical voices, especially given the extensiveness of the surviving records. This reinforces that witch belief was an integral piece of early modern intellectual thought, even in a region without convulsive witch persecutions.

Only two trials featured skeptical thought, and interestingly, both involved men with connections to the Royal Court, and came from the early trials of 1539-40. The first voice of skepticism came from the guard of the royal prisons, Juanes de Zubiri, in his trial in 1539 when he was accused of dereliction of duty by failing to apprehend accused witches, even assisting in their flight.\footnote{AGN, 63916 (1539).} Zubiri’s case was related to the witch trials
against the *alcalde*, Lope de Salazar, and other witches from the village of Ochagabia in
the Valley of Salazar. While the Court and Council suggested that bribery by the accused
witches motivated his dereliction of duty, a village voice proposed another explanation.
This villager, Iñigo Ladronde Cegema, explained: “The porter in Ochagabia says many
things…that all regarding the witches is a joke and dreams, and other things.”\(^\text{117}\) After a
report on the royal porter’s sceptical thoughts, Iñigo himself admitted: “I think it is true
what the porter says.”\(^\text{118}\) This skepticism was not confined to the porter and this villager
of Ochagabia at this time, as a member of the Court and Council shared their doubts.

The Bachiller Lope Camus, a jurist in the Royal Court, opined in the case of the
insubordinate jailer. He recalled seeing Juanes in the company of Doctor Goñi, who had
previously disputed “that of the witches” with the Royal Council.\(^\text{119}\) The Bachiller
Camus then recounted a conversation he had with the Doctor Goñi:

> And Camus asked the Doctor Goñi if he had faith in what the witnesses had said
about having seen the *alcalde* dance and join in the congregations of other
witches, and the Doctor responded that he did not have enough faith...to charge
them with it. The Doctor said that the devil can transport your body and mine...In fact if God permitted it, the Devil could transport the city of Pamplona
to the hill of San Cristobal.\(^\text{120}\)

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\(^{117}\) AGN, 63196 (1539), 79v: “[El] potrero en Ochagavia, que dice muchas cosas...que todo de las brujas es
burla y que es sueños, y otras cosas...”

\(^{118}\) AGN, 63196 (1539), 79v: “Creo que es verdad lo que el potrero dice.”

\(^{119}\) AGN, 63196 (1539), 79v: “lo de las brujas.”

\(^{120}\) AGN, 63196 (1539), 79v: “Y el dicho doctor le respondió a este testigo si daba fe a los tales testigos [que
decían que habían visto al dicho alcalde danzar y ayudarse en las congregaciones de otros brujos], y este
testigo les respondió que no daba fe para efecto de condenar con el dicho ellos, pero que daba fe para poder
prender. Y a esto el dicho doctor dijo que el demonio puede llevar vuestra figura y la mía...Que si Dios le
permitiese, que podría llevar la ciudad de Pamplona a la cuesta de San Cristóbal.”
The Doctor couched his skepticism in terms of religious belief, arguing that the devil can cause things to appear in a certain way. If it was all illusions made by the Devil, a legal penalty would be unjust. His concern was the legal ramifications of such belief. He also reinforced his skepticism by alloying his belief with those of the Inquisition. The Doctor shared: “That he had seen certain inquisitors…and that they had spoken about witches, and they had come to conclude that it was more fiction of dreams than truth.”

The skeptical thoughts of Doctor Goñi paralleled learned discussions debating the reality of witches’ deeds and the role of diabolical delusions. Doctor Goñi was likely drawing from conclusions the Spanish Inquisition had reached after the fierce witch trials in Navarra under Judge Balanza in 1525. As a result of that conflict, the Inquisitor General Alonso Manrique assembled a junta, or committee meeting, of ten jurists and doctors to formally deliberate on the issues surrounding witches, including the reality of witchcraft. The men assembled in Granada to consider six questions regarding witchcraft; questions ranging from basic definitions to procedural guidelines to remedies for the evil sect. They debated whether witches really and truly commit the crimes they have confessed or whether they are in fact fooled. The sophisticated conclusion reached by Licenciado Valdes underscored the difficulty in determining

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121 AGN, 63196 (1539), 79v: “Que él se había visto con ciertos inquisidores...y que había hablado sobre brujas, y que vinieron a concluir que era más ficción de sueños que verdad.”


whether witches *actually* committed the crimes to which they confessed, or only imagined them. Valdes urged inquisitors to work with greater diligence in confirming the truth, and encouraged improved sophistication in investigations, such as an inspection of the unguents witches claimed to use for their *maleficia*.

Both the Doctor Goñi and the Bachiller Camus were learned villagers voicing their skepticism. Perhaps less educated villagers shared these sentiments but their testimonies were not as articulate as the Bachiller’s, and simply were not included. Maybe they possessed the same skeptical thoughts, but not the precise language to convey them. Similarly, when the town *alcalde*, Lope de Esparza, a *hidalgo*, was denounced for witchcraft, he was included in a round-up of multiple witches. Lope denied these accusations with vigor, asserting:

> Everything in the said accusation is false... those who speak of the dances and gatherings, are false. And those people cannot nor should be believed because to believe in what such people say is error and against the Catholic faith...because the people who say and confess they go to dances riding...it is all a joke and diabolical illusion that the devil gives them in dreams and they think in their imagination.¹²⁴

Lope couched his bold skepticism as to the reality of witchcraft in Christian terms, echoing the arguments set forth in the *Canon Episcopi* (906 CE), a canonical decision it

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¹²⁴ AGN, 63994 (1540), 5r-5v: “Dice que es falso todo en la dicha acusación.... las que dice danzas y ayuntamientos aquello sería y es falso y las tales personas no pueden ni deben ser creídos porque creer lo que las tales personas dijiesen sería error y contra la fe católica...es todo burla e ilusión diabólica que el demonio les hace en sueños e ilusiones.”
was heretical to believe that people, mostly women, had occult powers. After Lope de
Esparza was sentenced to two months’ exile, his response intensified and he insisted his
sentence was “null and invalid.” In a lengthy rebuttal to the court he argued:

It is false and a thing of dreams and tricks of the devil, that through illusions and
false visions in dreams the devil represents and makes them think in their
imagination what happens in spirit and dreams he tricks them, making them
think they do and see [these things] corporally… and no faith at all can be given
to those witnesses…even if in spirit they what they do and see [is real].

Again Lope reiterated the arguments of the *Canon Episcopi* attributing these illusions to
the devil. He concluded his own defense by invoking his strong Catholic faith, saying
“And I believe in God and in the Holy Trinity, and in all the articles of the Catholic Faith
and in all that the Holy Mother church maintains.”

Interestingly, the voices of skepticism in such specific terms are limited to these
trials from 1539-1540. While there are small instances of skeptical thoughts woven
throughout the defense, never are thoughts as to the reality of witch belief and deeds
stated so clearly. These few skeptical voices, situated within dozens of voices in this trial
testifying to everything from Lope’s usage of toads to his inherited witch-hood from his

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126 AGN, 69334 (1540), 65v: “Y es falso y cosa de sueños y engaños del demonio, que por ilusiones y falsas
demonstraciones en sueños y espíritus, el demonio les representa y les hace creer en su imaginación, que lo
que parecen, piensen que lo hacen y ven corporalmente, siendo ello falso y ilusión del demonio. A los cuales
dichos testigos, no se puede ni se debe dar fe alguna…piensan que lo hacen y ven corporalmente, siendo
ello ilusión.”
127 AGN, 63994 (1540), 66r: “E yo creo en Dios y en la Santa Trinidad, y en todos los articulos de la Fe
Católica y en todo que la Santa M127 Execution was not performed by the Inquisition, rather, heretics with
death sentences were released or “relaxed” (relajado) to secular authorities. See Gustav Henningsen and John
Tedeschi, eds., *The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe: Studies on Sources and Methods* (Dekalb: Northern
father, serve to illustrate the cacophony of voices used to craft a witch in early modern Navarra. The silence on doubts about the reality of witchcraft, however, conveys loudly the fact that witches in Navarra were real to the villagers who crafted, feared, and lived with them.

5.7 Conclusion

Each of the thirty trial records in Navarra offers a patchwork of villagers’ voices and reports, elucidating that witchcraft and witches at the village level were not monolithically conceived. For many villagers, a witch was essentially a bad person, a bad Christian (*mala cristiana*), or someone who had the reputation (*fama*) of being a witch. For others, witch-hood was the result of kinship ties to other witches. An overwhelming number of villagers pointed to the relationship between the accused witch and toads as tangible proof of her *maleficia*. For some witnesses, though more frequently for the Court, witchcraft included meeting with other witches at conventicles, invoking the devil, and engaging in sexual perversions. From reports of bad Christians to hanging toads, village voices varied in form but not in substance. Though sometimes witch belief functioned as a venue to enact revenge, and a select few doubted the reality of witches’ deeds, all the villagers and judges in Navarra spoke the language of witchcraft, even if using different words, signifiers, tropes, and symbolisms. At the heart of the matter was *belief*, and the specific designated witches were manifestations of this
belief. Rich and variable, these depositions reflect the vast and deep reservoir of belief villagers drew from as they crafted their witches in early modern Navarra.
6. The Struggle for Souls

Created in 1478, the Spanish Inquisition sought to eradicate heresy throughout Ferdinand and Isabella’s Spain. Pope Sixtus IV’s signing of the bull *Exigit sincerae deviltonus affectus* established this exceptional judicial arm; one that lasted three centuries, expanded across the Atlantic, and treated numerous heresies until its final abolition in 1834. The Inquisition’s geographical reach was extensive—it established twenty-one tribunals throughout Spanish Iberia, in Sardinia, Sicily, the Canary Islands, Lima (Peru), Mexico City, and Cartagena de las Indias (present day Colombia). Its judicial range was equally expansive—it prosecuted dozens of crimes including crypto-Judaism, Muhammadism, atheism, Lutheranism, bigamy, blasphemy, and bestiality. Under its purview also fell the crime of witchcraft. Throughout its three centuries, thousands of people accused of witchcraft and sorcery were prosecuted under the category of “Supersticiones” (superstitions). Despite this, the Inquisition’s role in prosecuting witchcraft was significantly less energetic than previously believed, and relatively few were “relaxed” to secular authorities for execution.¹

The heresy of witchcraft has been referred to as the Inquisition’s “forgotten crime”² largely due to the small number of those sentenced to death. Yet, according to a

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¹ Execution was not performed by the Inquisition, rather, heretics with death sentences were released or “relaxed” (*relajado*) to secular authorities. See Gustav Henningsen and John Tedeschi, eds., *The Inquisition in Early Modern Europe: Studies on Sources and Methods* (Dekalb: Northern Illinois University Press, 1986).
comprehensive database of the Spanish Inquisition, nearly five-thousand trials fell under the category of *Supersticionces* from 1540-1700, which included crimes from witchcraft to sorcery to unsanctioned prayers. While perhaps less attended to than other crimes, witchcraft was of concern to the Inquisition and it fought for jurisdiction over the crime. The Inquisition’s tribunal in Navarra alone processed hundreds of witches.

This chapter examines the relationship between the Spanish Inquisition’s tribunal with oversight of Navarra and the Royal Tribunals of Navarra. This study reveals that, contrary to the common understanding that witchcraft was treated exclusively by the Spanish Inquisition, the Royal Courts of Navarra successfully tried cases of witchcraft over one-hundred-and-fifty years. Using letters between the Inquisition and the Royal Tribunals, this chapter examines the contested relationship between these two judicial institutions. These correspondences—including letters from a wide range of intermediaries such as the Council of Castilla, the Inquisitor General in Madrid, and the Vicar General of Pamplona—reveal the jurisdictional difficulties caused by the equivocalness of the very definition of witchcraft. As a “*crimen mixti*”, a crime that fused secular with heretical concerns, both judicial systems could, and did, make claims to its oversight. With these letters I examine both Tribunals’ arguments, and uncover their strong urge to maintain control over witch trials, while also exposing the ambivalence that both courts sometimes felt. This chapter then analyzes instances of

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judicial overlap, where witches were tried by both courts, as identified by a comparison of the procesos from the secular court and the Inquisition’s Relaciones de las causas (a treatment all cases of sorcery and witchcraft tried by the Inquisition would merit its own separate study). Finally, a close examination of defense arguments made in the Royal Courts reveals an unexpected facet of witch prosecution in Navarra: that many accused witches and their defense attorneys actually sought to have their cases transferred to the tribunal of the Inquisition at Logroño.

6.1 The Inquisition and the Crime of Witchcraft

Though the connection between witchcraft and heresy had long been established, the crime of witchcraft in Spain remained in secular hands in 1478 and into the sixteenth century. Maleficent magic in antiquity had been tried by secular courts, but the establishment of the Papal Inquisition in the early thirteenth century challenged this control over the prosecution of magic and witchcraft. Laws in Castilla from 1370 and 1387 confirmed that sorcery was heretical and would be punished by the secular court if committed by laymen, and by the church if clergy were involved. A Royal degree in 1500 ordered secular justices to seek diviners and arrest and punish them, thereby reinforcing secular control of the crime. At the time of the Spanish Inquisition’s creation,

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4 These are summaries of cases submitted to the seat of the Inquisition in Madrid by each tribunal. In this case, the examination pertains solely to cases treated by the tribunal with oversight of Navarra.
witchcraft and sorcery were firmly in the hands of the secular courts and, in some cases, ecclesiastical ones. Though some Inquisitorial tribunals prosecuted several witches, such as Saragossa (1498-1500), Toledo (1513), and Cuenca (1515),\(^6\) the early Inquisition did not actively pursue crimes of witchcraft, sorcery, the occult arts, and other “superstitions” for several reasons. The Inquisition in its initial phase was occupied with the prosecution of *conversos*, Jews who had converted to Catholicism. Second, as a *crimen mixti fori* (a mixed crime that included spiritual as well as secular transgressions), the secular component of witchcraft precluded the Inquisition’s exclusive control of witch trials. Doubts remained as to whether heresy was an immutable component of witchcraft. Furthermore, the Inquisition maintained its skepticism of the *reality* of diabolical witchcraft. If the pact and Sabbath did not occur in reality, was heresy even involved?

The concept of the diabolical pact shifted the vision of witchcraft and, as the Inquisition would later argue, placed the crime solidly in their holy hands. The pact with the devil, whether explicit or implicit, was both apostasy and idolatry and therefore essentially heresy. In 1512, a *Concordia* reached between King Ferdinand and representatives from the tribunals of Aragon allowed for Inquisitorial jurisdiction over witchcraft *only* in cases where heresy was involved.\(^7\)

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\(^7\) Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 75. This *Concordia* also included the crimes of usury, blasphemy, and bigamy.
Regional differences, and the varying prominence of heresies, shaped the vigor each tribunal had for various crimes. As a whole, however, the Holy Office was more skeptical of witchcraft than many secular and ecclesiastical courts in Europe, and this ambivalence greatly shaped its record in dealing with witches. The tribunal that oversaw Navarra was quite preoccupied with witchcraft—it treated hundreds of witch trials, fought fiercely for its judicial rights over the crimes, and sponsored the largest witch panic in the early modern period. Established in 1512 at the time of Navarra’s conquest by the Kingdom of Castilla, this tribunal was initially seated in Pamplona. It was later moved to Estella, then to Tudela, and then to Calahorra in 1540 where it remained for three decades. In 1570 the tribunal found its permanent seat in Logroño until the Inquisition’s dissolution. The Logroño tribunal’s dominion also included Guipúzcoa, Álava, and Vizcaya.

The circumstances and volume of witch trials treated by the tribunal of Logroño was exceptional, and a geographical awareness of the patterns of witch trials under the Inquisition is helpful in understanding why. Gustav Henningsen referred to the marked difference between the southern and northern portions of Spain as “the geography of

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9 As much consideration as possible is given when treating the Logroño records to the trials as pertained to the region of Navarra. However, separating the thousands of trials by regions is beyond the scope of this project. Thus, numbers and general information about witchcraft under the Logroño tribunal inherently includes witches in Guipuzcoa, Álava, and Vizcaya. The witches I approach closely, however, are only from Navarra.
witchcraft” in the Spanish Inquisition.\textsuperscript{10} While the northern half of Spain experienced large numbers of trials featuring diabolism and maleficia, southern Spain was silent on these fiendish tropes, despite hundreds of trials of sorcery and magic. One major difference was the substantial Muslim influence in southern Spain, as Islam’s magical tradition allowed for practices that sought to exert control of the supernatural \textit{without} necessitating a diabolical pact.\textsuperscript{11} Northern Spain, on the other hand, was not influenced greatly by \textit{moriscos}, but rather hosted large French populations, ones that were Old Christians (not of Jewish or Muslim descent), and familiar with demonological thought. In fact, it was a witch panic from France that crossed the Spanish-French political divide and ignited the singular witch panic in Navarra.\textsuperscript{12}

The demography of the region also shaped the strength of the local, secular courts. Witches arrived at the Inquisition by means of denunciations, referrals from a familiar or commissary of the Inquisition (of which there were many), or as a result of an inquiry. It naturally follows that tribunals in areas with deeper witch beliefs (rural, Old Christian populations) received more denunciations of witchcraft. But Old Christian populations were also more inclined to utilize and support the local courts and resist the Inquisition’s judicial intrusion.\textsuperscript{13} The stronger the secular court, the more influence it had

\textsuperscript{10} Gunnar Knutsen, \textit{Servants of Satan and Masters of Demons: The Spanish Inquisition’s Trials of Superstition, Valencia and Barcelona, 1478-1700} (Turnhout, Belgium: Brepols, 2009), xi.
\textsuperscript{11} Knutsen, \textit{Servants of Satan}, 49.
\textsuperscript{12} Henningsen, \textit{The Witches’ Advocate}, 23-25.
\textsuperscript{13} Knutsen, \textit{Servants of Satan}, 176.
over the prosecution of witches. Weak Inquisitorial tribunals, therefore, had a restricted range of influence to take the witches as their own. Conversely, tribunals that enjoyed a position of strength were able to force local courts to relinquish suspected witches. It was not uncommon for the Inquisition to try witches that were initially arrested by secular courts, and even in the strong Court and Council of Navarra it occurred with frequency. When the secular judges of Navarra did surrender witches to the Inquisitors, it was with great resistance and usually preceded by a struggle. Their obstinacy had its rewards, as they tried more witches than most (if not all) secular courts in Spain.

The uniqueness of the prosecution of witches in Navarra was shaped by several factors. To begin with, it was an expansive and mountainous territory, and the Inquisitorial tribunal that oversaw it was also burdened with the oversight of Guipúzcoa, Álava, and Vizcaya, that is, the entire Basque region of Spain. Similarly, the unique Basque tongue presented great linguistic challenges to the inquisitors, as few villagers spoke Castilian and even fewer inquisitors spoke Basque (Euskera). This newly conquered kingdom had a strong and proud identity, and resented Castilian rule.¹⁴ They were unlikely, therefore, to willingly surrender their power to foreign inquisitors. Given these considerations, it is little surprise that Navarra’s first witch hunt remained firmly in the hands of the local court, and rendered the Inquisition powerless to intervene.

¹⁴ For a history of the conquest in 1512, see Peio Monteano, La Guerra de Navarra (1512-1529): crónica de la conquista española (Pamplona: Pamiela, 2010).
6.2 The First Battle, 1525

The first string of witch trials after the Inquisition’s establishment in Navarra laid the foundation for one-and-a-half centuries of conflict between the two jurisdictions. The witch trials conducted in 1525 under the direction of Judge Pedro de la Balanza of the Royal Council resulted in the hasty execution of over fifty witches, the most lethal case of witch hunting in Navarra’s history. Though the trial records of this witch hunt do not survive, a comprehensive picture of this event can be pieced together through: surviving letters from the fellow judges of the Royal Council in response to Balanza’s zeal; complaints from the Vicar general about the abrupt executions at the hands Balanza; an inheritance petition brought forth by Judge Balanza’s heirs seeking their share of the witches’ confiscated goods, and allusions to this momentous episode by both courts—and the Council of Castilla in Madrid—for over a century.15

Dispatched by Navarra’s Council to investigate reports of witches, Judge Balanza began a zealous campaign against the witches in the Valleys of Roncevalles and Salazar from January until August of 1525. By May, his hasty actions brought the disapproval of his colleagues, Dr. Redin and Dr. Artega who implored him to refrain from ordering executions without first sharing his findings with the rest of the Council. They were surprised by a second-hand report claiming some eighteen witches had been sentenced, and they urged Balanza to inform them of these cases beforehand. Importantly, their

15 See AGN, 035728 (1525); AGN, 1525_CO_PS1.1, Leg.66, N.4.
letter noted there had been “some differences with inquisitors” about these witches, alterations likely due to his hasty executions. Underscoring the uncomfortable clash between the two courts, they emphasized “especially with this difference that the inquisitors have with us...and so, we beg you, that before you sentence or execute anyone, you share the cases you had concluded with us.”16 Thus even at this early juncture of witch trials, tensions between the two courts emerged. Balanza’s unilateral decisions not only intensified the animosities between the Court and Council of Navarra and the Inquisition’s tribunal at Calahorra, but also provoked ecclesiastical disapproval. This first test of control over witches sparked a procedural altercation between the inquisitors and the Royal Council, and even elicited the involvement of the Vicar general of Pamplona, Juan de Rena. Rena’s letter to the Council of Navarra in June of 1525 hinted at a “certain altercation” between the Inquisitorial and secular courts. He wrote:

In this Bishopric many witches have been discovered, whom the Royal Council of this Kingdom began to arrest. And after the inquisitors received notice of this, the licenciado Fresneda came to this city. I met with him and we went to the Council to have them remit this case to us, and know if this pertained to them or us. This resulted in an altercation of sorts.17

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16 AGN, 035728 (1525), f. 20r (missing); as cited in Idoate, La Brujería, 252. “En especial sobre esta diferencia que los señores inquisidores tienen con nosotros...Y así, le pedimos por merced, que ante que sentencie ni mande hacer ninguna ejecución, nos comunique los procesos que tiene concluidos.”
17 AGN, 1525_CO_PS1.1, Leg.66, N.4, 1r: “En este Obispado se ha descubierto muchos brujos y brujas, contra los cuales, los del Consejo Real de este reino empezaron a prender. Y luego que de esto hubo noticia los inquisidores vino a este ciudad el licenciado Fresneda, con el cual me junte y fuimos a los Señores del consejo para que no remetiesen en esta causa y saber si el conocimiento era suyo o nuestro, hubo cierta altercación.”
Vicar Rena’s letter offers a glimpse at how the Council held on to its jurisdiction firmly, while also showing that the Inquisition had little power to force its cooperation. Without any true control over Navarra’s Council, the Inquisition was forced to turn to another secular authority for help, and solicited the backing of the Royal Council of Castilla (in Madrid). Vicar Rena’s letter continued: “In the end it was left between us that the Licenciado Fresneda would then go to the Court of Castilla and inform Your Majesty, asking him to decide to whom pertained the knowledge of this issue.”\(^{18}\) In the meantime, however, so that “such evil was not left unpunished,” the Council of Navarra would proceed with the cases.\(^{19}\)

Judge Balanza’s actions had attracted the attention of the Inquisition, the Vicar General, and, ultimately, the King of Castilla. The Council members persisted in urging circumspection, and within a month, sent another reminder asking Balanza for his discretion and awareness of the other jurisdictions. They reminded him “there are many jurisdictions, and if we do not do things judicially, the Kingdom could have reason to complain about us.”\(^{20}\) These letters from the Council to their colleague suggest that the main concern was neither the sentencing nor executions of the witches, but rather the attention and ire these actions drew from the Inquisition. The Council indicated several

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\(^{18}\) AGN, 1525_CO_PS1.1, Leg.66, N.4, 3r-v: “En fin, quedo asentado entre nosotros que el licenciado Fresneda después iba a la corte, informase de esto a V.S.Rma.”

\(^{19}\) AGN, 1525_CO_PS1.1, Leg.66, N.4, 3r-v: “No quedase tan gran maldad sin castigo, que los del Consejo procediesen como hacian.”

\(^{20}\) AGN, 1533, f. 73, as cited in Idoate, La Brujería, doc. 16. “Hay muchos juicios, y si no hiciesen las cosas juridicamente, el Reino se podría con razón quejar de nosotros.”
times they found Balanza’s sentences to be just. Even though they complained that “there is little doubt, as we have seen, that this business of the witches causes much work,” it was not a ‘business’ they wished to relinquish; and thus the Inquisition was unable to intervene in this first battle for the witches. The Inquisition’s impotence in these early witch trials exposed its own lack of clear protocols on witchcraft, and made evident that it would need to formulate an official approach if it were to be effective in the future.

6.2.1 The Junta on Witches, 1526

Within a year of the secular campaign against witchcraft, the Inquisitor General Alonso Manrique assembled a junta, or committee meeting, of ten jurists and doctors to formally deliberate on the issues surrounding witches. The men assembled in Granada to consider six questions regarding witchcraft; questions ranging from basic definitions to procedural guidelines to remedies for the evil sect. The conclusions of this delegation shaped the Inquisition’s attitude and approaches to witchcraft. They deliberated on:

1. Whether witches really and truly commit the crimes they have confessed or whether they are in fact fooled.
2. For the witches who really commit murders, whether they must be exiled or relaxed or handed over to a secular court after their reconciliation so they may be struck with worthy penalties for their actions.
3. Whether they should be punished in the same way if they were fooled and did not really commit those deeds.

21 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 791, f. 353r: “Estos negocios de brujas suelen ser en las inquisiciones de mucho trabajo, gasto, y pesadumbre, y sacase de ellos poco fruto.”
4. Whether knowledge of those evil deeds and their punishment should concern inquisitors, whether it is appropriate for the inquisitors to know about those deeds.

5. Whether the witches may be sentenced to the greatest ordinary penalty through their own confessions, without other proof or support.

6. What remedy will destroy the plague of those witches.\footnote{AHN, Inquisition, Libro 1231, ff. 634r-637r; as cited in Lu Ann Homza, \textit{The Spanish Inquisition, 1478-1614: An Anthology of Sources} (Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Company, 2006), document 13, 153-54.}

A majority of six decided that witches attended the Sabbath in reality, while four argued that their attendance was imagined. There were varying degrees of mercy as to their punishment, depending on whether or not they had been diabolically deluded. Some felt pardoning was the most appropriate punishment for these delusional souls, while others voted the penalty should be the same whether they committed maleficia or not. Of particular interest for this present study is the blurred jurisdictional lines between the Inquisition and the secular court.

The various lettered men all agreed that inquisitors should be involved with the prosecution of witches. Some, like the Dr. Coronal, argued inquisitors should punish witches as the crime related to matters of the faith, but that similarly, a secular judge should punish them according to their secular crimes. The Bishop of Modonedo voted that witches who had been condemned to the Inquisition’s perpetual prison should not be released to be secular authorities, regardless of their secular crimes. Dr. Arcilla said that the matter should be left up to the judges depending on each penitent, but agreed with their release to secular authorities if the Inquisition had concluded with them.
Similarly, Dr. May said a secular judge may prosecute them after the Inquisitors’ business was complete, but added that they should not be released to the secular judges if they had been condemned to perpetual prison. Jealously guarding Inquisitorial privilege, the Licenciado Polanes and Dr. Guevara both decreed that they should not be referred to secular judges under any circumstances.\textsuperscript{23}

The sophisticated conclusion reached by Licenciado Valdes underscored the difficulty of proof in cases of witchcraft. Noting the struggle in determining whether witches actually committed the crimes to which they confessed, or only imagined them, Valdes urged inquisitors to work with greater diligence in confirming the truth. He encouraged improved sophistication in investigations, such as an inspection of the unguents witches claimed to use for their maleficia. If these investigations uncovered that the witches had in fact committed the crimes, the inquisitors should then consider the pact made with the devil and the heresy such an act entails. If proven conclusively that they are heretics, “then they must be given the ordinary penalty that is usually given, which the laws provide.” But on the other hand “If the witches deny their guilt, they may be relaxed to the secular arm.”\textsuperscript{24} Mercy was to be shown in exchange for confession—they should be punished according to the thoroughness of their confession and how quickly they confessed. Ultimately, Valdes privileged the Inquisition’s

\textsuperscript{23} AHN, Inquisition, Libro 1231, ff. 634r-637r, Homza, The Spanish Inquisition, document 13, 153-54.

\textsuperscript{24} AHN, Inquisition, Libro 1231, ff. 634r-637r, Homza, The Spanish Inquisition, document 13, 153-54.
jurisdiction, concluding “once the witches have completed the penance from the
inquisitors, the secular judges can proceed to punish them for the deaths, damages, and
other crimes they have committed.”

The junta of Granada thus produced an official order of operations, so to speak,
of judicial procedures. The Inquisition was to be afforded the right to decide if heresy
was involved, and if it was indeed present, they would mete out justice first and then
pass along the witches to answer for their secular crimes. Though the Inquisition was
now armed with an official set of protocols, it by no means suggested the secular court,
especially one as fiercely independent as the Court and Council of Navarra, would
accept or respect it.

6.2.2 Castilla’s Ruling on Witches, 1530

Several years after the Council’s execution of some fifty witches and the troubles
it caused with the Inquisition, the Council of Castilla opined on this judicial battle. Recall
that Licenciado Fresneda had promised to notify the Castilian court of the witch issues
in Navarra, and a letter from 1530 shows they had indeed received notice. Referring to
“certain murderous people and poisoners” in the Council’s custody, the Licenciado
Aguirre from the Court of Castilla wrote to the Royal Council in Navarra, reminding
them: “This business of the witches is not new, because yet another time the Royal

Council proceeded in other similar cases, and had the same altercation they are having now with the inquisitors of that Kingdom.”26 He stressed that after many deliberations during the previous altercation, it had been determined imprisoned witches and their cases were to be remitted to the Inquisition for examination, and if it was determined they had qualities that pertained to the Inquisition, they would remain under that jurisdiction. He agreed, however, that “those who do not have qualities [of heresy] shall be remitted to the Royal Council and to the other secular judges of this Kingdom, even though there has been much doubt as to whether these homicides and other crimes had actually been verified.”27 In other words, the Inquisition would be allowed to decide which cases were theirs, and then relinquish the ones they did not want. These conclusions mirrored the ones reached by the junta in Granada a few years prior.

One of the biggest concerns highlighted by the Council of Castilla was that justice had not been served in 1525 and had resulted in dozens of unjust executions. As a result of Judge Balanza’s questionable actions, the Castilian Council referred to the issue of witchcraft as “very delicate, and very dangerous,” and boldly claimed that the Council of Navarra “should not have jurisdiction over these cases, rather they should turn over these cases to the Inquisitors of that Kingdom” so that they can determine

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26 AGN, Tr_AS. Titulo.9, Faja 1, No. 8, 2r: “Ciertas personas homicidas y ponzoñadoras”; “Esta materia de las brujas no es ahora nueva, porque ya otra vez por ese Real Consejo se procedió en otros semejantes casos y hubo la misma altercación que ahora hay con los Inquisidores de ese Reino.”
27 AGN, Tr_AS.Titulo.9,Faja 1, No. 8, 2r: “Y los otros que no tuviesen las dichas calidades, se remitiesen a este Real Consejo o a otros jueces seglares de ese Reino, aunque se tuvo mucha duda si los homicidios y otros daños que entonces en ese Reino se tuvieron por averiguados.”
what applies to them.\textsuperscript{28} It was this distrust in the Court and Council of Navarra that prompted their favor of the Inquisition’s right to determine “what is theirs” and what should remain with the Royal Council.\textsuperscript{29}

The ruling by the Council of Castilla dealt a blow to the Court and Council of Navarra and strengthened the position of the Inquisition. Still, these clarifications did little to resolve the issues between the battling jurisdictions, and riding on the tails of the next group of witches came the next skirmish between the courts. While their reach was limited, Castilla’s involvement and interest in the issue of witchcraft was now established, and would reappear alongside the following crop of witches.

\section*{6.3 Inquisition Triumphant, 1539-40}

After a decade of calm, another cluster of witch accusations emerged in Navarra and reignited the battle over prosecutorial rights between the Royal Court and the Inquisition’s tribunal. In the valley of Salazar, dozens of accused witches, including the town’s \textit{hidalgo} mayor Lope de Salazar, were imprisoned for witchcraft. The Inquisitors of Calahorra were informed of these witches and declared they “seem to be materials that should belong to the Holy Office…it seems some of these accused have confessed to

\begin{footnotesize}
\bibitem{28}
AGN, Tr\_AS.Titulo.9, Faja 1, No. 8, 2r.
\bibitem{29}
AGN, Tr\_AS.Titulo.9, Faja 1, No. 8, 2r.
\end{footnotesize}
renouncing God…and things of this nature rightfully should be determined by us.”

The inquisitor Dr. Olivan planned a visit to the Council in Pamplona, and he wrote them, self-consciously delineating his motives to examine “what appears to be information that pertains to the Holy Office…in this business of the witches.” But he also reassured them “it does not seem there is too much information pertaining to the Holy Office” and made assurances to not interfere in their matters. He simultaneously reinforced that the Inquisition would, however, deal with the witches in a manner “conforming to justice and according to their rights.”

The visit to Pamplona by the inquisitors Dr. Olivan and Licenciado Val de Olivas was supported by the Council of Castilla. Dr. Olivan’s highlighted this Royal support in his letter to the tribunal in Calahorra in December of 1539. He reported: “We received the letter from Your Majesty sending us to Pamplona to deal with this business of the witches imprisoned in the Royal jails, we were diligent in doing so, conforming to the mandate from Your Majesty.” By aligning his actions with the will of the king, Dr. Olivan preemptively resisted defiance by the Royal Tribunal of Navarra, and justified

30 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 322, ff. 258v-259r: “Por ser materias que suelen tocar al santo oficio…parece que algunas de estas personas que están presas confiesen haber renegado de Dios…y los que son esta calidad parece que es justo que se determinen sus causas por el Santo Oficio.”

31 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 322, ff. 258v-259r: “Las que pareciere que hay información de cosas que tocan al Santo Oficio…asuntos de los brujos.”

32 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 322, ff. 258v-259r: “Pareciese que no hay información bastante de cosas que tocan al Santo Oficio.”

33 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 322, ff. 258v-259r: “Conforme a justicia como hallaren por derecho.”

34 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 785, ff. 220rv: “La carta de V.S. por la cual mandaban viniese a esta cuidad a entender en negocios tocantes a las brujas que están presa en cárcel reales de este reino, puse diligencia en hacerlo, conforme a lo que por la carta de V.S. me han mandado.”
the Inquisition’s intervention. He further substantiated his role with mention of the “lettered men, theologians, and jurists” with whom he consulted about the cases. As a result of his investigations, and in consulting with the Señor Visorrey and the judges of the Royal Council, it was concluded that many witches had characteristics that fell under the Inquisition’s purview and they would “see the justice in these cases.”

Dozens of witches were turned over to the Holy Office, despite confessions to maleficia including murder and crop damage. The Court and Council of Navarra remained in possession of only four. This was the Inquisition’s first battle victory in the war for jurisdiction over witchcraft.

The Inquisition hosted its public penitential ceremony, the auto de fe, in March 1540 in Pamplona, and within its records forty-nine witches from Navarra were listed. According to the “Nomina of the persons appeared in the auto de fe,” thirty boys and girls under fourteen were penanced for “witches and apostates and reneged God and our Lady and all the Saints.” There were “eight boys and girls older than fourteen” abjurados de levy for witchcraft. Maria Carrica Maria Icalcu were abjurados de vehemente for being witches, and nine more witches were reconciliadas, charged with “being

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35 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 785, ff. 220r+v: “Letrados, teólogos, y juristas...hacerse justicia en sus causas.”
36 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, f. 13r-15r.
37 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, f. 13r.
38 Meaning “light suspicion of heresy.”
39 Meaning “strong suspicion of heresy.”
40 Meaning they were reconciled into the Catholic Church after punishment.
witches, apostates, *maleficas*, idolaters, and blasphemous of our Holy Religion.” The Inquisition rejoiced in their intervention that, perhaps, prevented a fate similar to the fifty witches executed some fifteen years before by Balanza.

The Doctor Olivan took care to officially notify the Council of Castilla of the Inquisition’s actions, while simultaneously justifying its right to legal oversight. A week after the *auto de fe* he wrote the Royal Council in Madrid: “I have already written the King how we concluded the cases of these witches and others who pertained to us, decided upon by the consultants who were the best lawyers in the city and people with experience and jealous of our Holy Catholic faith,” and it was determined they should be processed by the Inquisition and thus an *auto de fe* was held. Within six months of its initial inquests, the witch situation in the Valley of Salazar concluded. The bulk of the witches landed in the Inquisition’s tribunal, while four (including the town mayor), were punished locally. This event demonstrated Inquisitorial power, while also establishing that the local court seemed to be a natural place for witch trials to begin, though not necessarily conclude. Though unevenly, the witches in this decade were

41 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, f. 13r. The reconciled witches were: Maria Lopez de Esparza, Joana Miguel Guinda, Catelina Torrea, Mariato Mario, Catelina Veginder, Catelina de Jaurieta, Maria Cubiat, Joana Quiape, and Aseli Melida. Testimony from many of these witches appears in the secular court documents.

42 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, 11r: “Ya escribí a V.S. como estaban concluso los procesos de estas brujas y de ciertas personas comendados de ver por loa consultores, que para ello fueron llamados de los mejores letrados que hay en esta ciudad y personas de experiencia, y celosos de la nuestra santa fe católica.”

43 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, 13r; AGN, 63994 (1540).
shared between the courts and few sentences were handed down on either side of the judicial divide.

For three decades, few people were accused of witchcraft and sorcery, and neither tribunal processed many trials for these crimes. The Court and Council of Navarra prosecuted only two witches (1555 and 1561), and the Inquisition’s tribunal sentenced only seven people charged with *Supersiticiones.* The absence of witch trials, however, bore no reflection on the presence of witch belief, and the potential for another battle over Navarra’s witches.

6.4 The Clash Continues, 1575

The hand of the Inquisition was present in the leading witch trial that sparked witch fears throughout Navarra in 1575-76. As town *alcaldes* and court officials searched for witches throughout Navarra, more and more villagers were accused and arrested. While the potential for a repeat from 1525 lingered, there were differences from the witch concerns of fifty years earlier. Situated against a backdrop of established contentions regarding jurisdiction over witches’ secular and spiritual crimes, were the directions of the council in Granada, support from the Kingdom of Castilla, and the Inquisitorial victory of 1540.

44 Henningsen, unpublished *Relaciones de causas* data for all *Supersticiones* in the Logroño tribunal.
In August of 1575, two young boys from the village of Anocibar accused their aunt Maria Johan of taking them to the witches’ gatherings. The village priest denounced her to the Council, accusing her of diabolism, heresy, apostasy, and maleficia. The children alleged she had renounced her faith, made a pact with the devil, and reveled at the witches’ gatherings she had forced them to attend. But she also was accused of maleficia, especially the poisoning of vast wheat fields in the town of Salveatorena. The young boys also implicated two other witches, Maria Xandua and Miguel Cubiri, and did not escape the watchful notice of the Inquisitors. Within several months of the arrests of the accused, the Inquisition sought jurisdiction over these souls.

Despite the quiet of the preceding decades, the Inquisition had continued to jealously guard their declared jurisdiction over cases of witchcraft from the past half century. Immediately following notice of these imprisoned witches, the Inquisition issued strong reminders to the Council in Navarra of the protocol surrounding witchcraft, and their ultimate authority. Unfortunately, this did not happen before the swift execution of Maria Johan by the secular authorities on October 25, only two months following her accusation. Nor did their intervention save Miguel Cubiri from execution at the hands of the secular authorities of Navarra in November 1575. Several

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45 AGN, 69853 (1575).
46 AGN, 69853 (1575).
47 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 831, f. 100r-103r. List of the accused witches transferred to the Inquisition.
weeks after Maria’s public execution in Pamplona, the Inquisitor Salvatierra, prosecutor of the Council of the Inquisition, wrote the Court and Council of Navarra. In a forceful letter from November 1575, he informed them he was aware of the large number of witches (thirty-six) imprisoned by the Council. Further, he knew they had executed some and had also interrogated some under torture. He reminded them that these actions defied what had been decided, and asserted the Inquisition’s rights over the “knowledge and punishment of the crime of heresy and of those who have had a tacit or explicit pact with the devil.”

He declared the imprisoned witches to be “heretics, apostates of the Holy Catholic Faith” since they renounced God and worshipped the devil and thus concluded that “they pertain to the knowledge of the Holy Office of the Inquisition.”

Inquisitor Salvatierra highlighted the presence of the diabolical pact in the testimonies that he had received from the Council, while omitting the secular crimes of maleficia also present in their confessions. This key point transcended mere legal squabbles on the physical plane; it had very dire effects for the very souls of the sentenced. Echoing doubts about the secular authorities’ competence from 1530, he invoked the grave consequences of the Council’s previous failures: “And what is worse, the judges have condemned and executed the witches in the fire, and since they were

48 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 831, f. 100r: “Conocimiento, punición y castigo del crimen y delito de la herejía y de los que tacita o expresamente han tenido o tienen pacto con el demonio.”

49 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 831, f. 100r: “Herejes, apostates de la santa fe Católica…pertenece el conocimiento de las dichas causas al Santo Oficio de la Inquisición”
excommunicated and the secular judges do not have the power to absolve them, they
died in mortal sin and out of the brotherhood of the Roman Church.” He insisted they
abandon this trend and follow “the form and order of the law, of which they should not
be ignorant.” Salvatierra underscored the gravity of salvation for their souls. This was
not the first time this concern had been raised, as the Vicar general Rena had similar
worries about the damnation of the unfortunate souls in 1525.

The Royal Council vigorously defended its actions, highlighting the crimes
against the kingdom that placed the witches in their hands. In a letter from the same
month (November) they retorted: “These men and women have committed murder of
children and animals, and the women have had unnatural sex with goats and have
killed animals and damaged vineyards and fields, destroying them with poisons and
powders.” Underscoring these crimes—ones that wrought havoc on society and
neighbors—they defiantly announced that “the men of the Royal Council have been and
will continue to be the judges.” Astutely and with reason, the secular court focused on
the secular aspects of the mixed crime of witchcraft. After asserting their legitimate
oversight of these cases, however, the Council assured the Inquisition that, “in the

50 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 831, f. 100r: “Y lo que mas es de dolor, que los dichos oidores y alcaldes han
condenado a pena de muerte…y ejecutado en ellas la dicha quema, que estando como estaban
descomulgadas y no las pudiendo ellos absolver, murieron en pecado mortal y fuera del gremio de la Iglesia
Romana… la forma y orden del derecho, de que no debieron tener ignorancia.”
51 Archivo General de Simancas, Inquisición, P.R. 28-65: “Las dichas mujeres e hombres habian hecho y
cometido muertes en niños y creaturas y haber tenido las mujeres acceso contra natura con cabrones y haber
muerto animales y hecho todos ellos muchos danos en vinas y heredades y otros frutas de la tierra,
destruyéndolos con veneno y polvos e otras cosas.”
process of the prosecution of these crimes, if one or more of the accused have committed a crime of heresy or apostasy, then and only then, will they be remitted to the inquisitors, after they have been sentenced by this tribunal.”52 The Council guarded its right to prosecute the crimes of *maleficia*, while simultaneously promising to release heretics and apostates to the Inquisition—but only *after* they had judged them for their earthly crimes. Problematically, the Inquisitors felt the same way, and had decided on a similar order of operations with themselves taking the lead in 1526. It was therefore not so much who got the witches, but who got them first. Should heresy or *maleficia* take precedence in the judicial order of operations?

The Court and Council shrewdly couched their work in spiritual terms as well in their letter to the King. Recognizing the Inquisition’s chief reason for meting out justice to witches was the concern for their souls (which required absolution only the Inquisition could offer), they added to their justifications for prosecutorial rights: “We have worked hard in this business [of the witches] and will continue to do so, providing a service to God and to Your Majesty, cleaning the land of these evil people.” By framing their work as a service to God in addition to a royal task, they placed their efforts on an equal plane with the services offered by the Inquisition. They coupled this sacred work with the words “evil people”, thereby emphasizing the anti-social nature of these

52 Archivo General de Simancas, Inquisición, P.R. 28-65: “En la prosecución de los dichos delitos, que alguno o algunos de losacusados hayan cometido delito de herejía o apostasía, tan solamente los remitirán por el tal delito a los dichos inquisidores después que hayan sido castigados por este tribunal, conforme a la pena que de derecho se hallare merecer por causa de haber perpetrado los sobredichos delitos.”
criminal subjects, delinquents best handled by secular authorities. They assured the
King “when we note that one of them has committed a crime of heresy or apostasy, only
then will we refer it [to the Inquisition], having been first punished by us for the other
crimes they have committed.”53 While agreeing to turn the witches over to the
Inquisition, the Council simultaneously challenged the judicial order of operations.

In addition to their petition for guarding social order as well as spiritual order,
the Council continued to mount justifications for its rightful jurisdiction. Against
Inquisitorial privilege it argued: “The following inconveniences would follow; First, the
inquisitors are outsiders of this Kingdom and the delinquents are from within and there
are many of them and they do not speak the Romance language, rather a Basque tongue
very insular and different from the common Basque. It is very clear, they cannot proceed
against them with the brevity and quick handling that we are used to here.”54 Thus, it
was not only an issue of linguistic challenges, but an administrative one. The trouble in
translating their “strange tongue” would delay the speed of justice. Keep in mind,
however, that many accused witches lingered in royal prisons for years, and over a
dozen witches died while awaiting sentencing. Further bolstering their argument for

53 Archivo de Simancas, Inquisición, P.R. 28-65: “Que lo que en este negocio hemos trabajado y adelante se
hiciere, se habrá hecho particular servicio a Dios y a Vuestro Majestad, limpiando esta tierra de esta mala
gente…cuando nos constare que alguno de ellos haya cometido delito de herejía o apostasía, tan solamente
se le remitiremos luego, habiendo sido primero castigado por nosotros, de los demás delitos que hubieron
cometido.”

54 Archivo de Simancas, Inquisición, P.R. 28-65: “Se seguirían los inconvenientes: el uno, que como los
dichos inquisidores están fuera de esta reino, y los delincuentes son del y son muchos y no hablan romance,
sino una lengua vascongada muy cerrada y diferente del común Vascuence, es cosa clara, que no se podrá
proceder contra ellos con la brevedad y buen despacho que aquí se acostumbra.”
jurisdiction, the Council raised the issue of finances, arguably a greater area of concern than they admitted. They complained “And the other thing is, the chamber and fiscal of Our Majesty has lost a great amount of money and wealth, when these offenders should be condemned [but are not].” The Royal treasury was depleted by expenditures in beginning these processes, but not being able to finish them. When delinquents were later pardoned by the Inquisition, as had happened in 1540, their material goods were no longer for available for the secular authorities’ confiscation. Throughout Navarra’s witch trials, money remained a constant concern.

Visibly flustered by this jurisdictional battle, the Council of Navarra mounted yet another offence blocking Inquisitorial jurisdiction in another letter to the King, also from November 1575. Abandoning generalities and specifically addressing the recent executions of Mari Johan and Miguel Cubiri, the prosecutor of the Council guarded the rights to the “thirty something women and three men” that the Inquisition sought by emphasizing their deeds of maleficia. He argued: “The inquisitors generally do not know much about those said crimes. And if we refer them and they beg for mercy, they will never get punished with the rigor of our tribunals, the likes of which is necessary and appropriate for such ills.” Their concern was, again, for the crimes that pertained to the secular court, not the Inquisition. If the Inquisition pardoned all witches at will, what

55 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 831, f. 101: “Los dichos inquisidores no suelen conocer de muchos de los dichos delitos. Y si se les remitiesen pidiendo misericordia, no serian castigados con el rigor que en estos tribunales lo seran, lo cual es tan necesario como conveniente por tanto mal.”
message would that send to the population? Further, what of the Court’s right to punish criminals in their midst? Underlying the difference in persecution was the focus of each tribunal, and, perhaps their understanding of the “reality” of the witches’ deeds and the porous definition of witchcraft itself.

The Court and Council’s fight for prosecutorial power reached a crescendo when they postured mounting a court battle against the Inquisition. A memorandum entitled “On the part of the judges of the Superior Court of Navarra, in the business with the inquisitors of Logroño regarding the witches” they set forth nine major points of contention.Important to note among them is the argument against the inquisitors’ abilities to properly be able to decide which cases belonged to whom. The fifth article stated; “The inquisitors do not have to be judges, though it is claimed; yet they are tasked to be able to know and determine which cases pertain to them and which do not, and this is to the detriment of the jurisdiction of the judges.” It was unfair for the inquisitors to decide who had authority over certain cases, and even more troubling considering they were not necessary trained in law. Again, the judicial order of operations was a source of contention.

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57 Archivo General Simancas, Inquisición, PR 28-66, f. 196: “Por parte de los alcaldes de la Corte Mayor de Navarra, en el negocio de los inquisidores de Logroño sobre los brujos y brujas, se pretende lo siguiente”; “Que no han de ser los inquisidores jueces, como lo pretenden sus letras, para conocer y determinar en perjuicio de la jurisdicción de los alcaldes, cuales casos les pertenece a ellos y cuales no.”
Despite this aggressive posturing and outpouring of letters from the Court and Council, this string of witch trials ended up in the arms of the Inquisition. Though the Council managed to execute Mari Juan and Miguel Cubiri, and hand down a few other sentences, the eyes of the Inquisition were fixed firmly on the series of witches being hunted and discovered in villages throughout Navarra and they ultimately succeeded in obtaining authority over almost all of their trials.

6.4.1 Into Inquisitors’ Arms, 1576-77

In March of 1576, Maria Xandua from Anocibar was transferred to the Inquisition. Though she had received the same death sentence as Miguel Cubiri, Maria was spared for unknown reasons. Seizing this chance to save her, her procurador Pedro Larremendi, pushed for her remittance to Logroño, arguing immediately after Miguel’s death in December: “It seems that my client was accused of crimes of heresy, apostasy, and idolatry. This [secular] jurisdiction is neither competent to understand nor determine these crimes. So I ask this case be remitted to the Inquisitors as the competent judges.”\(^58\) He chose his language wisely, succinctly addressing the jurisdictional battles between the two courts. After stressing the unreliable admissions produced by Maria and Miguel’s torture, and the children’s singular accusations, he urged the Council to “revoke the Court’s sentence, and refer this case to the Inquisition, as I have asked. Or

\(^{58}\) AGN, 69852, 118r: “Parece que la dicha mi parte fue acusada de delitos de herejía, apostasía, e idolatría de los cuales delitos no es este fuero competente para conocer ni determinar. Y así pido se remita los inquisidores del Santo Oficio como jueces competentes.”
rather, free my client or amend the sentence she has been given." He even asked the Court of Castilla to intervene in any manner they saw fit. Though Miguel had been swiftly executed after his torture, Larramendi grabbed this last-minute opportunity to save Maria Xandua from the garrote.

The Council did not transfer Xandua to the inquisitors without resistance. They prolonged her case for months to re-examine all the witnesses, including the children.

The arguments set forth by Larramendi calling attention to heresy and apostasy were ultimately successful. The inquisitors, underscoring her admission to diabolism and the anal kiss, explained “Because of this the judges, having killed the others, referred Xandua with a copy of her case to this Holy Office, and having confessed before the Commissary of Pamplona, she was placed in our secret jails on the fourteenth of March 1576.”

After enduring six months in the royal prison, torture, and given a sentence of death, Maria finally arrived at the Inquisition’s tribunal in Logroño. An inquisitorial relación de las causas related the sobering conclusion to the case of Anocibar, reporting:

The boys Miguel and Martín de Olague, were brought before this Holy Office, and having been examined separately... revoked all they had deposed and admitted to raising false testimony against Maria Xandua and her accomplices,

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59 AGN, 69852, 118v: “Revocar la dicha sentencia de Corte, y remitir la causa a las Inquisidores, como lo tengo pedido, o dar mi parte por libre, o moderar la condenación en lo que lugar hubiere.”

60 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, f. 209v: “Por lo cual, los dichos alcaldes, habiendo quemado ya a los dichos, remitieron la persona de la dicha Xandua con la copia de su proceso, a este Santo Oficio, y fue reclusa en las cárcel de él, a 14 de marzo de 1576, habiendo confesado la dicha María Xandua ante el comisario de Pamplona.”

61 Trial summaries sent from each tribunal to the Supreme Council, the Suprema, in Madrid.
and that they never went to the witches’ gatherings nor saw anyone there. And that all they falsely deposed was at the urging of certain people.\textsuperscript{62}

Having separated the children from one another, the inquisitors elicited admissions that the boys had lied and raised false testimony against Maria Xandua, Mari Johan and Miguel Cubiri. It was on the advice of unnamed others, perhaps the parish priest who first reported their allegations. While their testimony finally exonerated Maria Xandua, it did not save her life.\textsuperscript{63}

Over a year had passed since her transfer from the royal jail into the secret jail, and the \textit{relación} reported she became ill and died in inquisitorial hands. Since she had been exonerated by the boys’ revocations, she was afforded a Christian burial by the Inquisition. The pivotal case of Anocibar—the one that sent ripples of heightened witch fears throughout Navarra—concluded with the simple words: “And the boys returned to their homes.” While the Inquisition’s involvement in Anocibar came too late to save Mari Juan and Miguel, their interference with the rest of the witches cropping up around Navarra ensured that no other witch was executed by secular authorities.

Following the witches of Anocibar, several more witch trials in 1576-1577 concluded before the Inquisition’s judges. As the town of Ciordia sought its witches,

\textsuperscript{62} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, f. 210r: “Miguel y Martín de Olague, muchachos, que fueron mandados traer a este Santo Oficio, donde habiéndose puesto cada uno por si en casas de la cuidad, fueron examinados… revocaron todo lo que habían depuesto y dijeron haber levantado falso testimonio a la dicha María Xandua y sus cómplices, y que nunca fueron a los dichos ayuntamientos ni las vieron allí y que lo que dijeron y depusieron falsamente por consejo de ciertas personas…Y los muchachos se volvieron a sus casas.”

\textsuperscript{63} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, f. 210r.
seven villagers accused Catalina Arana of witchcraft, leading to her arrest. While in prison, she in turn accused nine others of witchcraft. Catalina’s own provisor blamed her for the false accusations against her nine neighbors, and petitioned the Royal Council of Castilla to re-examine Catalina and “take those accused of being witches to the Court of Madrid.” Believing his clients would fare better in Madrid, he asked the Council of Castilla to exercise dominance over the Council of Navarra. Navarra refused to release the witches, and within three months, at least one perished in prison, while two others lay dying. That is where the secular court record stopped and the Inquisitorial record began.

Catalina was transferred to the Holy Office on March 14, 1576. A relación from November 1577 explained that since she had testified to ‘adoring and giving reverence to the devil, and reneging God and Our Lady and all the saints’, the secular court accepted this case involved overt acts of heresy and apostasy, and thus referred her to the Inquisition’s judges. Once before the inquisitors, Catalina changed her testimony, first denying parts and then revoking it entirely. The inquisitors reported: “She claimed that all she had said was false and revoked it all, and she denied having committed any crimes at all. And even though the Holy Office re-examined the witnesses anew and

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64 They are: Joan Lopez Guibela, Joan Lopez de Ibillos, Theresa, María Mazquiaran, María San Joan, Graci Sasarte, María Sasarte, Catalina de Aguirre, and María Juan.
65 AGN, 327214, 43r: “Los que están acusados de brujos y brujas los quieren llevar a la corte de Madrid.”
66 This is the same day Maria Xandua, and many other witches from Navarra, were transferred to Logroño.
67 AHN, Inquisition, Libro 833, f. 257r: “Le adoraban y hacían reverencia...y renegaban de Dios y de Nuestra Señora y de todos santos.”
they ratified their depositions, she persevered in her denial.”\textsuperscript{68} Her refusal to confess earned her a sentence of torture. The sixty-year-old Catalina was tortured but “she persevered in her same denial and...so the inquisitors voted that she would appear in the auto, where she was abjured de vehementi.”\textsuperscript{69} The Inquisition sentenced Catalina harshly: in addition to the torture she endured, she was given four-hundred lashings total (half in Logroño and half to be executed in Pamplona) and five years’ exile from her town of Ciordia and the district of Logroño. Catalina’s case demonstrates that the Inquisition was not always eager to absolve accused witches, and also elucidates the importance of confession and contrition within the Inquisition’s judicial paradigm.

From the Valle of Aezcoa arrived another group of six witches before the Inquisition at Logroño on March 14, 1576. The tribunal reported that Mariato Charra had “confessed to the said judges that she was a witch and that a large, ugly, black man took her to the witches’ gathering. And there she danced with the other witches, and the man got on all four legs like a goat and he had [sexual] relations with them and they kissed his backside.”\textsuperscript{70} Because of these heresies, the Council handed all of the accused witches to the Inquisition (save Maria de Garayoa who remained in a local prison as she was too

\textsuperscript{68} AHN, Inquisition, Libro 833, f. 257r: “Que todo cuanto había dicho era falso y lo revocó todo, y negó haber hecho delitos algunos. Y aunque fue acusado y se examinaron por el Santo Oficio los testigos y otros contestos de nuevo y se ratificaron que depusiesen de los dichos...persevero en la dicha negativa.”

\textsuperscript{69} AHN, Inquisition, Libro 833, f. 257r.

\textsuperscript{70} AHN, Inquisition, Libro 833, ff. 206r+v: “Ante los dichos alcaldes dijo que confeso como era bruja y que un hombre negro, grande y feo la llevaba a los ayuntamientos. Y allí consocio a las sobredichas reas y danzaron y bailaron, y el dicho hombre se volvió con cuatro pies como cabrón y tuvo acceso con ellas y le besaron en el trasero.”
ill for travel and soon passed away). Two other witches also perished soon after the transfer: Maria Johan de Ansorena died within the Inquisition’s secret prison, and Gracia de Loperena died after being relocated to a hospital. The surviving witches revoked all of their confessions once in front of the inquisitors, while Mariato ratified most of her previous confessions omitting devil worship. This refusal to confess to all earned her a torture sentence, despite the fact she was quite ill. It was successful, as she ratified her previous statements after the torture, and was sentenced to one hundred lashings and six years of exile from the Inquisition’s district. Though her torture was ordered to be “moderate,” she died several days later.\textsuperscript{71}

The town of Burgui provided another wave of thirteen witches who arrived before the tribunal of Logroño.\textsuperscript{72} This case differed from other ones, as most of the testimony came from children, an irregularity promptly noted by the inquisitors. Furthermore, many of the witnesses were the same accusers from the clerical witch trial in Burgui several years earlier (1569).\textsuperscript{73} Because of these questionable qualities, the inquisitors re-examined the witnesses several times, and after separating them from one another, the children admitted that “in all they have said they have deposed falsely and have raised false testimony against the accused. And some said they had done this at the

\textsuperscript{71} AHN, Inquisition, Libro 833, ff. 189-190.
\textsuperscript{72} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, ff. 208v-209r. They are Catalina Ochoa, her daughter Isabel Escandi, Pascuala Surion, Andela Ortiz, Catalina Petruco, Maria Mea, Maria Gracieta, Agueda Maria, Catalina Ezquer, Maria Ezquer, Catalina Ezquer, Maria Martin and Pedro de Alcacaoa.
\textsuperscript{73} Archivo Diocesano de Pamplona, Proceso de 1569. Agiunaga, carton 13.
request of certain people now deceased.” The interrogation techniques used by the inquisitors in this instance, such as private interviews, worked on behalf of the accused villagers of Burgui. None of them were sentenced, none tortured, none died in the secret jails. The Inquisitors absolved them de la instancia and they returned home to the village of Burgui.

In the end, more than fifty accused witches were remitted to the Inquisition. Thirty-eight women and seven men all received absolution, except for three witches who were sentenced to whipping and exile and appeared at the auto de fe in 1577. While the Inquisition did not sentence any of them to death, several witches did perish within their secret jails. It can be argued that the Inquisition’s involvement stopped the waves of witch fears that rippled throughout Navarra after the public execution of Mari Juan and Miguel Cubiri in Pamplona in 1575. As town alcaldes sought their witches, witches were easily found. If not for the interference and absolution of the Holy Office, these waves could have morphed into panic (as would happen in 1609). But while the Inquisition was eager to involve itself in 1575, this would not be the case two decades later.

74 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, ff. 208v-209r: “En todos sus dichos habían dicho y depuesto falsedad y habían levantado falso testimonio a las dichas personas. Y algunas dijeron que lo habían depuesto por inducimento de ciertas personas difuntas.”
75 Dismissal of the case.
76 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 733, 196r-210r.
6.5 Ambivalence, 1595

For two decades, no witches appeared in the courts of Navarra.\textsuperscript{77} This calm was disrupted when the Lord Andueza of the Valley of Araiz, “discovered” and accused a large group of villagers of witchcraft in the spring of 1595. Remarkably, this complicated case involved three different jurisdictions: It began with the seigniorial power of the Lord Andueza, was then processed by the Court and Council of Pamplona, and later referred to the tribunal at Logroño, only to be rejected by the Inquisition.\textsuperscript{78}

With the help of his son, Lord Andueza extracted confessions from his inmates who admitted to numerous secular and spiritual crimes. These nineteen accused witches, including four children, were referred to the secular court of Navarra, imprisoned in its jails, and, unfortunately, quickly began to die within its damp and unhealthy walls, including the two youngest children, sisters aged nine and thirteen. They ratified their confessions in front of the Council, only to shortly thereafter recant their initial depositions. Despite the tender age of many of the witches and the allegations they were coerced by the Lord to confess, the Council accepted these confessions and sentenced the surviving witches to whippings and exile. Curiously, their procurator did not initially seem to push their transfer to the Inquisition, despite the heresy and apostasy featured in their declarations. Rather, his defense argued their

\textsuperscript{77} One healer accused of sorcery was tried by the secular court in 1590, and seven people total were tried under Superstitiones by the Logroño tribunal, but none for witchcraft.

\textsuperscript{78} Idoate, La brujería, 133.
confessions were forced by the Lord Andueza, who threatened to burn, mutilate, and kill them unless they confessed. It was through a commissary of the Inquisition that their case was made known to the tribunal of Logroño. While it is not surprising these witches—accused of diabolical pacts, diabolical sex, and other heresies—would pique the attention of the Inquisition, it is surprising that the Inquisition would have no interest in dealing with these nefarious revelers.

The inquisitor Lombrera from the tribunal of Logroño submitted a report to the Inquisitor General on the situation with these witches in April of 1595. As had transpired so many times before, he reported that the Council of Navarra had imprisoned some witches and “having gotten news of this” the tribunal requested the Council of Navarra to send the original charges and testimony. A commissary of the Inquisition then examined the cases, “to discover if they have committed a crime of apostasy or other sins against the Faith.”

While the witches had confessed to diabolical sex, devil worship, and the renunciation of God, crimes that fell squarely within the Inquisition’s domain, they disregarded the case. The jurisdiction they had often jealously guarded, was not of interest to them at the moment. Inquisitor Lombrera’s letter suggests that all the witches’ revocations influenced their ambivalence. He reported: “And all of them revoked the

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79 AGN, 071319 (1595), 118r-v.
80 AHN, Inquisition, Libro 791, f. 353r, as in Idoate, 358: “Para saber si habían cometido delito de apostasía o otros contra la Fe.”
confessions they had given the secular justices and the judges of the Court... And so we have proceeded up to the point with some caution in this case because of its poor quality.”

Lombrera also found the Inquisition’s involvement in witchcraft to be more trouble than it was worth, divulging: “This business with the witches has caused the Inquisition much work, waste, and grief, they yield from it little fruit, and as experience has shown, and as the letters and decrees of the Supreme Council show us.” In addition to his general air of caution, Lombrera emphasized that little good could come from this particular case, but acknowledged the tribunal would ultimately defer to the Suprema’s directions. In a noteworthy gesture of concern, the inquisitor pushed for a swift response, informing the Inquisitor General that the accused were still imprisoned and many were dying.

The accused witches from the Valley of Araiz remained in Pamplona. A letter found in their secular witch trial elucidated their rejection by the Inquisition. The licenciado Lombrera wrote to the Royal Council of Navarra: “For the moment these cases do not belong to the Holy Office, and so we re-send them to the judges,” adding that if something seemed to pertain to the Catholic Faith, to send it their way at that

81 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 791, f. 353r, as in Idoate, 358r: “Y todos ellos...revocaron las confesiones que habían hecho antes la justicia seglar de los lugares donde fueron presos y ante los alcaldes de Corte...Y hemos procedido hasta ahora con algún cuidado en este negocio por ser de la calidad que es.”

82 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 791, f. 353r, as in Idoate, 358: “Estos negocios de brujas suelen ser en las inquisiciones de mucho trabajo, gasto, y pesadumbre, y sacase de ellos poco fruto, como la experiencia lo ha mostrado y se da a entender por las dichas cartas y decretos del Consejo.”
time. After eight months enduring diseased prison conditions, the surviving witches of Araiz were finally freed, with only one sentence handed down to a single male witch. The tribunal of Logroño had kept their hands clean of this witch problem.

For more than three decades, the tribunal of Logroño remained uninvolved with witches. From 1577 until 1610, not a single witch was processed by the Logroño tribunal. In fact, no witches or sorceress were tried by the Court and Council either. But under this quiet façade, lay a deep reservoir of witch belief, beliefs that had the potential to morph into witch fears given the proper conditions.

6.6 The Witch Panic, 1609-1614

It is in this moment of calm in Navarra that the largest witch panic in early modern Europe began. In the nutritive soil of witch belief lay the potential for panic, glimpses which may have been seen in 1575-76. Ironically, while it was the Inquisition’s interference at that time that cooled the witch fever, it would be the Inquisition’s handling in 1609 that fanned its flames. What began as a tale of the witch cult from a young domestic working on the French side of the Pyrenees, would end in the accusations of thousands of villagers, the confessions of hundreds, and the executions of eleven people, six living and five in effigy. Further, it would prompt a significant change

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83 AGN, 071319 (1595), 113r: “No tratar por ahora de estas causas en el Santo Oficio, y así, se vuelvan a enviar a esos señores alcaldes.”
84 AGN, 071319 (1595).
in the legal approach to witch accusations within the Spanish Inquisition, one that ensured that never again would a single witch be executed under its supervision.\textsuperscript{85}

Recall that a witch panic differed greatly from witch belief, it was a dangerous mutation of witch belief. Witch panics, though short lived, were explosive and often tore communities apart. Gustav Henningsen defined a witch craze as “an explosive amplification caused by a temporary syncretism of the witch beliefs of the common people with those of the more specialized or educated classes.”\textsuperscript{86} While witch belief was transmitted by established belief systems within the local community, witch crazes were dysfunctional and broke traditional patterns of witches, sometimes engulfing the majority of the population. This witch panic had wrought havoc in the French Basquelands and then spread across the border into the Spanish Basquelands.

According to the Bishop of Pamplona, Antonio Venegas de Figueroa, witches were not a problem until intense witch hunting began on the French side of the Pyrenees.\textsuperscript{87} It is there, in the French Basquelands, that demonologist and judge Pierre De Lancre from the Parlement de Bordeaux led a vigorous witch hunt that, according to him, triumphed with the execution of eighty witches. He considered the Basque people to be particularly prone to witchcraft and suspected the entire region was infested with

\textsuperscript{85} Henningsen, The Witches’ Advocate, 357-377.
\textsuperscript{86} Henningsen, The Witches’ Advocate, 391.
witches. Villagers on both sides of the border helped spread these rumors, while an ambitious rector from the town of Vera (in Navarra), Lorenzo de Hualde, reinforced them through his fiery sermons. Having served as a translator for Judge De Lancre’s anti-witch crusade in the French Basque region of Pays du Labourd, Hualde zealously brought his demonological knowledge and witch fears into Navarra. A letter from the Bishop Venegas to the Inquisition reported that Hualde and other local priests “gave sermons...maintaining that out of the entire population of the two villages more than three quarters were witches....and preached from the pulpits exactly what the child witches of France had said.” With entire churches being routinely inoculated with witch fears and convinced that they were amongst witches, there is little wonder how the panic was created and perpetuated. It is easy to see how witch beliefs could morph in witch problems and even panic. The socially accepted truth creates reality, and the reality was that in 1609-10, Navarra was swarming with witches.

Through a combined result of voluntary and involuntary confessions, mass denunciations, and preaching to exhort clemency, dozens of witches were brought to the attention of the Inquisition and many to its prisons. Of these numerous witches, thirty-one would be formally sentenced. Eleven prisoners remained *negativos*, meaning they would not confess to witchcraft and these were to be burned. Only six of these damned

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souls were still alive after their imprisonments, as an epidemic had spread through the
prison and carried away five witches. Death did not spare the deceased witches,
however, and they were burned in effigy. The punishments for the witches were meted
out at the *auto de fe*. The *auto de fe* was a penitential ceremony that served as a public
warning for transgressions, and entertainment for many people who traveled great
lengths to witness these elaborate ritual of penance and punishment.

Intrigued by the sect of witches, thousands of villagers flocked to the *auto de fe* in
November of 1610. As evidenced by an account of the scene by a commissary of the
Inquisition, the *auto* proved to be exceptionally well-attended. He marveled: “Never
before have so many people been gathered together in this town. It is estimated that
over thirty thousand souls have assembled here from France, Aragon, Navarra, Vizcaya
and various parts of Castilla.” He concluded with the key reason for this enthusiasm
was “the publication of the announcement that the vile sect of the witches was to be
revealed at this *auto de fe*.” The *auto* lasted several days and did not fail to impress the
people. The *negativos* sentenced to death were cloaked in *sanbenitos* (penitential smocks)
and *corozas* (penitential hats) covered with devils and flames, indicating they were to be
burned. The effigies of the five deceased witches were held aloft by poles, followed by
small coffins containing their bones. Lasting several days, this dramatic ceremony

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impressed the villagers, as was shown by a pamphlet that concluded: “Having listened to so many ghastly monstrosities for the space of two whole days...we all returned to our homes, crossing ourselves the while.”

Reportedly witnessed by 30,000 souls, the *auto de fe* did little to subdue the witch fears. The *auto*, coupled with a preaching campaign, effectively fanned the flames. The witch craze followed a predictable pattern: indoctrination of fear, mass denunciations, forced confessions, and ultimately village violence. As we have seen, there were several documented cases of vigilante ‘justice’, most likely accompanied by many unrecorded instances. In February 1611, the Inquisition’s Supreme Council, the *Suprema*, received notice from the tribunal in Logroño about the state of things: There were two-thousand exposed witches, 339 confessions had been made, and another one-thousand six hundred witches were suspected. As a result, the *Suprema* instructed one of the Logroño’s inquisitors, the Inquisitor Alonso Salazar de Frias, to tour the area and issue an Edict of Grace. The Edict promised those who gave a full confession exemption from punishment and excommunication, and reinstatement into the Catholic Church.

In May 1611, Salazar began a momentous eight-month long visitation throughout the tribunal’s territory. Within a week he had published the Edict in Santesteban and the

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92 Juan de Mongastón, *Relación de las personas que salieron al auto de la fe*, (1611); as cited in Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 193.
response was overwhelming; the number of people who sought to confess astonished him. He quickly began noticing discrepancies and great injustices, as in the Bay of Biscay for example, where the majority of some one-thousand-five-hundred punished witches had been children under the age of discretion. As the Inquisitor Salazar toured the region with the Edict of Grace, the panic had reached its apex, caused by a combination of rumors, propaganda, and as Salazar himself noted, the sermons and Edict itself. In his second report to the Inquisitor General in the Spring of 1612, he recommended: “Under the present circumstances, new Edicts and prolongation of those conceded will not be beneficial. On the contrary, any method of airing these matters publically within this tense atmosphere is harmful and can cause them greater and more widespread harm than they have already suffered.” He then advocated complete silence and discretion with the shrewd observation that: “In my experience I have seen that there were neither witches nor bewitched in a village until they were talked about and written about.”

Throughout his visitation, Salazar noted indiscretions and judicial misdeeds, communicating his concerns and recommendations through seven letters to la Suprema. His skepticism and demands for constraint, however, were ridiculed by his colleagues at

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* AHN, Inquisition, Leg. 1679, Exp. 2.1, No. 2[a], 16r. As quoted in Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 343. “No solo no les conviene nuevos edictos y prorrogaciones de los concedidos, sino que cualquier modo de ventilar en público de estas cosas, con el estado achacoso que tienen, es nocivo y les podría ser de tanto y de mayor daño como el que ya padecen”; “saco de las experiencias que he visto, de que no hubo ni brujas no embrujados en el lugar hasta que se comenzó a tratar y escribir de ellos.”
the Logroño tribunal, the inquisitors Valle and Becerra.\textsuperscript{99} They had launched their own written campaign seeking to convince the \textit{Suprema} in Madrid of the pressing reality of the evil witch sect.

The \textit{Suprema}, thus armed with the conflicting reports from the inquisitors Valle and Beccera on one hand, and Salazar on the other; the records of the eighty-four trials conducted in Logroño; and the presence of two accused witches, reached its verdict.\textsuperscript{100} Their decisive resolutions would dictate the Inquisition’s approach to witchcraft until its dissolution in 1834. In August of 1614 they issued their instructions, which included witchcraft regulations from 1526, as well as sixteen clauses taken from Salazar’s own recommendations.\textsuperscript{101} Their statement began with a scathing chastisement of the Logroño tribunal for its imprudent handing of the witches, highlighting that the witch panic showed a clear break from the Inquisition’s usual restraint in such matters.

\section*{6.6.1 New Rules for Witches, 1614}

The witch panic and its lingering effects prompted updated, concise protocols for cases of witchcraft. The new instructions featured thirty-two clauses that clearly sought to avoid another witch panic and prevent irregularities such as child testimonies, mass denunciations, and accusations in the absence of any proof. The first protocol thus

\textsuperscript{99} Henningsen, \textit{The Witches’ Advocate}, 308-12.
\textsuperscript{100} Henningsen, \textit{Salazar Documents}, Chapter 12.
\textsuperscript{101} Henningsen, \textit{The Salazar Documents}, 457.
advised: “Henceforth when cases concerning this question arise, the inquisitors shall make inquiries and find out whether the deaths of children and persons whom the witches confess to have killed, really took place…and whether there were any other circumstances that may explain their deaths.” This clause advocated accountability in proving whether or not a crime had even occurred, while also promoted thorough investigations that privileged alternate, non-preternatural explanations. In a similar vein, the Suprema’s third clause advocated confirmation of “whether they really go to the meadows and gatherings to cause the harm they confess to”, which spoke both to a legitimate search for proofs and harkened back to concerns from junta in 1526.

Similarly, the Supreme Council recommended inquisitors investigate the devastations and damage the witches say they caused, as well as the weather magic they are credited with (clauses five and seven). Remarkably, their advice also included an education campaign that advised inquisitors to have local preachers explain to villagers that natural misfortunes occur because of God’s wrath due to our sins, “or because of weather”, and disasters also could occur in regions with no witches at all.

The Suprema’s judicially sound approach sought to prevent further errors in matters of witchcraft, and additional safeguards were put in place. Perhaps one of the

102 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 334, 245r: “Que los inquisidores en las causas que de aquí adelante se ofrecieren de esta materia inquieren y se informen si las muertes de criaturas y personas que las brujas confiesan haber muerto sucedieron...u otras circunstancias para saber de qué murieron.”

103 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 334, 245v: “Que procuren saber si estas van realmente a sus prados y juntas a hacer los daños que dicen ellas.”

104 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 334, 245v: “O por la disposición del tiempo.”
most impressive aspects of these new instructions was the effort made to remedy the errors already made in the panic. The Suprema expressed “the deep regret felt by the Holy Office and in particular by the Council, for the vexations and violence which the alcaldes of the villages without judicial authority...have inflicted on the accused.”

Furthermore, they ordered: “the sambenitos of the persons relaxed in the auto de fe of 1610 and of the rest who were reconciled...are never to be hung on display.” They also threatened punitive action against any commissioner of the Inquisition engaged in intimidation or coercion of confessions. Interestingly, the Suprema alluded to the jurisdictional conflicts between the Inquisition and the secular courts in an unexpected way. The twenty-seventh clause declared: “The inquisitors are to leave the [secular] Court or any other justices free to prosecute and punish these offenses without impeding them judicially or extra-judicially, or by other obstructions or personal intercession.”

The silence urged by their penultimate clause spoke volumes. The Supreme Council of the Inquisition ordered: “There should be silence in these issues. Make it clear to the commissioners and confessors, so they approach this orderly. And that only in the

105 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 334, 251r: “Se declare el justo dolor y sentimiento que ha tenido el Santo Oficio y en particular el Consejo se las violencias y vejaciones con que los alcaldes de los lugares, sin tener jurisdicción...han hecho con los notados de esta secta.”
106 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 334, 249v: “Que de las personas que en el auto de 1610 fueron relajadas y los demás así en el auto...no se pongan sambenitos en ningún tiempo.”
107 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 334, 251v: “Que los inquisidores dejen libremente a la dicha Corte y cualesquiera otras justicias proceder y castigar en estos agravios sin impedírselo por ninguna vía judicial ni extrajudicialmente, ni con otras intercesiones ni medios particulares.”
necessity of someone making a confession should this issue be raised, and they must preserve the same secrecy as in the other cases dealt with by the Holy Office.”¹⁰⁸ In a fitting conclusion, the Inquisition—Master of Secrecy—urged silence and privacy in matters of witchcraft. The new instructions concluded with instructions to bind together all the materials and suggestions from the Supreme Council so that it “shall always be at hand to guide the inquisitors in future cases.”

Forged from the protocols of 1526 and the recommendations made by the inquisitor Salazar, the Suprema had crafted a comprehensive set of instructions that featured specific safeguards to ensure that another witch panic would not occur under the Inquisition’s supervision. This new compilation would prove to be effective, and another witch panic was never again seen on Spanish soil. Nor was another witch sentenced to execution by the Inquisition (nor by the Court and Council of Navarra, for that matter). As witch panic is not equivalent to witch belief, cases of witchcraft and superstitions continued to be tried by the tribunal of Logroño. Throughout the remainder of the seventeenth century (from 1613 until 1694), one-hundred-sixty-seven

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¹⁰⁸ AHN, Inquisición, Libro 334, 252v: “Se ponga silencio en estas conferencias, mandándole así a los dichos comisarios y confesores, para que lo vengan a entender todos con orden, que solamente en la necesidad que tuvieren de tratar de estas cosas para el descargo de sus conciencias, lo puedan hacer, y guarden en este crimen el mismo recato y secreto que en lo demás que toca al Santo Oficio.”
people accused of *Supersticiones* fell under Logroño’s jurisdiction, though few were accused of witchcraft.\(^{109}\)

### 6.7 The Last Witches of Both Courts, 1647

Maria de Ollo was a sixty-year-old healer and a beggar in Pamplona. Rumored to have “good hands,” her services were sought and used by many villagers. But her profession made her vulnerable to accusations of *causing* ailments (in order to extort money for their cure) and exposed her to the revenge of unhappy customers. In April 1647, more than ten witnesses testified against her. Their testimonies revealed her extensive reputation for being a sorceress and a witch. Her accusations included causing the illness of a young girl, of harming those who refused her charity when she begged, and even of taking a villager to the *aquelarre* when he was a child some three decades earlier. For twenty-nine years this witness had guarded his secret out of fear she would kill him. He reiterated her reputation for witchcraft and reported she had done much harm to many people.\(^ {110}\)

Arrested alongside Maria de Ollo was seventy-eight-year-old Maria de Yrisarri, another one of Pamplona’s healers. Though she was an old, poor woman engaged in unauthorized healing practices, she did not suffer from the same *mala fama* ascribed to

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\(^{109}\) Data from Henningsen’s unpublished *Supersticiones* log given to me in 2012. Recall that the category of *Supersticiones* encompassed healing, superstitious prayers, and other superstitions; and that the Logroño tribunal oversaw three regions in addition to Navarra.

\(^{110}\) AGN, 16058 (1647), 12v.
Maria de Ollo. She was not accused of maleficia and had fewer villagers testifying against her; she even had several villagers provide testament to her being a buena cristiana. Maria de Yrisarri did not hide her healing activities, and openly confessed it was true that she had blessed certain sick people, using the “words of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.”\textsuperscript{111} She justified her heterodox, feminine powers of healing by invoking the authorized and masculine support of the abbot of Atondo who had once looked at the lines of her palm and declared she had “a particular gift of God, and by saying the prayers mentioned and giving blessings, she could remedy the sick and do much good.”\textsuperscript{112} She emphatically denied she had done wrong; and argued her gift was from God, so said the Abbot, and thus she cured in God’s name. If she cured in the name of God, was there a diabolical pact? Was this heresy?

In June 1647, the procurador for Maria de Ollo and Maria Yrisarri argued his clients should be transferred to the Inquisition. In his defense of Yrisarri, Joan Francisco Enríquez argued she was a woman of good morals, a widow, and a buena cristiana. In addition to rejecting the court’s sentence of torture and arguing for her freedom, he urged the court to “submit her case to the Holy Tribunal of the Inquisition” in case the

\textsuperscript{111} AGN, 16058 (1647), 45r.
\textsuperscript{112} AGN, 16058 (1647) 45v: “Tenia particular Gracia de Dios y que diciendo las dichas oraciones y haciéndoles unas bendición con eso se remedirían los enfermos y demás de esto le dijo que podía hacer mucho bien.”
accusations included “some type of heresy.”\textsuperscript{113} The Court’s response to this recommendation was definitive and swift: “We declare there is no place for now to submit this case to the tribunal of Logroño of the Inquisition. And our Court will continue with the justice of this case where it began and where it will stay until its conclusion.”\textsuperscript{114} The Royal Court refused to relinquish authority over these women.

Surprisingly, within several months the Royal Council announced: “We remit the case of Maria de Yrisarri to the Logroño tribunal of the Holy Inquisition.”\textsuperscript{115} They simultaneously issued the same declaration on behalf of Maria de Ollo. Though the Court was silent as to the reasons behind their order, it is likely that a familiar of the Inquisition held a role in this, likewise it is possible their procurador also influenced this transfer. The Court’s decision infuriated the prosecutor who demanded a reversal in the decision.

In a strongly worded demand, the prosecutor petitioned the Council to revoke the lower court’s order remitting the case to Inquisitorial hands. He insisted the case remain within the Royal Court so that social justice may be served. He emphasized their criminality, arguing: “The accused have caused many evils in this city and to different

\textsuperscript{113} AGN, 16058 (1647), 38r: “Sea remetida con la causa y pleito al Santo Tribunal de la Inquisición caso que el otro delito o delitos sean especie de herejía.”

\textsuperscript{114} AGN, 16058 (1647), 43r: “Declara no haber lugar por ahora el remitirse esta causa al tribunal del Santo Oficio de la Inquisición de Logroño. Y el nuestro fiscal siga su justicia en nuestra corte donde esta comenzada esta causa hasta su conclusión.”

\textsuperscript{115} AGN, 16058 (1647), 86r: “Se remite esta causa la dicha María de Yrisarri al tribunal de la Santa Inquisición de la nuestra ciudad de Logroño.”
people, causing illness and even worse. And they have the reputation of being witches, sorceresses, and for these reasons it pertains to our Court and Supreme Court to punish them for the crimes they have committed against the republic.”\textsuperscript{116} By underscoring the secular nature of their crimes, he reinforced the Court and Council’s jurisdiction over these women. His astute argument was not novel, as it had long been asserted by the Royal Court that punishment of secular crimes should take precedence. But he bolstered this standard argument by adding another tactical point. He pointed out that proof of their \textit{maleficia} resulting from a diabolical pact or other heresy was missing from the case, reasoning: “Whereas on the other hand: It is known that crimes they have committed pertain to our Court and Council.”\textsuperscript{117} There was no proof of heresy or a diabolical pact, rather the reports centered on injury to neighbors and \textit{mala fama}. Though their cases had been submitted to the Inquisition, they physically remained in the royal jail, and in November 1647, the secular court sentenced them to ten years’ banishment, a sentence they never served.\textsuperscript{118}

The Inquisition’s \textit{relaciones de causa} regarding Maria Yrissari commenced on January 1648.\textsuperscript{119} In contrast to the two-hundred-and-twenty-two folios of reports from

\textsuperscript{116} AGN, 16058 (1647), 88r: “Las acusadas han causado muchos males en esta ciudad en diferentes personas causándoles enfermedades y otras cosas peores y están en opinión de brujas, hechiceras, y por esta parte toca el castigarlos al vuestra corte y Consejo y por los delitos que han cometido perturbando la república.”

\textsuperscript{117} AGN, 16058 (1647), 88r: “Por lo cual: Es conocimiento de los delitos cometidos toca a nuestro Corte y Consejo.”

\textsuperscript{118} AGN, 16058 (1647), 107r-108r.

\textsuperscript{119} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 838, ff. 19v.
the Royal Court, the file from the Inquisition’s records on both sorceresses covers a meager eight folios total. Their shortened “case summaries” did not provide names of witnesses, detailed reports, arguments set forth by the inquisitors, nor the defenses made by the attorney for the accused. The summary related that the Inquisition had asked “the Court and Council of our Kingdom to remit to this Holy Office the accused and the original trial,” a request that the Court only partially complied with. The Court did hand over the trial records to the inquisitors, but not Maria Yrisarri. In September of 1648, the relación reports that the inquisitors began to examine the witnesses from the original trial to determine whether or not the case involved heresy. The reports from the inquisitors make clear that their attention was geared towards heretical acts. From their interrogations, they concluded that she had “an implicit pact with the devil and that she was also suspected of heretical acts.” The inquisitors were unable to interrogate the seventy-eight-year-old Maria, however, as she died from illness two months later in the royal jails on November 9, 1648, a year-and-a-half after her procurador had originally petitioned for her transfer to the Inquisition.

Maria de Ollo, on the other hand, was transferred to the Inquisition’s secret jail on November 7, 1648 after the Inquisition had conducted its interrogations confirming

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120 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 838, ff. 19v-23r.
121 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 838, f. 20v: “Corte y Consejo de Nuestro Reino remitiendo a este Santo Oficio la dicha Rea y el proceso original.”
122 AHN, Inquisición, Libro 838, f. 21r: “Pacto implícito con el demonio y que también estaba sospecha de hechos heréticas.”
heresy was involved.\textsuperscript{123} The \textit{relación} emphasized her “superstitions” and the report about her attendance at the witches’ gathering and raising of toads. Though no information was provided about the witness, or even when the alleged crime occurred, the inquisitors shared a villager’s deposition that “she took him out of his bed and to a certain spot in the countryside where she made him guard toads with a little stick, while she danced with others and kissed certain body parts of a man to whom they all gave reverence.”\textsuperscript{124} The \textit{Calificadores} (inquisitors designated to assess whether it fell to their jurisdiction) confirmed she “had an implicit and explicit pact with the devil,” and formally charged Maria with heresy, asking for her transfer from the royal prison to the secret jail on September 29, 1648.\textsuperscript{125} Though Maria arrived in the secret jail in November 1648, it was not until February 5, 1649 that she finally testified in front of the inquisitors, confessing to her healing practices, while asserting they were done in conformity with God’s will. Within a month of her interrogation, sixty-year-old Maria became very ill and was transferred to a hospital where she died on May 11, 1649.\textsuperscript{126} More than two years had passed since her initial arrest.

The contrast between the trials of these sorceress processed under both tribunals is telling. The Court and Council focused on reports of \textit{maleficia}, and the \textit{fama} of the

\textsuperscript{123} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 838, f. 21r.
\textsuperscript{124} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 838, f. 21v: “Le solía sacar de la cama y le llevaba a cierto sitio en el campo donde le hacía guardar sapos con una barrilla mientras la dicha con otras bailaba besando ciertos partes del cuerpo a un señor a quien todas reverenciaban.”
\textsuperscript{125} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 838, f. 21v: “Tener pacto implícito y explícito con el demonio.”
\textsuperscript{126} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 838, f. 23r.
accused, while the Inquisition neglected to include those testimonies, instead focusing on acts that could be deemed heretical or diabolical. Furthermore, the difference in the richness of the files is striking, and demonstrates clearly the limiting nature of studies that draw exclusively from Inquisition sources. The concerns of the villagers centered around the \textit{fama} of these women who claimed to heal illnesses, but were feared to harm their neighbors. Inquisitorial concerns, on the other hand, focused on heresy and a diabolical pact. The sorcery trial of 1647 also elucidates that, sometimes, being stuck between these two courts had worse effects that being sentenced by one.

6.8 The Last Sorceress in Navarra, 1675

Ironically, the witch trials of the Royal Court and Council of Navarra concluded with a healer accused of sorcery whose case was remitted to the Inquisition, but concluded by the secular judges. The \textit{procurador} of fifty-year-old Maria Esparza actively pursued the Inquisition’s involvement, no doubt counting on their skepticism and mild sentencing. The Inquisition, however, had little interest in this accused sorceress at this late date.

In the town of Asiain, Maria de Esparza was accused of infanticide, being a fake healer, and various acts of \textit{maleficia} including the destruction of vineyards. A chronic beggar, she was also believed to cast spells on those who refused her charity. Along with her husband, she had long-established \textit{fama} for sorcery, and many of her neighbors
truly feared her. Despite some villagers’ positive reviews of her healing skills, such as restoring breastmilk for nursing mothers, the village voices uniformly reported she had “the public opinion, *fama*, and reputation that she is a sorceress and that her husband was too, and this has been and continues to be the public voice and common knowledge.”127 This reputation and the genuine dread she inspired, led to her imprisonment by the authorities of Navarra. Further damning Maria, the Court ordered four medical experts to examine the case, and they inexplicably declared her healing “did not come from a natural virtue nor from the strength of natural remedies nor from the natural virtues of certain words, nor from a miracles, it clearly came from the hand of the devil...Only the devil.”128 Driven by the twelve witnesses testifying against her and the deafening silence of any testimony on her behalf, and punctuated by the damning medical testimony; the Court sentenced Maria harshly to public humiliation, two-hundred lashes, and ten years’ exile from the kingdom of Navarra.

The Licenciado Quadrado mounted the best defense possible given these damning qualities. He argued that her case belonged before the Inquisition. He had already given a vigorous defense, explaining her cures were merely simple prayers, and blasting the medical testimony as “ignorant,” ridiculing their opinions on the causes of the illnesses without an examination of the bodies. But his defense had been disregarded

127 AGN, 17176 (1675), 11v: “Está en opinión, fama y reputación de que es hechicera y que también lo fue el dicho su marido y que tal ha sido y es la publica voz y fama y común decir.”  
128 AGN, 17176 (1675), 28v: “No vino por virtud natural en fuerza de remedios naturales ni en fuerza de virtud natural de las palabras ni por milagro. Concluyese claramente venir por mano del demonio.”
by the Court, and he knew that the Inquisition was the best option for his client to receive a lesser sentence. Thus he insisted “they must remit this case to the tribunal of the Holy Inquisition.” Unsurprisingly, the Royal Court did not wish to relinquish its jurisdiction. Surprisingly, however, the Inquisition had no interest in the unorthodox healer Maria de Esparza.

The Court vigorously fought for its rights over Maria’s prosecution. She had, after all, committed much maleficia for some time and admitted her husband had been a witch. She engendered the fear of the villagers, extorted clients, relentlessly begged, and was a bad neighbor. The Court’s ruling did not deny the possibility that the Inquisition could have some jurisdictional claims over Maria. Instead they argued the order of operations. Echoing debates over the sequence of sentencing between the two courts from 1526 and 1575, the Council confirmed the Court’s sentence, while promising the Inquisition “and after its execution, we will then remit the case to the Inquisition.”

Undaunted, a commissary of the Inquisition, Pedro de Adios, pressed the request for her case to be submitted for their review and reported there were elements of heresy that fell under their purview. The Council was forced to submit her case to the Holy Office in December of 1675. Meanwhile, Maria de Esparza remained imprisoned in the Royal jails.

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129 AGN, 17176 (1675), 31r: “Que debía remitir a aquel al tribunal de la Santa Inquisición.”
130 AGN, 17176 (1675), 31v: “Y después de su ejecución se le remite la causa a la Inquisición.”
while her case lulled in the doldrums, awaiting the Inquisition’s decision. But the
Inquisition did not want her.

Maria de Esparza—accused of sorcery and heterodox healing—was listed in their
*Relaciones de causas* as but a passing entry, an aside:

Maria de Esparza, from the town of Asiain in the kingdom of Navarra, was
denounced to the Holy Office on the 25th of November in a letter written by the
Commissary of the Holy Office in Pamplona. He said she had been sentenced by
the Council for sorcery... In January...three *Calificadores* agreed in unison that
her case did not have the quality of pertaining to religion.\textsuperscript{131}

Maria’s last chance for a milder sentence at the hands of the Inquisition was denied.
They did not want her at this late time. In the meantime, the secular authorities did not
want to feed her. Her *provisor* had to beg them to resume her daily allowance as she was
starving. Once again, Maria was caught in the crosswinds of the two powers: The Court
of Navarra argued they should not have to support her, since they had only paused their
sentencing at the Inquisition’s request for review of her case. Conversely, the Inquisition
argued since she was not in their prisons they had no responsibility for her whatsoever.
Ultimately, Maria escaped from the royal jails, was recaptured, and received her
sentence of two-hundred lashes and exile from the Kingdom of Navarra. The last witch
trial before the Court and Council of Navarra ended with a note from her ward: Juan de
Saturtegui reported it took six days by horseback to lead Maria de Esparza out of

\textsuperscript{131} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 839, ff. 240r-v: “María de Esparza, vecina del lugar de Asíaín en el reino de
Navarra fue delatada al Santo Oficio por carta de las 25 de noviembre escrita por el Comisario del Santo
Oficio de la ciudad de Pamplona en que dije que había castigado el consejo a la susodicha por hechicera...En
16 de enero...por tres calificadores los cuales de conformidad dijeron no tenía calidad de oficio en material
de religión.”
Navarra. Taking her hand, he led her across the border into Aragon, and warned her to never return home again.

Never again was another trial of witchcraft or sorcery held by the Royal Court and Council of Navarra. Similarly, in the seventeen cases that came before the tribunal at Logroño after Maria Esparza, only one person was sentenced, the rest were absolved or suspended.\textsuperscript{132} At this late date, perhaps the Royal Court and Council and the Inquisition’s tribunal at Logroño could finally agree on one thing: “This business of witches usually causes much hard work, waste, and grief; and it yields little fruit.”\textsuperscript{133}

\textbf{6.9 Conclusion}

The presence of both the Spanish Inquisition’s tribunal in Navarra and the semi-autonomous Royal Court and Council of Navarra created an exceptional jurisdictional situation for trials of witchcraft and sorcery. Both jurisdictions fought over their rights to these cases for one-hundred-and-fifty years, and each raised arguments as to why their tribunal was most appropriate. The Court and Council highlighted that the Inquisitors did not have the proper legal training, and though it was assumed they were familiar with the law, it was not a requirement to be an Inquisitor. They also argued that the

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\textsuperscript{132} Data from Henningsen’s unpublished database, 2012.
\textsuperscript{133} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 791, f. 353r: “Estos negocios de brujas suelen ser en las inquisiciones de mucho trabajo, gasto, y pesadumbre, y sacase de ellos poco fruto.”
\end{flushright}
Inquisition’s emphasis on confession and penance was not adequate punishment for secular crimes which had grave impacts on neighbors and property. The Inquisition, however, relied on a definition of witchcraft and sorcery that inherently included diabolical agency. Thus the Inquisition’s role as adjudicator of heretical crimes clearly placed them in charge of witches and sorceresses. They also argued for the spiritual health and salvation of the accused. Regardless of the specific arguments set forth, the relevance, power, and control of each tribunal was at stake. The stronger the secular court, the more influence it had over the prosecution of witches. Weaker Inquisitorial tribunals, likewise, had a limited range of influence to take the witches as their own. Navarra was exceptional. It was as a region with a remarkably strong local court, a culture with deep witchcraft and sorcery beliefs, a population that comingled with fellow Basques living on the French side of the political border, and a distinct tongue not understood by Inquisitors. This tested the limits of power for the Spanish Inquisition in matters of witchcraft at the local level, and exposed that though omnipresent, the Inquisition was not omnipotent in matters of witchcraft in Navarra.
Conclusion

Maria Johan de Anocibar is a witch...she gave and offered herself to the Devil...
When she entered in the [church], she did not drink the Holy Water nor did she pray to
the Holy Sacrament. She spat in the face of a crucifix that was next to the baptismal font,
and did the same to the image of Our Lady and other saints.
–Royal Court and Council of Navarra,
15 September 1575.¹

When Maria Johan, Miguel Zubiri, and Mariato Xandua were accused of
witchcraft in 1575, the varied accusations against them spoke to the deep reservoir of
witch beliefs in early modern Navarra.² Their main accusers, two young boys, alleged
the witches had kidnapped them, taken them through the air to the witches’ gatherings
in the countryside, and given them a clutch of toads to care for, a reflection of the
importance Navarrese witch belief placed on toads and their power to do maleficia.³
Other witnesses reported that these witches were bad neighbors and had damaged their
crops and fields.⁴ Still others stated they had mala fama and were mala cristianas.⁵ The
variability found in the villagers’ reports reflected the fluidity and flexibility of
witchcraft understandings, and demonstrated that witchcraft and witches at the village
level were not monolithically conceived.

¹ AGN, 69853 (1575), 36r-37r: “María Juana de Anocibar...es bruja, y como tal, se dio y ofreció al Demonio...Y
cuando entraba en [la iglesia], no tomaba agua bendita ni hacia oración al Santísimo Sacramento, antes se
allegaba a un cru cifijo que esta junta a la pilla del baptism y le escupía a la cara, y lo mismo hacia a la
imagen de Nuestra señora y otros santos.”
² See AGN, 69853 (1575).
³ AGN, 69853 (1575), 12r-14v.
⁴ AGN, 69853 (1575), 19v-20v.
⁵ AGN, 69853 (1575), 73r.
The Royal Court and Council of Navarra held their own prescribed notions of the characteristics and activities of witches. The fiscal of the Royal Council charged Maria, Miguel, and Mariato with a formulaic accusation, blending villagers’ reports with pre-conceived notions of witchcraft. This long list of accusations reflected the more fantastical images of witchcraft that, although not prominent in Navarra, were present in the reservoir of witch belief and occasionally appeared in witnesses’ reports. The magistrates charged them with flying to “meet with large groups of men and women…in the countryside who were witches,” using “powders and poisons” to kill the crops and children, and most significantly, offering and giving “themselves to the Devil.” This stock definition, though often commonplace in other early modern courts of Europe, diverged sharply from the quotidian witchcraft concerns usually reported in Navarra’s witch trials. Daily witchcraft concerns involved bad neighbors, bad luck, and most importantly, bad Christians.

Being a *mala cristiana*, a bad Christian, was the central tenet of what it meant to be a witch in Navarra. Religious performativity was crucial to the cohesion of the social fabric, and those who weakened it were among the first to be fingered as witches. Reflected in the words of magistrates and villagers, the term *mala cristiana* was often used interchangeably with *bruja*. Drawing from this inseparable connection between

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6 AGN, 69853 (1575), 25r-26v.
7 AGN, 69853 (1575), 25r-26r: “Se juntaban muchos hombres y mujeres…toda la gente del campo que fuesen brujos…/25v/… echaba ciertos polvos y veneno …/26r/…hacer el daño de las frutas y creaturas…/27r/…se dio y ofreció al Demonio.”
mala cristianas and witches, the procuradores’ first and foremost defense was the argument that the accused was a buena cristiana, thus not a witch. A buena cristiana was characterized by his or her outward religious performances, such as attendance at Mass, participation in Holy Communion, and abiding by cultural and behavioral norms. The terms “buena cristiana” and conversely “mala cristiana” transcended religious connotations throughout the trials records, and were used to signify whether or not the accused could actually be involved in witchcraft.

Sixty-year-old Maria Johan was, in many ways, a mala cristiana. Whether due to madness, or an illness, Maria Johan’s unstable behavior, inexplicable fits, and talk of demonic tormentors, invited negative attention and terrified her neighbors. Despite decades of efforts from her family and multiple clerics to free her from these invisible forces, Maria continued to be plagued by spirits, causing a great disturbance to her local community and led to her fama as a mala cristiana. To be sure, a label of mala cristiana did not necessitate demonic possession, or rumors of infanticide, sacrilege, hung toads, or diabolical pacts. Being marked a mala cristiana was usually the result of weak Catholic practices, revealing that Catholic performativity shaped villagers’ reputations in Navarra, which at certain times, made them vulnerable to witchcraft accusations. Maria Johan’s charges, and those brought against her accomplices Miguel and Maria Xandua, were somewhat extraordinary, and led to extraordinary consequences.

AGN, 69853 (1575), 6r-9v.
Given the severity of the accusations made against these *mala cristianas*, the magistrates of the Royal Council of Navarre broke from their tendency towards relatively moderate judicial proceedings. Though the centralized Royal Tribunals had the authority to order interrogative torture, they seldom utilized this judicial procedure. But given the gravity of the accusations against these *malas cristianas*, these witches, the magistrates ordered interrogation under torture for all three of the accused.\(^9\) Unsurprisingly, the strains of particularly rigorous tortures to the flesh induced all three accused witches to confess to the crimes they had been accused of. They declared to be true all that the magistrates had initially charged them with, including attendance at the witches’ gatherings, causing *maleficia* to crops, animals, and people, and Mariato confessed to intercourse with the devil in the shape of a goat.\(^10\) These confessions yielded sentences of execution for all three of the accused, resulting in a wave of witch trials that spread across Navarre lasting through the Spring of 1576. The public executions of Maria Johan and Miguel Zubiri were momentous events in Pamplona, as the court had not ordered an execution for witchcraft since 1525 (and would never again do so after 1575), and these shocking burnings stoked witch fears throughout Navarra.

Within months, over forty witches had been accused of and imprisoned for witchcraft. Though the local court of Navarre had independently prosecuted dozens of

\(^9\) AGN, 69853 (1575), 57r, 98r.
\(^10\) AGN, 69853 (1575): 60r-63v (Maria Johan); 109r-113r (Miguel Zubiri); 115r-116r (Mariato Xandua).
witch trials over one hundred-and-fifty years, this time the Spanish Inquisition took control of all the accused, and adjudicated them itself, resulting in absolutions and a few light sentences.\textsuperscript{11} Along with the dozens of other accused witches, Mariato Xandua, who had surreptitiously been spared her execution sentence, was transferred to the secret prisons of the Spanish Inquisition. Sadly, as her case stalled, she contracted a prison illness and died almost two years after her initial arrest.\textsuperscript{12} Indeed, the presence of both the Spanish Inquisition’s tribunal in Navarra and the semi-autonomous Royal Court and Council of Navarra created an exceptional jurisdictional context for witch trials in Navarra.

The pivotal trial of the witches of Anocibar exemplifies the major arguments of this dissertation. First, it has shown that witchcraft beliefs at the village level were malleable, variable, and diverse. While some villagers believed witches engaged in diabolism, others thought they sickened crops and livestock with poisonous powders, and some believed they raised toads for maleficia. But, most villagers simply saw witches as those known to be malas cristianas, or those with the fama of witchcraft. Second, this dissertation has revealed the presence of the strong and independent Royal Tribunals that challenged the authority of the Spanish Inquisition’s jurisdiction of witchcraft. It has explored the contested relationship between these two judicial institutions, and

\textsuperscript{11} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, f. 210r; AHN, Inquisición, Libro 733, 196r-210r.
\textsuperscript{12} AHN, Inquisición, Libro 833, f. 210r.
revealed, perhaps surprisingly, that many accused witches and their *procuradores* actively sought to have their cases transferred to the tribunal of the Inquisition at Logroño. Third, it has argued that witchcraft in Navarra was informed by a Catholic understanding of “good” and “bad Christians,” and that those accused of witchcraft were perceived to be *malas cristianas*. Those with weak Catholic performativity or behaviors that threatened the social cohesion were most vulnerable to witch accusations.

Finally, this dissertation has challenged depictions of witchcraft as a sensational or disruptive phenomenon, and shown how witch beliefs were organically woven into everyday community life, religious beliefs, and village culture. This dissertation has sought to demonstrate that witchcraft was the result of a complex set of connections and causes, and only through a close examination of witch belief at the local level can we truly appreciate the inner logic of witchcraft and the early modern world in which it flourished.
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Biography

Rochelle Elizabeth Rojas was born in San Jose, Costa Rica on March 14, 1975. She graduated from the University of Florida with a Bachelor’s of Arts in Education (Summa Cum Laude) in 1998, and a Master’s of Arts in Education (Summa Cum Laude) in 1999. In 2009, she received the One Hundred Scholars award, a scholarship for teachers, from the University of California at Berkeley. As a guest student at U.C. Berkeley, she took history courses in preparation for applications to Doctoral programs. In 2010, Ms. Rojas was awarded the Dean’s Graduate Fellowship as part of her acceptance package to Duke University. In the Summer of 2011, she was granted funding to attend the Intensive Latin Language Institute at the University of Virginia. In 2012, Ms. Rojas received the Dissertation Research travel grant from Duke University to conduct preliminary research in Spain. For the 2013-2014 academic year, Ms. Rojas received the Fulbright Scholarship and the International Research Travel Fellowship from Duke University and the Fulbright Scholarship; she accepted the former. Ms. Rojas was honored with a dissertation completion fellowship from the Charlotte W. Newcombe Foundation for the 2015-2016 academic year. She is a member of the Golden Key National Honor’s Society and the Duke Society of Fellows.