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Discovering El Cuaderno: An Examination of the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts and Three Debating Inquisitors, 1609 - 1614

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Discovering *El Cuaderno*:
An Examination of the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts
and Three Debating Inquisitors, 1609-1614

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement
for the degree of Bachelor of Arts in the Lyon G. Tyler Department of History from
The College of William & Mary

By

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Accepted for _____
(Honors, High Honors, Highest Honors)

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Introduction

From the outset, the manuscript book titled *Inquisición de Navarra: Cuaderno de actos comprobados de bruxos* sitting in the Archivo Real y General de Navarra makes clear the persuasive goals of its two Inquisitorial authors:

“Positive acts of things that the witches do as such witches, being awake, day and night, outside of their gatherings and *aquejarres*, and other [things] which proceed from the things they do at them [the *aquejarres*], which happen really and truly, without being able to claim that neither dreams or illusions intervene, as evidenced by their [the witches’] confessions...”¹

These prefatory remarks voice the concerns of the senior Inquisitors of the Logroño tribunal Alonso Becerra Holguín and Juan de Valle Alvarado. The Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts, which lasted from about 1609 -1612, were documented by both contemporary inquisitors in Logroño and by civic officials throughout the Kingdom of Navarre. However, this text, which I shall refer to as *el cuaderno* is unique. It is a legal summary and an explicitly elite document that compiles thousands of witness testimonies with the aim of creating a certain view of witchcraft. *El cuaderno* was meant by Inquisitors Becerra and Valle to be the ultimate verdict of culpability against the witches who seemed to have overrun Navarre.

El cuaderno is organized in the following way: a table of contents containing a brief summary of the contained *actos* begins the document, each *acto* (of which there are 32) follows, and the extra confession of one Doña María de Endara is added onto the end of the manuscript. Each *acto* begins with a brief summary of a verified act of witchcraft and is followed by

¹ “Actos positivos de cosas que los bruxos hazen como tales bruxos, estando despiertos, de dia y de noche, fuera de sus juntas y aquejarres, y otras que proceden de las que se hazen en ellos, las quales pasan real y verdaderamente, sin que se pueda pretender que interbenga sueño ni ylusion, como consta por sus confesiones ...” Archivo General de Navarra, *MSS Códice L. 3*, 1612, fol. 1r.

supporting evidence extrapolated from witness confessions obtained during visitations and trials. All of the evidence is properly cited to a specific record so any reader could feasibly find the original record which the *acto* cites, if it still exists. And before the next *acto* begins, *el cuaderno* lists even more citation numbers to support the *acto* discussed.

However, despite its readability, the infamy of the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts in Early Modern European Witchcraft studies, and even the popularity of the Spanish Inquisition among historians, this document has been quite understudied.² Perhaps this neglect stems from the uneven focus placed on Inquisitors Becerra and Valle's victorious opponent and fellow junior inquisitor, Alonso de Salazar Frías. It is my goal to rebalance this scholarship and other work conducted on the witch-hunts by scrutinizing *el cuaderno* and interpreting how and why Becerra and Valle shaped their argument the way they did.

The Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts purportedly began in the small village of Zugarramurdi located very near the French border in northern Spain. A number of contemporaries writing at the time blamed the French witch persecution just to the north for the stirring of diabolic heresy in Spain.³ Regardless of the ultimate nationality of the witches or the origin of the persecution, twenty-five of the thirty-one the witches convicted and presented at the Logroño *auto de fe* were exclusively from Zugarramurdi and Urdax.⁴ Although the witches confessed to belonging to the

² Two notable Spanish historians of witchcraft, namely Florencio Idoate and Gustav Henningsen devoted much of their scholarship to the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts. However, their work on *el cuaderno* specifically is negligible next to all the other research done on the famous incident.

³ In letters written in 1609 to the Logroño tribunal during his visitation through the region, Inquisitor Valle mentions the "restlessness" of the region due to the prosecution of witches in Southern France. See Libro 794, Archivo Histórico Nacional, fol. 459r-v for Valle's letter written from Urdax, dated 20 August 1609. Further evidence of this contemporary concern about the French witch persecution can also be found in Pamplona Bishop Don Antonio Venegas de Figueroa's letters to the *Suprema*. See in particular Gustav Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents: Inquisitor Alonso de Salazar Frías and Others on the Basque Witch Persecution* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2004) 190.

⁴ Gustav Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate: Basque Witchcraft and the Spanish Inquisition (1609-1614)* (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1980) 27.

Devil's sect for a number of years,⁵ in December 1608 events began to reach a head for the witches' sect. Early in the New Year, worried villagers took "the law into their own hands"⁶ and searched for incriminating evidence of witchcraft in the suspects' homes. However, by January many of the witches had publically confessed, asked pardon in their churches, and were privately reconciled to the rest of the community.⁷ The most prominent historian of the Zugarramurdi episode, Gustav Henningsen, even suggests that the problems surrounding the witches may have been dealt with effectively within Zugarramurdi itself. But unfortunately for the witches, the Inquisition became involved.⁸

The Spanish Inquisition relied heavily upon a network of agents in the field to report information back to the appropriate tribunal; the tribunal at Logroño was no different. However, Zugarramurdi and Urdax were located at the far limits of this information web. Being on the other side of the Pyrenees Mountains, and relatively tiny villages compared to other important localities in Navarre, it seems the goings-on in Zugarramurdi and Urdax were not made known to the tribunal until 1609. Although Henningsen suggests that it may have been Fray Leòn de Aranibar of the monastery in Urdax who notified the tribunal,⁹ the official commissioner's report was not received in Logroño until January 12th.¹⁰ Faced with the heresy, Inquisitors Becerra and Valle (Salazar had not yet been appointed to the vacant third inquisitor's post) consulted past trial records and *Suprema* advice, since witchcraft had flared up a few times early in the century before. They then summoned four of the suspected heretics to the tribunal, where they were

⁵ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 28. In some cases, the witches confess to diabolic actions that took place "thirty years before." For the narrative of events that took place, I will be using Henningsen's account as his work to sort out the confusing and complex sequence of events is easiest to follow in his book *The Witches' Advocate*.

⁶ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 32-33.

⁷ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 34.

⁸ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 36.

⁹ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 50.

¹⁰ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 51.

jailed by the 27th of January.¹¹ Six more suspects arrived of their own will by early February and were jailed themselves by the middle of the month.¹² Things moved quickly from there, with letters flying between the tribunal and the *Suprema*, especially a questionnaire which would factor heavily in the investigation to come.¹³ Valle eventually went on visitation throughout the area in 1609 with an Edit of Faith, and thereby gathered more evidence: he conducted interviews and arrested a number of individuals to send back to the tribunal in Logroño. As the trials continued back in Logroño, however, illness struck the imprisoned witches in August of 1609 and 1610 just before the *auto de fe*.¹⁴

It was before this on the 8th June of 1610 that the tribunal gave their verdicts in a *consulta de fe*; of the eight person jury, only Inquisitor Salazar voted against burning all of the witches at the stake.¹⁵ It seems he had already become skeptical of the Inquisition's findings, but only voiced his opinion at the *consulta*.

Even so, the *auto de fe* began on November 7, 1610. The illnesses of the summer meant that only twelve of the original 31 witches were still alive, but the inquisitors had culled an ample repertory of diabolical deeds from the suspects.¹⁶ In general, the witches confessed to ceremonies in which they denied their Catholic Faith, pledged their allegiance to the Devil and his unholy sect, and admitted new adherents to their sect. They also produced evil and poisonous powders, celebrated a Black Mass, feasted on the corpses of the dead which they exhumed,

¹¹ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 52.

¹² Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 55-56.

¹³ Henningsen, "The Fourteen Questions from *La Suprema*" in *The Witches' Advocate*, 57-59.

¹⁴ The tribunal prison seems to have surprisingly suffered from two August epidemics, one beginning with the reported death of Estavanía de Navarcorena in a letter to the *Suprema* on the 22nd of August 1609. This sickness eventually killed the notable witches Graciana de Barrenechea and one of her daughters Estavanía de Yriarte. The second epidemic began on the 21st of August 1610 and had killed six more witches by the 30th. All of this evidence of August illnesses makes one wonder why this summer month was such a particularly unhealthy time. See Henningsen, "The Two Prison Epidemics" in *The Witches' Advocate*, 150-153 and Libro 794, Sección de la Inquisición, Archivo Historico Nacional, fol. 433r.

¹⁵ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 176.

¹⁶ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 197.

damaged crops, committed infanticide, disciplined one another with vicious beatings, and engaged in sexual intercourse with the Devil.

All of these activities were read out to the supposedly 30,000 attendants at the *auto de fe* in November 1610. In fact, the personalized sentences and descriptions of heretical activity were so detailed and long-winded that some may have taken hours to read.¹⁷ Furthermore, in contrast to the 25 other heresy cases presented at the *auto*, which all represented the usual workings of the Inquisition,¹⁸ the witches' confessions were certainly more dramatic, terrifying and titillating. In response, publications were produced from the memorable event. One in particular, a pamphlet published by Juan de Mongastón in 1611,¹⁹ includes both eye-witness accounts of the processions and ceremony and reports of the witches' confessions, some of which may have been taken from reports made by the Tribunal itself.²⁰

The *auto* of November 1610 certainly was intended to end witchcraft in Navarre. And it is logical to believe that news of the large *auto* may have been spread by these circulating pamphlets or by eye-witness reporting, and thus could account for what historians have assumed was a new surge in witchcraft accusations in the winter of 1610-11. Yet witchcraft accusations were already numerous before the *auto*, with the Inquisitors writing frantic letters to the *Suprema*. News of relapsed witches and new adherents from Fray León de Aranibar in October of 1610 increased the number of *aquelarres* to 22.²¹ Shortly thereafter, the violence of the witch-

¹⁷ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 191.

¹⁸ The tribunal also prepared sentences condemning "six for Judaism, one for Mohammedanism, one for Lutheranism, one for bigamy, twelve for blasphemous and heretical utterances, and two for masquerading as agents of the Inquisition." Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 181.

¹⁹ Juan de Mongastón, *El auto de fé de Logrono de 1610*, ed. Manuel Fernández Nieto (Madrid: Editorial Tecnos, 1989) 32.

²⁰ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 195.

²¹ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 203-205.

hunts increased and the incidences of witchcraft spread throughout northern Navarre and into parts of neighboring regions in the east.²²

As the Inquisition then began anew their investigation of witchcraft, it seemed a few things had changed. Interrogating witches and sending their written confessions to the tribunal had been the role of the Inquisition's agents, but gone was the need for commissioners to put pressure on the suspected witches to confess. Instead, local authorities -- including priests, councilors and village elders, along with family members -- assisted in wringing confessions from the accused.²³

Ironically, skeptics began to arise simultaneously. Besides Inquisitor Salazar, who would voice his own critical opinions between 1611-12, the Jesuit Hernando de Solarte, the Bishop of Pamplona, Don Antonio Venegas de Figueroa, and other notable parish priests began to doubt the means by which the witchcraft evidence had been collected. They seemed to understand the role of hysteria in spreading accusations and witchcraft stories, the overstepping of authority that many civil authorities had practiced against the suspects, and the maltreatment many accused witches had suffered. By the spring of 1611, Salazar would submit a letter to the *Suprema* accusing Becerra of despotism; he also pointed out the failings of the tribunal in following proper interrogation procedure. Salazar noted too that Inquisitor Valle was behaving badly toward him on account of his own dissenting vote made in the *consulta de fe* before the *auto de fe*.²⁴ A rift was growing in the tribunal between Becerra and Valle on the one hand and their junior colleague Salazar on the other. By 1612, this rift would result in both sides composing polemical documents against each other, one of which was *el cuaderno*.

²² I must agree with Henningsen therefore, and suggest that some factor other than the *auto de fe* itself must have contributed to all the new outbreaks. *ibidem*, *The Witches' Advocate*, 206.

²³ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 210.

²⁴ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 222-223.

Becerra and Valle worked on their own to suppress Salazar's and other skeptics' voices. In attempting to disqualify the aforementioned parish priests and even arrest some for opposing the Inquisition, it seems that Becerra and Valle were doing all they could to ensure that their war against witchcraft continued.²⁵ But the conflict became even more inflamed once Salazar went on visitation himself in 1611, and began to send reports to the *Suprema*. Salazar's writings from the field relay a skepticism that stands in stark contrast to the opinions of his senior inquisitors. Eventually, Becerra and Valle responded to the claims of their junior inquisitor by writing their own verdicts, one of which is *el cuaderno*. Until the *Suprema* sent new instructions to the tribunal in 1614 outlining a more skeptical and lenient treatment of witchcraft accusations, Becerra and Valle and Salazar were locked in a heated debate over the proof of the witches' sect in Navarre.

At this point it must be clear that a large number of primary sources about this entire event are extant. Letters are the main documents used in the reconstruction of the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts. Letters from *comisarios* in the field, from Valle and Salazar on visitation, and from bishops, priests and other influential figures abound. Furthermore, other letters and pamphlets also exist on the actual November 1610 *auto de fe*. Inquisitorial documents are also important: although the records of complete interrogations and confessions are few,²⁶ summaries of missing confessions survive. And finally *el cuaderno*, a manuscript book of 65 folios or 130 pages, remains to be studied.

The way in which these various documents have been interpreted is important to my research endeavor. Mentioned perpetually in the footnotes of this paper are the contributions of

²⁵ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 224-225.

²⁶ The Napoleonic wars have destroyed many of the holdings of the Logroño tribunal, including such potentially influential material as Salazar's Visitation Book. See Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 318.

Gustav Henningsen. The influence of Henningsen's work on the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts is of utmost importance to a proper study of *el cuaderno*. In truth, many of his claims will be tested by my study of *el cuaderno* in the subsequent chapters. As Henningsen only makes a passing reference and performs only a perfunctory study on *el cuaderno* himself, which he titles "The Pamplona Manuscript: Memorial A,"²⁷ his conclusions on the context of the witch-hunts are missing a crucial aspect. Furthermore, Henningsen's obvious bias in favor of Inquisitor Salazar as "the witches' advocate" hinders a truly critical study of the beliefs of the three Logroño inquisitors, how they arrived at those beliefs, and the shape of their arguments against one another.

Overall, it seems that Henningsen too often overlooks the fact that none of the historical characters in the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts knew how things were going to turn out. His major study, *The Witches' Advocate*, narrates the persecutions in a way that seems to neglect what the inquisitors themselves may have actually felt about such events. Circumstance and human dynamism play a huge role in understanding how the persecutions unfolded and, more importantly, how all of the people involved reacted to the witch-hunts. Trying to recreate the mental state of any historical actor from the documents left behind is difficult and perhaps impossible for many reasons. But in attempting to do so, the careful historian must not force any document or individual into predetermined and static attitudes, as Henningsen seems to have done with Inquisitors Salazar, Becerra and Valle.

Nevertheless, Henningsen has performed a large amount of the leg work necessary for placing *el cuaderno* within a chronological context. In his collection of texts from the events,

²⁷ Henningsen refers to *el cuaderno* as "The Pamplona Manuscript: Memorial A." He offers no reasons for why the manuscript ended up in Pamplona and suggests that a *Memorial B* may still be missing. See Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 336-346.

The Salazar Documents, he even provides helpful geographic background and additional translated letters from relevant bishops and other priests. Essentially, Henningsen is *the* expert on the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts and it is his works and conclusions which I will hold in direct comparison with my findings from *el cuaderno*.

A number of other historians have also contributed to the field of Spanish witchcraft, and their approaches and conclusions have influenced my own approach to understanding *el cuaderno* and the events which surround it. Despite their age, the works of both Julio Caro Baroja and Florencio Idoate are crucial for my study. Caro Baroja's interest in tracing the communal mentalities of the persecuted and persecutors may eventually have some bearing on my elite document.²⁸ Idoate's introduction to his transcription of *el cuaderno* also provides a wealth of background and data which have informed my conclusions.²⁹

To research a document such as this, it is also important to consider all facets of the witchcraft persecution in play. Local religion, elite written precedents such as demonological treatises and older witchcraft trials, popular writings and possible literary genres (such as Mongastón's pamphlet), and the workings of Inquisitorial law are all acceptable lenses of interpretation for *el cuaderno*. Furthermore, other approaches may be gleaned from such works as Maria Tausiet's *Ponzoña en los Ojos*³⁰ and Lyndal Roper's *Witch Craze*.³¹ Both Tausiet and Roper entertain interesting anthropological conclusions. Although both were looking for causal

²⁸ "Much more is known about sorcery and witchcraft from the point of view of those who believe in witches than from the witches themselves. And we have to analyze the mentalities of such people: the mentalities of whole communities gripped by a specific fear, not simply individuals convinced of their own unnatural powers." See Julio Caro Baroja, *The World of the Witches*, trans. O.N.V Glendinning (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1964) xiii.

²⁹ Florencio Idoate, *Un Documento de la Inquisición Sobre Brujería en Navarra* (Pamplona: Editorial Aranzandi, 1972).

³⁰ María Tausiet, *Ponzoña en los ojos: Brujería y superstición en Aragón en el siglo XVI* (Zaragoza: Institución Fernando El Católico, 2000).

³¹ Lyndal Roper, *Witch Craze: Terror and Fantasy in Baroque Germany* (London: Yale University Press, 2004).

agents in witchcraft persecutions, whereas my work focuses more on the contextualization of a document, any popular voice which I might be able to glean from *el cuaderno* may benefit from their anthropological approaches.

What is so fascinating about this document is the many uses it can serve in supplying the curious historian with a glimpse into an inquisitorial tribunal: dissent within a tribunal, the clash between skepticism and belief, modes of written persuasion, and the values of such men embroiled in a large and seemingly uncontrollable persecution are all themes for study. Finally, and perhaps most attractively for me, lies the slim possibility that some voices of the persecuted may be found. Those accused of witchcraft rarely were given their own voice in the documents that survive; indeed, any of the examples of popular voice we may find in *el cuaderno* were all mediated through the elite inquisitor. Nevertheless, in examining the types of summaries that the inquisitors favored as most persuasive and chose to include in *el cuaderno*, there may be a slight chance of unearthing the popular voice.

In any case, the independence of Becerra and Valle in creating their own persuasive narrative reveals itself in *el cuaderno*. A hallmark of their agency, this document speaks to Becerra and Valle's own views on witchcraft, demonic persuasion, and the spiritual health of Christians in Navarre. Most importantly, *el cuaderno* is the product of their particularly unique argument, which was affected by a number of outside forces, yet also full of its own legal and spiritual preoccupations. In other words, Becerra and Valle imagined witches in a certain way in *el cuaderno* in order to facilitate their own goals. And just how this picture of witchcraft was concocted is quite the stor

Chapter One: The Inquisitors

Historically speaking, inquisitors in Spain have been painted in a mostly negative light: the backwards torturer or the nefarious heresy hunter who burned countless numbers at the stake. The stereotypical Inquisitor is the infamous prosecutor, a “symbol of abusive legal power and narrow-minded orthodoxy.”¹ Yet recent scholarship has done much to reveal the career tracks, the everyday practices, and the many difficulties faced by inquisitors; this fairly recent work has revealed the inquisitor himself to be a useful conduit for the study of inquisitorial legal practice and the differences between elite and local religious and intellectual life in Early Modern Spain.² Being a Spanish Inquisitor was about much more than extracting confessions through torture and presiding over the public spectacle of the *auto de fe*. Being an inquisitor was to be a part of an overlapping world of secular and ecclesiastic authority, a policeman of religious belief and practice among the Spanish Catholic flock, and a religious judge intent upon both upholding legal precedents and working as a pastoral figure to ensure the safety of their brothers’ and sisters’ souls.

The inquisitor was not a new or unique character to European history when the Spanish Inquisition was first authorized by Pope Sixtus IV in 1478.³ Spanish inquisitorial practice was indebted to ancient Roman legal precedents; the practice of inquisition itself was fundamentally

¹ Kimberly Lynn Hossain, *Arbiters of Faith, Agents of Empire: Spanish Inquisitors and their Careers, 1550-1650*, Doctoral dissertation, Johns Hopkins University, 2006: ii.

² Among this new scholarship overturning the negative stigma of earlier Inquisition study is Kimberly Lynn’s work on the careers of inquisitors (see above), and Sarah Nalle’s work on *comisarios* in “Inquisitors, Priests, and the People During the Catholic Reformation in Spain,” *The Sixteenth Century Journal* 18 (Winter 1987): 557-587.

³ In fact, mendicant orders and bishops often acted as medieval inquisitors when the Pope authorized them to do so. See Kimberly Lynn Hossain, *Arbiters of Faith, Agents of Empire: Spanish Inquisitors and their Careers, 1550-1650*, 4.

a legal procedure deriving its name from the Latin *inquisitio*, meaning “investigation.”⁴ Thus, inquisitorial methods had existed since Roman times and continued to persist through the medieval ages as they were applied to new Christian concerns. These ancient re-used methods relied upon human inquiry and worked towards obtaining a “complete proof”; a “complete proof” was only obtained through the agreement of two witness testimonies or through confession of the victim.⁵

However, the Spanish Inquisition’s *particular* character derived not only from its wide-reaching presence as a governing tool, its entrenched bureaucracy, and its own specific origins; the Spanish Inquisition was unique in that it possessed a large number of inquisitors who maintained their positions for consecutive years at a time at various levels of authority throughout the realm. Medieval inquisitors, who certainly also had careers as inquisitors, were only able to practice their trade spontaneously as ad hoc missions in a specific place and in response to a certain heretical activity. In contrast, once the Spanish Inquisition’s tribunals were established, they endured irrespective of any certain mission in the area until their dissolution.

In response to the specific heresy of “judaizing,” or continuing to practice Judaism despite being a baptized Christian, King Ferdinand and Queen Isabella requested the enactment of an inquisition; Pope Sixtus IV granted their request in a 1478 papal bull. Christian judaizers were the focus of the first inquisitors. Dominicans invested with the power of *inquisitio* by the two monarchs arrived in Seville in 1480, published their Edict of Grace, and began to make arrests and hold trials in the *converso*-populated city. The papal bull ultimately imbued a number

⁴ LuAnn Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition 1478-1614: An Anthology of Sources* (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2004) x-xi.

⁵ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xi.

of crown-selected bishops and priests with the authority to fulfill the inquisitorial office in cities and dioceses throughout the kingdom.⁶

Little documentation has survived from the first years of inquisition activity in Spain, and the lack of evidence continues for the first two decades of the institution's history, likely due to the peripatetic nature of the early inquisitors.⁷ We also lack documentation as to how any sort of institutionalization within the Inquisition may have been established at this time. However, tribunals did begin to form around the country: between 1480 and 1504, tribunals were established in Seville, Córdoba, Jaén, and Granada in the south, in two locations in New Castile, near the border with Portugal, and in Murcia along the Mediterranean Sea.⁸ The creation of these tribunals was perhaps a response to the ineffective nature of a traveling inquisitor and the need for a more established and lasting presence in order to root out the allegedly pervasive judaizers.

Simultaneously, the bureaucracy of the Spanish Inquisition was also being built. In 1483, Pope Sixtus IV again involved himself in Spanish religious affairs by appointing Dominican prior Tomás de Torquemada as the first Inquisitor-General. The Inquisitor-General then accrued counselors who collectively came to be known as the "Council of the Supreme and General Inquisition," or the *Suprema*.⁹ Thus the Inquisition was founded and continued to exist in a nexus of Spanish royal power and papal authority. Owing allegiance and appointments to crown, but also invested with authority by the pope, inquisitors, even the Inquisitor-General, walked a fine

⁶ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xvi.

⁷ The first inquisitors were initially meant to travel continually, much like their monarchs. The inquisitors kept up this lifestyle in order to address the geography of their *converso* targets. As a new crop of judaizing was allegedly discovered, the inquisitors traveled to the new location to conduct their *inquisitio*. These perceived bursts of heretical behavior may have been related to forced expulsions. Oftentimes, especially after partial expulsions, where non-Christians were given the option to convert or migrate, a new generation of *conversos* was created. Although Ferdinand and Isabella created these expulsions to keep Jews from contaminating the new *conversos*, "inquisitors continued to find judaizing *conversos* ten years after starting work in Seville." Ultimately, the 1492 Expulsion purged the entire Jewish population from Spain, although it seems likely that even this complete expulsion created new judaizing *conversos* as well. See Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xvii.

⁸ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xviii.

⁹ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xx.

line between the secular and religious authorities. For example, since *Suprema* nominations came from the king, the tribunals have been regarded as more akin to secular courts than ecclesiastical ones by many modern historians.¹⁰

These mixed origins (both papal and secular) of the Inquisition's foundation were paralleled by the even more complicated process of prosecuting heresy on the ground. Heresy itself was defined as the active, "public denial of some aspect of orthodox Christian theology or religious practice."¹¹ Therefore, the inquisition was not permitted to prosecute non-Christians nor Christians who simply doubted their faith privately. Furthermore, definitions of heresy changed over time as definitions of orthodoxy were modified. And although in other parts of Europe, bishops continued to be the main prosecutors of heresy,¹² the inquisitors were to supposed to take over this role in Spain; this sometimes resulted in conflicts between existing ecclesiastical authority and inquisitorial authority. In a number of ways, bishops could insert themselves into the world of the inquisitors. They could seize and try inquisition cases themselves. Or, in an example from the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts, they could intervene in other way: Pamplona Bishop Don Antonio Venegas conflicted with the inquisitors at the Logroño tribunal and reported to the *Suprema* his own observations. Not only did Bishop Venegas follow Inquisitor Juan de Valle Alvarado on his visitation to Zugarramurdi in the fall of 1609 and question the residents himself, but in 1611, he wrote to the *Suprema* to de-legitimize the claims and conclusions of the two senior inquisitors of the tribunal.¹³ It may be a stretch to suppose that Bishop Venegas felt his authority threatened by the work of the Logroño inquisitors; however, it

¹⁰ Henry Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1998) 163.

¹¹ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xi.

¹² Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*, 137 and 158.

¹³ See Chapter Three of Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*. In this chapter, Henningsen has compiled letters demonstrating Bishop Venegas' "recommendations" and intervention in the affairs of the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts.

may be possible that he viewed the proceedings of the witch-hunt as being detrimental to his bishopric rather than beneficial. Bishop Venegas's example illustrates the challenges that the inquisitors sometimes had to endure from other religious authorities. Significantly, in Venegas's case, he had been a member of the *Suprema* before becoming a bishop.

Inquisitors faced challenges as well from the secular population, particularly in dealing with the heresy of witchcraft. Since witchcraft allegations often centered on acts of *maleficia* which damaged victims' possessions or physically harmed or killed individuals through cannibalism, poisonings or evil spells, the secular authorities legitimately claimed the right to try those suspects in secular courts.

Prosecuting heresy in such a mixed-jurisdiction world was also difficult because it seems that the Inquisition itself claimed dual jurisdiction, especially in the justice administered to its own officers: although secular courts could not try *familiares* or other essential Inquisition personnel, the "Inquisition itself claimed the right to try laymen for non-ecclesiastical offences and for injuries done to its officers."¹⁴ This issue of civil courts especially arose for the Logroño tribunal: in some cases civil authorities and angry family members took witch hunting into their own hands, and mimicked inquisitorial process by arresting and torturing witches on their own. In fact, the accused witches took their secular "judges" to court and accused them of attempted rape, for beating them every time they invoked the help of God or the Virgin Mary, and for forcing a confession from them.¹⁵

Despite these challenges from other authorities, inquisitors could bring an impressive staff to bear in their prosecution efforts. Besides the top officials of the Inquisitor-General and the *Suprema*, each tribunal held a variety of essential people. Along with the required two

¹⁴ Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*, 164.

¹⁵ Archivo General de Navarra, Proceso 100796: 1611, 5v, 7v-8r, 10r.

inquisitors (who were to be composed of either canon law jurists or one jurist and one theologian) as stipulated by Inquisitor-General Torquemada in 1498,¹⁶ most tribunals also included a prosecutor (*fiscal*), a constable (*alguacil*), theologians (*calificadores*) not employed by the tribunal, a *receptor* who dealt with the tribunal's finances, a warden and a quartermaster of the prison (*alcaide* and *despensero* respectively), a notary "of the secret" who recorded witness testimony (*notario del secreto*), a notary "of the sequestration" who dealt with seized property (*notario del secuestro*), a general secretary who registered other major inquisition documents, and other subordinate workers and scribes.

Additionally, although not employed at the tribunal, familiars (or *familiares*) and *comisarios* were two other major officials related to the work of the tribunal. The familiar was "a lay servant of the Holy Office, ready at all times to perform duties in the service of the tribunal."¹⁷ Familiars could be called the "secret police" of Spain,¹⁸ although neither the familiar nor *comisario* were ever meant to perform espionage. Familiars were also laymen, and thus were often involved in issues of mixed jurisdiction with the secular courts. Oftentimes, familiars were of noble blood since the title was honorable and highly coveted; it didn't hurt that a few of the privileges of being a familiar included removal from secular jurisdiction (in theory) and taxation freedoms in some cases.¹⁹

Comisarios were often parish priests (or *curas*) removed from the confines of the tribunal. They were especially necessary in rural areas where the inquisitors were loathe or unable to make their presence regularly felt. *Comisarios* could collect testimony, compile evidence, and prepare all the necessary material to prosecute to such a degree that inquisitors'

¹⁶ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition 1478-1614*, xxii.

¹⁷ Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*, 145.

¹⁸ Nalle, "Inquisitors, Priests, and the People," 559.

¹⁹ Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*, 147.

productivity could increase significantly with a number of active *comisarios*.²⁰ In order to effectively administer to the localities, the Inquisition required the use of these local priests to “extend the Inquisition’s presence into the countryside on a permanent basis.”²¹ *Comisarios* were fundamentally different from familiars in their duties and abilities, however. For, despite being a similar non-salaried official, *comisarios* “were a legal extension of the inquisitor himself.”²²

For a number of reasons, *comisarios* were especially valued by the Logroño tribunal. Not only were the potential *comisarios* already well-located as parish priests in the mountainous regions of the Basque country, but they were much more likely to be knowledgeable about the culture of their region. None of the three inquisitors concerned with the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunt was from the Basque region, nor could they speak Basque. It was for this reason that León de Aranibar, *abad* (or abbot) of the monastery of San Salvador at Urdax, was made a *comisario*. With Urdax being situated less than 5km away from Zugarramurdi and on the active French border, Aranibar was well-situated for his position. Furthermore, for his knowledge of the trade routes and cargo, Aranibar considered himself especially well-qualified. In his own letter of personal recommendation to the Logroño tribunal, Aranibar highlights this benefit:

“... the said monastery is located in the valley of France and Spain and by the doors of the monastery pass very typically many travelers, flocks, and cargoes of Bayonne, San Juan de Luz and other parts of France for Pamplona, Tudela, and parts of Aragón, and on the entire road, up to the entrance of Pamplona, there is no *comisario* or any other official of the Inquisition to check on the bundles of merchandise that entre the kingdom through that port of Urdax, and it is very important and necessary that in this place there should be a competent *comisario* with the requisite attributes for such a position.”²³

²⁰ Nalle, “Inquisitors, Priests, and the People,” 559.

²¹ Nalle, “Inquisitors, Priests, and the People,” *ibid.*

²² Nalle, “Inquisitors, Priests, and the People,” *ibid.*

²³ “...el dicho monasterio esta sito en la vaya de Francia y España y por las puertas de dicho monasterio es passo muy ordinariamente de muchos caminantes, recuas y cargas que de Bayona, San Juan de Lus y otras partes de Francia passan para Pamplona, Tudela y partes de Aragon, y en todo el dicho camino hasta entrar en la ciudad de Pamplona no ay comissario ni otro official de la santa inquisicion para reconocer balas de mercadurias q por el dicho puerto de Urdax entran en el dicho Reyno, ni para hazer otras cossa tocantes al servicio del sancto officio y es muy importante y necesario q en este puesto aya un comissario confidente con las calidades requisitas para tal cargo.” Archivo Histórico Nacional, Sección Inquisición, Libro 794, 434r.

We may infer from Aranibar's assertions that the Spanish Inquisition may have seen fit to acquire *comisarios* who were also versed in local trade patterns, who understood the localities surrounding them, and whom they could trust. The exact reason as to how this knowledge could benefit the inquisitors is unclear, but it is doubtful that Aranibar would dedicate such a substantial part of his letter to such concerns if trade patterns or at least human traffic were not something that could be of value to the proceedings of the inquisitors. In fact smuggling, especially of heretical material, was a major problem along this border that would have interested the inquisitors. Thus, it becomes clear that *comisarios'* competency in a wide range of local knowledge made them invaluable assets to the local tribunals.

Similarly, for their competency in legal and theological matters, consultants known as *consultadores* were also part of the tribunal's personnel. These men could play a huge role in the outcomes of cases as they were given equal ability to vote at the *consultas de fe* in which the inquisitors and the representative of the bishop (the *ordinario*) also voted and gave their verdicts. In fact, the *consultadores* were to give their verdicts first, followed by the *ordinario* and then the inquisitors themselves.²⁴ Worthy and knowledgeable *consultadores* were highly valued for their learned opinion and according to Gaspar Isidro de Argüello's *Instructions of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, Handled Summarily, Both Old and New*, the "lack of learned men" could be a major problem:

"In some places, learned men cannot be had either at all or in such numbers as the inquisitors desire; this is relevant because inquisitors have to consult with learned men over the cases. And even if the learned men are available, or can be had, they are not of such trustworthiness or confidence as is necessary. As a result, some of the inquisitors do

²⁴ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 176.

not feel secure or satisfied in their consciences, and for this reason the determination of the trials is delayed, which is against the disposition of the law.”²⁵

Of course, the Logroño tribunal had its share of *consultadores* as well. Indicative of even more bureaucratic sophistication was also the use of *calificadores*, or other theologians who did not vote, but nonetheless “acted as assessors and weighed the evidence for heresy” before trials began.²⁶ Furthermore, even outside apothecaries and doctors (not given official inquisition titles) could be consulted; they even accompanied Inquisitors Valle and Alonso de Salazar Frías on their visitations in order to substantiate proof. These doctors were often involved in the testing of potions, powders and ointments said to be created by witches for evil purposes.²⁷ They also assisted the inquisitors in testing what many accused witches’ called “the Devil’s mark;” these marks on the bodies of the accused were pricked with needles to observe any strange effects.²⁸ Doctors were also consulted by the inquisitors remaining at the tribunal around December 1609 in order to diagnose the illness which afflicted the imprisoned witches.²⁹ *Consultadores*, *calificadores* and other learned men like secular doctors, then, played a very important role in the verification of proof, the administration of justice and theological truth, and the evaluation and care of sick accused heretics in inquisitorial tribunals.

Each of the personnel of the tribunal played integral roles in the procedures of the inquisition. The process was so complex and littered with protocol that all these hired hands were necessary for the successful operation of even one tribunal. It is important to note here, then, the basic judicial assumptions and processes which the inquisition followed. Just as their medieval counterparts resurrected the Roman law antecedents, the inquisitors and their retinue of

²⁵ Gaspar Isidro de Argüello, *Instructions of the Holy Office of the Inquisition, Handled Summarily, Both Old and New*. Part I in Document 7 of *The Spanish Inquisition 1478-1614: An Anthology of Sources*, LuAnn Homza, ed. and trans. (Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, Inc., 2006): 71.

²⁶ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xxii.

²⁷ Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 312-313.

²⁸ Archivo Histórico Nacional, Secc. Inquisición, Libro 794, 445r.

²⁹ Archivo Histórico Nacional, Secc. Inquisición, Libro 794, 444r.

associates closely modeled their work after the procedures prescribed by both medieval and Roman legal precedent:

“there was in reality no other precedent from which to work, and the Spanish inquisitors followed down to the last detail – in all aspects of arrest, trial, procedure, confiscations, recruitment of personnel – the regulations that had been in use in thirteenth-century Languedoc and Aragón.”³⁰

Guilt was presumed and the power of confession and witness testimony was supreme.

The inquisitors operated in deep secrecy, with accused heretics kept unaware of who had testified against them. Because of this secrecy, the imprisoned had few avenues for defense. Character witnesses could be used to confirm the prisoner’s Christian behavior; this strategy was known as *abonos*. Other witnesses could be called to cast doubt on certain pieces of evidence in a tactic known as *indirectas*. In a case of capital enmity, the prisoner could also invalidate the prosecution by attempting to name those who had testified against him in an approach called *tachas*. In extreme cases, the defendant might try to recuse the inquisitors or appeal their case directly to the *Suprema*.³¹

Compurgation was also another technique used by defendants to prove their innocence; if eight witness named by the defendant could swear to the prisoner’s Christianity, her or she might be released. However, this technique was fraught with problems caused by the extensive secrecy of the tribunal; in many cases, a defendant could, in ignorance, name someone to testify on their behalf who had already testified *against* them, thereby nullifying the entire exercise. This was the case with the relapsed *conversa* Marina González, who began to name witnesses for her compurgation with apparent ease. She then suddenly stopped, perhaps with the anxiety that those

³⁰ Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*, 139.

³¹ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xxiv.

she named were unfit to testify on her behalf. Unfortunately, this was interpreted by the inquisitors as implying “that she knew she was guilty of the crime of which she was accused.”³²

In the case of ambiguous guilt or a stubborn *negativo* prisoner,³³ the inquisitors could authorize the use of torture to elicit a confession. Torture of accused heretics was highly structured and controlled; prisoners were given multiple chances to confess, and the entire session of torture was recorded by a scribe. The forms of torture were conducted by professionals and seemed to take one of the following three types: the *toca*, an early modern equivalent to waterboarding; the *potro*, or rack; and the *garrucha*, in which prisoners were hung by their bound wrists from behind. Whatever was confessed during torture had to be ratified by the defendant again the next day, or another session of torture could be warranted. Yet, despite a modern-day cultural preoccupation over inquisitorial torture, it seemed to be a feature that was applied rarely during the Spanish Inquisition.³⁴

In a similar vein, punishments for convicted heretics are often viewed by the modern public to have consisted of mass burnings and deaths of thousands. In reality, numbers for those burned at the stake were comparably low.³⁵ Only relapsed heretics (those convicted once for heresy, then found guilty again of relapse) or heretics who refused to confess despite powerful evidence were burned.³⁶ Inquisitors used the term “relaxed to the secular arm” to refer to the sentence of burning at the stake. This was actually exactly what happened, as convicted heretics

³² For the entire sequence of Marina González’s failed compurgation, see Homza, Document 5 in *The Spanish Inquisition*, 46-47.

³³ The adjective *negativo* was used by inquisitors to describe defendants who refused to confess.

³⁴ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xxv; see *ibid.*, Document 5, 27-49 for a description of a torture sequence.

³⁵ See William Monter’s evaluation of the statistical evidence on Inquisition punishments in *Frontiers of Heresy: The Spanish Inquisition from the Basque Lands to Sicily* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 32.

³⁶ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xxvi.

were given to the secular authorities of the city for the administration of the sentence. In many cases, the heretic was strangled before the fire was lit.³⁷

Other sentences could include an abjuration of light (*de levi*) or grave (*de vehementi*) suspicion of heresy. These convicted heretics were often penanced; penances could include anything from paying fines, wearing for a period of time garish yellow smocks called *sanbenitos*, attending a certain number of masses, or most likely, participating in a form of public humiliation.³⁸ Although the *sanbenito* certainly fell into this realm, nothing accomplished public humiliation as well as the famed *autos de fe*. In these huge public spectacles, penanced and convicted heretics marched around the town square wearing symbols of their heresy, had their convictions read aloud, and then (if the sentence warranted it) were burned at the stake beyond the city limits.

Two final punishments also included admittance to “perpetual prison,” in which convicted heretics were enclosed in a monastery for a number of years. The last punishment, and by far the worst, as it was tantamount to a death sentence, was galley service in the king’s fleet for a number of years. And although not considered a punishment, the sequestration of an accused heretic’s goods (often immediately upon arrest) was often another negative element of the inquisitorial process. The prisoner’s goods were used throughout their trial to pay for any expenses incurred on their behalf. Only when the prisoner was convicted of heresy were their goods officially confiscated. This may have been one way in which the Inquisition financially sustained itself, but the reality of inquisitorial finances was much more complicated.³⁹

Inquisitors themselves had a number of specific duties. Of course, their presence at witness depositions, collection of other pertinent evidence, and verdict delivery were all

³⁷ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xxvi.

³⁸ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xxvi-xxvii.

³⁹ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xxvii-xxviii.

required. But inquisitors were also obliged to go on visitation throughout their territory once a year.⁴⁰ Inquisitors took turns to perform these loathed visits in order to read Edicts of Grace and collect the subsequent testimony. These edicts allowed Christians to come forward and admit to their heretical activity without fear of punishment. Inquisitors also collected witness testimony against other community members during this probationary period.⁴¹

The visitation records of the Inquisitors Valle and Salazar are rich documents for this very reason. Most information from beyond the tribunal's reach was provided via *comisarios*. But when an inquisitor could see for himself the evidence (or lack thereof as may be the case), and comment about their experiences in letters to the tribunal, we are provided with an insight into his thoughts. For example, both Inquisitor Valle and Salazar went on visitation during the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts, and their writings (especially Salazar's) provide much of the basis for the historical interpretations of the event. Their reports, or *relaciones*, also vary in important ways. For one, the precise composition and very detailed construction of Salazar's reports from 1612 lead the reader to doubt that such lengthy statements were written during the actual visitation. In contrast, the letters sent from Inquisitor Valle to the tribunal about the mundane and colloquial things which he discusses stand in stark contrast to the legal concerns of Salazar.⁴² Valle's letters are shorter and to the point, stressing what he believes to be important. This is in marked contrast to Salazar's carefully crafted long summaries. Yet, in both instances, these reports are integral to the historian attempting to understand what it must have been like to be an inquisitor on visitation.

⁴⁰ Although initially itinerant, once the Spanish Inquisition set up tribunals, 1498 Instructions required that "the inquisitors go to all the towns that have not taken the oath of the general Inquisition." By 1581, inquisitors were required to make these rounds once per year; see Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*, 179.

⁴¹ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xiii.

⁴² One example of Inquisitor Valle's letters from his 1609 visitation can be found in Archivo Histórico Nacional, Secc. Inquisición, Libro 794, 445r.

According to one prominent scholar, inquisitors may have often encountered villagers that did not “know the Holy Inquisition.”⁴³ In fact, many local communities may have either used the Inquisition’s presence to settle scores against one another or simply rejected the Holy Office’s intervention outright.⁴⁴ Following this argument, we would expect that (especially in the Basque region) the small seemingly isolated communities would have had some warning of the visiting inquisitor’s approach as the visitations were often infrequent. This paints of a picture of a large Spanish population “that was largely out of touch with the Inquisition.”⁴⁵ At the same time, however, it is hard to believe that even the most removed villages in the early modern Spanish countryside did not understand the effects of the Inquisition; in fact, most other scholars disagree with Kamen’s assertions. Especially with the notable presence of the Logroño tribunal’s *comisarios* in the region, such a statement should not be applied so indiscriminately to Zugarramurdi. In reality, by the documents left for study, it seems that even these most remote areas of the Spanish Empire keenly felt the presence of the Inquisition. For example, it was the *comisario* in Urdax, Fray León de Aranibar, who first reported the accusations of witchcraft to the otherwise ignorant tribunal and who continued to provide the inquisitors with letter upon letter of the events of Zugarramurdi and the surrounding area.⁴⁶

But what kind of heresies did visiting inquisitors find? What kind of heresies did the tribunals deal with overall? With the initial purpose of the Spanish Inquisition being the hunting of Christian judaizers, *conversos* were the obvious targets of the first inquisitors. By the later sixteenth century however, inquisitors seemed to have widened their gaze and began to prosecute Old Christians for heretical behavior. Moral offenses replaced judaizing trials, and possessing

⁴³ Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*, 180.

⁴⁴ Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*, *ibid.*

⁴⁵ Kamen, *The Spanish Inquisition: A Historical Revision*, *ibid.*

⁴⁶ Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 50.

heretical Lutheran texts or beliefs could be grounds for accusation by 1521.⁴⁷ Other less clear deviations from the Catholic faith, such as *alumbradismo*, were also prosecuted by Inquisitors in Toledo.⁴⁸ *Moriscos*, the Muslim equivalent to *conversos*, became of focus of inquisitorial activity in the late sixteenth century, decades after they had first been ordered to be baptized in 1502 and 1525 – 1526.⁴⁹ And another surge in *converso* trials followed the absorption of Portugal in 1580; this may be due to the fact that many Jews fled from Spain to friendlier Portugal after the Expulsion of 1492.⁵⁰

While the day-to-day activity of the Logroño tribunal reflected these victim trends to some degree, the regional variety of Navarrese heresy accounted for some major differences. The inquisitors of the Logroño tribunal dealt with a number of different operational concerns and heresies: the misbehavior of an *ex-licenciado*,⁵¹ a Frenchman, Juanes de Corbero accused of bigamy,⁵² the collection of a proper genealogy of León de Aranibar,⁵³ and a nebulous argument between a vicar and a local woman⁵⁴ all fell under the to-do list for the Logroño tribunal. The fact that their territory also shared a border with France often caused the Logroño inquisitors to deal with problems like the smuggling of banned literature.⁵⁵

However, the three inquisitors involved in these trials would find themselves embroiled in a heresy much bigger than the mostly moral offenses listed above. Who exactly were these

⁴⁷ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xxix.

⁴⁸ For more on this seemingly original heresy which debated the proper techniques for prayer, emphasized personal contemplation, and among other things was characterized by increased female involvement see Stefania Pastora, *Un'eresia spagnola: spiritualità conversa, alumbradismo e inquisizione (1449-1559)* (Florence: Leo S. Olschki, 2004); and Homza, Document 8 in *The Spanish Inquisition*, 80-92.

⁴⁹ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xxxiv.

⁵⁰ This shift in heretical focus is demonstrated by Document 26 of Homza's *The Spanish Inquisition*, 257-266.

⁵¹ Archivo Histórico Nacional (AHN), Secc. Inquisición, Libro 794, 445r.

⁵² AHN, Libro 794, 447r.

⁵³ AHN, Libro 794, 447r.

⁵⁴ AHN, Libro 794, 448v.

⁵⁵ In fact, the inquisitors and even Bishop Venegas often blamed the whole witch-hunt on the ferocious activity of French prosecutors whose victims fled into northern Spain and Zugarramurdi. See in particular Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 190-191.

unfortunate men? The two senior inquisitors of the Logroño tribunal were Alonso Becerra Holguín (the Senior Inquisitor) and *licenciado* Juan de Valle Alvarado. Both of these men advanced to their positions in the tribunal in 1608. Becerra was a monk of the military Alcántara order from Extremadura, where witchcraft was for the most part unknown. He most likely also held a doctorate in theology.⁵⁶ Valle came from Northern Spain, where witchcraft beliefs were widely held. Valle had worked for many years as a secretary to several bishops.⁵⁷

Then, months after the tribunal's first notification of the activities of Zugarramurdi in January of 1609, the last inquisitor was added.⁵⁸ The 44 year-old *licenciado* Alonso de Salazar Frías was from northern Spain himself, and it is likely that he also possessed a familiarity with popular belief in witches.⁵⁹ Salazar held a degree in canon law and was the son of wealthy Burgos merchants and civil servants. He had connections with bishops and through his career may have mixed with ministers of the empire and the king of Spain himself. In other words, Salazar came from much more illustrious origins than his fellow inquisitors.⁶⁰

It had been a little more than a year since Salazar had joined Becerra and Valle at Logroño when the *auto de fe* of 1610 was held. Although a few murmurs of new witch accusations had been heard,⁶¹ it is likely that the three men considered the bulk of this strange and disturbing heresy to be behind them. Yet little did these Spanish Inquisitors know that they would find themselves involved in a full-blown witch-hunt which would last for four more years, involve a major tribunal disagreement and *Suprema* intervention, and result in history-making decisions on the nature of witchcraft and legal proof.

⁵⁶ Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 17.

⁵⁷ Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, *ibid.*

⁵⁸ Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 18.

⁵⁹ Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 21.

⁶⁰ See Henningsen's heading "The Witch Trial at the Logroño Inquisition" in *The Salazar Documents* for added information on the appointment of Becerra, Valle and Salazar to the Logroño Tribunal, specifically pages 17-20.

⁶¹ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 203-205.

Regardless, the history of the Spanish Inquisition up to that point distinctly showed how the institution had changed over time to better facilitate its mission. From peripatetic inquisitors to fully-staffed tribunals, the people of the Inquisition had transformed in size and in power. The victims of the inquisitors also varied both from region to region and from decade to decade. An increasingly codified legal practice reinterpreted the ancient and medieval precedents in the practice of *inquisitio*. So, as we shall see in the coming chapters, inquisitors faced new and virulent forms of heresy with all of these tools and standards at their beck and call. How they would individually use these forms of power and interpretation would vary considerably and make for debate. To what degree they decided to do their jobs, to actively address the needs of the Catholics in their region, and to deal with a virulent form of heresy sprung upon them, was in fact quite dependent upon the individual inquisitor.

Chapter Two: The Witches

The 31 witches from Zugarramurdi who were all either dead, burned or reconciled at the 1610 *auto de fe* left few surviving inquisitorial records. Much of the original testimony and other invaluable primary materials were destroyed by French forces during the Napoleonic wars; in fact, the entire archive of the tribunal at Logroño was lost.¹ Due to this lack of such crucial documents, piecing together the confessions of the witches via other secondary compilations (such as *el cuaderno*) becomes the task in question, and this can be done with some relative success for a few of the 31 Zugarramurdi witches.² At best, however, the historian must be satisfied with only a brief analysis of who these witches seemed to be and why their stories may have contained certain elements. By investigating well-known witchcraft tracts, we may be able to re-create an image of the Early Modern witch, who they were, and what they did. It is worth noting that despite the regional variations across Europe of the feared Devil's servant, a common foundation of witch belief was present. Prototypes for this foundation existed for the construction of the witch, and were employed even in such rural and seemingly isolated villages like Zugarramurdi, Spain.

However, noting the preoccupations of Becerra and Valle as they dealt with the witches is even more important to understanding how the Zugarramurdi witch was conceived and represented in the records. After initially receiving reports of witchcraft from León de Aranibar and jailing the first four Zugarramurdi witches in the tribunal in late January 1609,³ Becerra and Valle were then forced to deal with the rest of the witches when they arrived of their own

¹ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 318.

² For example, the account of María de Zozaya is one of the most complete stories of a single witch's confession and trial from the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts. Henningsen re-creates Maria de Zozaya's trial record with sources from Libro 835, fol. 401r - 420r in the Archivo Histórico Nacional, from fragments of Juan de Mongastón's *Relación*, and from Becerra and Valle's *Cuaderno de Actos comprobados de bruxos*.

³ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 52.

volition to set matters straight and essentially revoke the heretical confessions they had made in Zugarramurdi.⁴ Yet from an early date, Becerra and Valle seem unwilling to permit the revocations, saying

“We gather, that either it must be the advice of the Devil – with whom the Graciana in question is on intimate terms – or at the request of their relatives that they have presented themselves to the Tribunal in order to explain away the confessions they made to the parish priest in the presence of other people.”⁵

Already then, the two inquisitors were beginning to create a diabolical relationship which fought against the work of their tribunal. They began to exercise their control and force their own interpretations onto a situation unfamiliar to both of them. In trying to figure out who these heretical Christians were and what they were up to, Becerra and Valle certainly drew upon some resources on witchcraft. But what resources could they refer to?

To begin with, medieval and early modern documents preserved in canon law and other widely circulated print manuals described who witches were and what they did for an elite, literate audience. In fact, Gustav Henningsen asserts that Spanish theologians wrote some of the earliest treatises on witchcraft.⁶ The motifs created by such pervasive documents may have informed most witch persecutors and their victims, but elite publications were not the only engines of witch-hunting. In her book on the German witch craze, Lyndal Roper asserts that local culture in Germany also affected witch-hunts. Although she also outlines a number of elite printed texts on witchcraft (of which there were many for baroque Germany), she asserts that,

“For although it was a Europe-wide phenomenon, the witch craze only took hold by persuading people that the apocalyptic battle between God and Satan, man and Devil, was taking place in their very own villages, that witches were dancing in the woods

⁴ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 55.

⁵ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, *ibid.*

⁶ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 22. Henningsen points to the work of Alfonso Tostado written sometime around 1440, Alphonsus de Spina's *Fortalitium fidei* printed in 1471 (supposedly the first book on witchcraft), and Martín de Arles y Andosilla's *Tractatus de superstitionibus*, printed 1510, as examples of early Spanish work on witchcraft.

where they gathered their firewood, or holding sabbaths on the hills, or congregating under the very streets of their town.”⁷

Zugarramurdi and all of Navarra were not excluded from such an emphasis on local religious traditions and demonic fears. Furthermore, elites were only given an idea of what the witch was capable of through published texts; the actual witch supplied the “real” story.⁸ Thus, the dynamic between the elite and popular mind-set of witchcraft was a fluid framework of constantly exchanged ideas and expectations from “top” to “bottom” and back up again. Methodologically, this understandably causes problems for any historian of witch-hunts; for those researchers of the Spanish Inquisition’s witch-hunts, this interplay between elite (inquisitor) and popular (suspected witches and accusers alike) influences the way in which prejudices can be assigned to one side or another. In other words, an investigation of the witch-hunt carried out in Navarre from 1609-1614 requires that a critical eye is applied to any testimony read by the researcher. For at any given time, the expectations of either the witch or inquisitor may be attributed to their own beliefs or the adopted beliefs of the other.

Certainly the villagers of Zugarramurdi never had access to the written documents that may have influenced the expectations of the inquisitors; but it may be the case that the accused witches were influenced by the elite witchcraft ideas that came from the inquisitors and their interrogation questions. At the same time, however, Becerra and Valle most likely had never heard of the existence of some of the witches’ claims: costumed toads as demonic witch familiars that assisted in potion-making and flying were certainly unique aspects of Zugarramurdi witchcraft. Nonetheless, the senior inquisitors were forced to make a place for the existence of such a creature in their idea of witchcraft. In the case of the expanded experiences of the elite witch-hunters, Roper provides a helpful note as well:

⁷ Roper, *Witch Craze*, 19.

⁸ Roper, *Witch Craze*, 45.

“Though [witchcraft interrogators] had a rough idea of what witches normally did, they relied on the accused witches to furnish the story of their experiences with the Devil. Witchcraft confessions do not report real historical events. They do, however, tell us what their hearers believed that witches did, and so they help us to understand why the interrogators were so passionately determined to root out the terrible sect of witches.”⁹

This is the key to effectively interpreting the witchcraft preoccupations of Becerra and Valle.

Just as they were able to respond as individuals to the demands of their inquisitorial careers, so too were they in the position to create for themselves the witchcraft of Zugarramurdi. Thus the beliefs encapsulated in *el cuaderno* are indebted to common Early Modern European witchcraft tropes found in elite treatises, among the common masses, *and* within the imaginations of Inquisitors Becerra and Valle.

A number of notable characteristics compose the model of the elite witch. First and foremost, the witch was a woman. Though men certainly were convicted at the 1610 *auto de fe*,¹⁰ the majority of the witches accused, interrogated, and convicted were female.¹¹ However, it is wrong to assume that simple misogyny was the cause for such a bias; in fact, certain texts well-known to canon lawyers clearly laid out the female bias for witchcraft. Although an elite construction, the view of the female witch as described in what is commonly called the *Canon Episcopi* was an enduring motif. Supposedly a canonical decision delivered at the Council of Ancyra in 314, the *Canon Episcopi* was included in Gratian’s *Decretum*, the much-referenced collection of ecclesiastical law and the “primary body of teaching material for the study of canon

⁹ Roper, *Witch Craze*, 45.

¹⁰ Roughly one third of the 31 witches were men. See Henningsen’s *Witches’ Advocate*, 198-200 for a graph of the 1610 *auto de fe* convicted witches and their sentences.

¹¹ It should be noted, though, that men were often accused of witchcraft in the hysteria that followed the November 1610 *auto de fe*. In one case, a number of children in Aranaz accused a cowman Yricia of taking them to the *aquejarres*. As new young initiates, young male children were also accused of witchcraft as well. See Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 210.

law.” Furthermore, the text “became the starting point for all systematic discussions of sorcery and witchcraft from the fourteenth century on.”¹²

First, the *Canon Episcopi* makes it clear that witchcraft is heresy. “Heresy” derives from the Greek word *hairesis*, essentially meaning a choice. In choosing to make a pact with the Devil and reject their Christian baptism, whether implicitly and explicitly, the witch committed heresy. Implying the faults of such a heretical act, the *Canon Episcopi* says, “Those who have been subverted and are held captive by the Devil, leaving their creator, seek the aid of the Devil. And so the Holy Church must be cleansed of this pest.”¹³ Then the *Canon Episcopi* continues, focusing on women only:

“It is not to be omitted that some wicked women, who have given themselves back to Satan and been seduced by the illusions and phantasms of demons, believe and profess that, in the hours of the night, they ride upon certain beasts with Diana...”¹⁴

Setting aside the debate over the physical reality of the power of the Devil, the *Canon Episcopi* lays out certain foundational beliefs about the faith of women. It may be the case that the words “some wicked women, who have given themselves *back* to Satan” (my italics) may refer to the initial weakness and sin of Eve. Most importantly however is the issue of transvection, or night flight. The *Canon Episcopi* makes it clear that these flights are pure illusion. Despite still being the work of the Devil, no witch actually flies to a sabbath. Flight is important because Becerra and Valle place great significance upon this diabolical act in their early opinions. In a July 11, 1609 letter from the Suprema, the inquisitors are encouraged throughout their investigation to

¹² Document 5: “Regino of Prüm: A Warning to Bishops, the *Canon Episcopi* (ca. 906) in *Witchcraft in Europe 400-1700: A Documentary History*, eds. Alan Charles Kors and Edward Peters (Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2001) 60-63.

¹³ Regino of Prüm, *the Canon Episcopi*, 62.

¹⁴ Regino of Prüm, *the Canon Episcopi*, 62.

“test and verify with the same witnesses of the complicity or with others the facts that have resulted from their trials such as having toads, making unctions and powders, killing children...”¹⁵

These powders made from the toad’s fluids were responsible for enabling the witches to fly in the first place.¹⁶ Therefore, not only could Becerra and Valle expect to be dealing with the dramatic trial of the decade,¹⁷ but they were engaging with a centuries-old discussion over the possibility of witch flight. Over the course of the witch-hunt, Becerra and Valle changed their opinions about this one particular act of witchcraft, but the fact that witches might be flying to and from devil-meetings remained an integral part of the Zugarramurdi witch trope.

In another popular early modern manual on witchcraft and sorcery, a more subversive and evil construction of the elites’ ideal witch comes into play. The ways in which Becerra and Valle engage with the *Malleus Maleficarum* (or not) are notable. The *Malleus Maleficarum*, written by Henrich Kramer and Jacob Sprenger,¹⁸ two Dominican Inquisitors in Upper Germany, was widely circulated with the papal bull *Summis Desiderantes* after its initial publication in 1486.¹⁹ Using authoritative sources such as the Bible, ratified testimony from witch-hunts in Germany, and other personal narratives, the authors qualify women as being more prone to

¹⁵ “...comprobar y verificar con los mismos testigos de la complicitad o con otros los hechos que resultan destos procesos como son tener los sapos, hazer los unguentos y polvos, matar los niños...” AHN, Sección de la Inquisición, Libro 332, fol. 252v, 24 July 1609.

¹⁶ The “evil-smelling fluid” described by Henningsen was the unction that came from the toads. See Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 71.

¹⁷ One letter from the *Suprema* insists that the inquisitors do what they believe best suits the pursuit of justices in such a “grave business.” AHN, Sección de la Inquisición, Libro 332, fol. 231v-232r, 11 March 1609.

¹⁸ It should be noted here that the joint authorship on the *Malleus* is questioned by many. It may be the case that Kramer wrote the bulk of the large book. See Christopher Mackay’s Introduction to *The Hammer of the Witches* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009) 2-6 for more information.

¹⁹ “Introduction” in *The Hammer of the Witches*, ed. Christopher Mackay, 7. For the overwrought sex bias in the *Malleus Maleficarum*, many historians have accused Kramer and Sprenger of outright misogyny; after reading the stories the two inquisitors collected and printed it is hard to think otherwise. This version of the female witch begins in Question 6: “why a large number of sorcerers is found among the delicate female sex than among men; what sort of women are more often to be found to be superstitious and sorceresses,” Kramer and Sprenger, *The Hammer of Witches*, 61.

superstition via their insatiable and unstable carnal desire and their fickle belief, among other things.²⁰

The *Malleus* belongs among the elite texts discussed here not only for its wide reach and notoriety, but also because the *Suprema* warned inquisitors in 1538 against its wholesale use. In a November 23 letter to the tribunal concerning the proper process for dealing with the witches, the *Suprema* wrote:

“...it is hugely inconvenient that you all [the people] imagine that only witches do these things, and be warned not to believe everything that the *Malleus maleficarum* says because it seems like something seen and verified, and [yet] the matter is of such quality that one can be fooled like the others ...”²¹

Through such a warning, we may presume that the *Malleus Maleficarum* had reached Spain;²² because the *Suprema* feared its contents might affect the correct pursuit of justice, they felt obliged to warn their inquisitors against its application and use in the real world. Furthermore, upon closer inspection, it seems that many of the personality characteristics of witches as described in the *Malleus* did not appear with great consistency among the witches of the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunt. At the very least, the inquisitors did not seem to make a special point of noting how jealous or given to lying the accused witches seemed to be, despite the *Malleus*' preoccupation with such characteristics. It is much more likely that Becerra and Valle may have feared lying not because the act of false testimony denoted something heinous in the personality

²⁰ Women are described as temperamental and jealous, prone to fits of vengeance through spells since their weaker bodies and lower social status prevent a male-like vengeance. They tend to sin more often because they sinned first through Eve. In fact, God created women imperfectly since they were made from man's curved (versus a straight) rib. Women lie and envy; they contradict the deeds and commands of God and of their husbands. Women are Sirens, who overturn kingdoms and celebrate vanity. I could go on, but the gist of the argument is clear very early on. Kramer and Sprenger, *The Hammer of Witches*, 164 - 169.

²¹ “...es grande inconveniente que tengan imaginación que estas cosas las hagan solamente las bruxas, y estar advertidos no creer todo lo que dize el malleus maleficarum porque lo relata como cosa que vide y averiguo y la materia es de calidad en que puede engañarse como los otros...” in AHN, Sección Inquisición, Libro 322, fol. 216v-217r.

²² Monter has found evidence that some seventy-six copies of the dangerous tract had been confiscated by a *comisario* in Bilbao as late as 1608, right at the beginning of the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts. The texts may have belonged to a Madrid book-seller, in fact. See Monter, *Frontiers of Heresy*, 270 – 271.

of their suspects, but because it caused real legal problems for their cases. Thus, despite its popularity among elites (and modern-day historians for that matter), the character of the *Malleus*' witches must be applied prudently or not at all to the way in which Becerra and Valle represented the accused women of the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts.

The *Malleus* also does not hold up when scrutinized against the *maleficia* and other activities of the witches of Navarre. Sprenger and Kramer held that witches were capable of “turning the minds of men to love or hatred,” affecting the fertility of others, conjuring illusions to make it seem as if men’s penises were removed, and transforming humans into beasts.²³ Finally, midwife sorceresses caused greater harm than any other witch, since they could not only cause a women to miscarry, but they also acted to either kill the child or offer it to the service of the Devil without the parents’ knowledge shortly upon birth.²⁴ Yet, when compared to this evidence, it is clear that Becerra and Valle created their victims to be different from the European “standard;” though the incidence of child death related to the Zugarramurdi witches was high, there seems to be no evidence of midwives being responsible for the killings. Also, few if any of the witches’ spells were intended for love magic. Animal transformations were noted: accused witch María de Zozaya admitted to turning herself into a rabbit in order to confound the hunting of a young priest.²⁵ But attempts to thwart the fertility of men in their village via the removal of certain anatomical parts did not seem to be practiced by witches in Zugarramurdi, either. So by comparing the representations of the *Malleus*' witch with the actual witches that Becerra and Valle met, a disjuncture between elite expectation and popular reality grows. In the end, although it may be helpful in re-creating the mental landscape of the inquisitor, not all elite texts matched or fully explained the behavior inquisitors reported from the

²³ Kramer and Sprenger, *The Hammer of Witches*, Questions 7, 8, 9 & 10, 62.

²⁴ Kramer and Sprenger, *The Hammer of Witches*, 212.

²⁵ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 159.

field. And despite the *Malleus*' reputation as the "most handled manual in Spain and in Europe surely,"²⁶ the inquisitors in Zugarramurdi encountered witches with distinctive local flairs which contravened the *Malleus*' conventions.

One last elite text which outlined possible demonic behavior for Becerra and Valle may be noted, however. Spanish theologian Pedro Ciruelo's *Reprobación de las Supersticiones y Hechizerías*,²⁷ written in 1530, serves as another elite source of demonological knowledge.²⁸ As a heavily reprinted and cited vernacular source, such a tract might have been well-known to the inquisitors at Logroño. Although Ciruelo focused heavily on local religious superstitions and the problem of rogue conjurers, he did delve into the dangerous elements of unapproved local magic which happened to resemble witchcraft very much. Ciruelo's text argues against the many false beliefs "the simple people"²⁹ possessed and against those who robbed and fooled them into believing false superstitions and acts of witchcraft.³⁰ The *hechizerías* Ciruelo points out were similar to the diabolical acts of *maleficia* Becerra and Valle often envisioned their witches committing.

The entire third part of Ciruelo's tract is an argument against *hechizerías*, "that are used to reach good things, or to stop bad things, outside of the usual course."³¹ Descriptions of destroyed crops, insect infestations, and the devil's communication with witches³² all point to a mental framework that envisioned witches as occupying a vital role in daily experiences, even

²⁶ "...el manual más manejado en España y en Europa seguramente." In Florencio Idoate, *La Brujería en Navarra y sus Documentos* (Pamplona: Diputación Foral de Navarra, 1978) 21.

²⁷ Pedro Ciruelo, *Reprobación de Las Supersticiones y Hechizerías* (Spain: Albatros Hispanofila, 1978).

²⁸ Stuart Clark references Ciruelo's work throughout his giant work on demonology. Clark uses Ciruelo to prove that elites were worried about the Devil's ability to work magic, to instigate superstition among victims and accusers of witchcraft, and the dangers of such superstition and witchcraft. See Clark, *Thinking With Demons: The Idea of Witchcraft in Early Modern Europe* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1997) 245, 485, and 632 respectively.

²⁹ Ciruelo, *Reprobación de Las Supersticiones y Hechizerías*, 28.

³⁰ Ciruelo, *Reprobación de Las Supersticiones y Hechizerías*, 108.

³¹ "...contra las hechizeras: que se ordenan para alcançar alguno bienes: o para de algunas males: fuera del curso natural." Ciruelo, *Reprobación de Las Supersticiones y Hechizerías*, 73.

³² Ciruelo, *Reprobación de Las Supersticiones y Hechizerías*, 75.

ones as routine as agricultural fertility concerns. Such a framework for acts of the Devil and his sect in humans' everyday lives certainly would have affected the way in which the two inquisitors perceived the witches and their capabilities.

As far as well-known elite literature was concerned, the inquisitors at Logroño had plenty to read when shaping the characteristics and activities of their own witches. But certainly of the most influence to the inquisitors were the stacks of legal precedent housed in their own tribunal archives. The documented presence of witchcraft in Navarre before 1609 extended back to the early 1520s for the inquisitors, and thus covered three large witch-hunts of the past century.³³ In a state of surprise, fear and ignorance at the outbreak of the witch craze, the inquisitors turned to an archive full of trial records, letters from the *Suprema*, and even local secular trials against witches (which dated back even further than the sixteenth century)³⁴ for guidance. In their letter to the *Suprema* in February of 1609, Becerra and Valle demonstrated that they had taken full advantage of these resources about witchcraft. They wrote that they had surveyed the “similar cases of the sect of Witches” encountered by the Logroño tribunal in 1526 and 1555.³⁵ With a point of view guided by a wealth of inquisitorial recommendations, the two inquisitors were by no means limited to the elite printed texts and classic ecclesiastic precedents.

The letters from the *Suprema* to the tribunal during past outbreaks of witchcraft focused on determining the possibility of illusion, or *engaño*. Obsessed with determining whether the accused witches actually flew to Sabbaths, brewed potions, and killed children and adults with demonic incantations, the *Suprema* constantly reminded the inquisitors to verify with utmost

³³ Henningsen notes three “hectic with persecutions in the Pyrenees and the Basque provinces in 1507, 1517, and the 1520s...” See *The Witches' Advocate*, 22.

³⁴ The first documented case of a witch trial in Upper Navarra (of which Pamplona was the capital) is dated to 1300 from the mayor's *cuentas* of the city of Estella. See Idoate, *La Brujería en Navarra y sus Documentos*, 15.

³⁵ AHN, Sección de la Inquisición, Legajo 1679, No. 18.

diligence the truth of the witches' claims. For example, in one letter from the *Suprema* to the inquisitors in Navarra in 1526, the governing body instructs the tribunal to

“verify the persons that they say have died [from the witches' maleficia], [to discover] in what manner did they die, and if there were wounds or bruises ... and other natural diseases ... were [the persons who died] found dead outside their houses and beds, and if inside, did they have fevers, and how many days before they were ill... if the [witches] said they made hail or thunder and lightning, [the inquisitors] were to get the specific day and area and confirm that it really occurred...”³⁶

Thus we can surmise that Becerra and Valle may have been inclined to view the fantastic accounts of their witches with a grain of salt. Each clause of these instructions also evinces a clear inquisitorial interest in finding verified proof (or *actos comprobados*) of witchcraft as well. Reading such archival documents may have also made Becerra and Valle susceptible to certain witchcraft confessions which matched these previous cases and instructions. In reading such past instructions (and in instructions the *Suprema* would eventually send before the beginning of Inquisitor Valle's visitation through Navarra in 1609), the inquisitors at the Logroño tribunal were supposed to place a definite emphasis on finding verified proof of witchcraft. Whether or not Becerra and Valle eventually made such efforts is left for review in *el cuaderno*.

Even the uppermost echelons of the Spanish Inquisition devoted themselves to unraveling this problem of illusion and proof where witchcraft was concerned. In Granada in 1526, Inquisitor-General Alonso Manrique held a consultation. A direct result of the contemporaneous, secular witch-hunt in Navarra, the Inquisitor-General called a number of *calificadores* and other influential and learned persons to Granada in order to address this issue of illusion; they wanted to determine whether or not the witches truly went to the night sabbaths, whether they in fact flew, or whether that act was in their imaginations or a result of the Devil's tricks. Besides voting

³⁶ AHN, Sección de Inquisición, Libro 319, 1526, fol. 270v.

6 – 4 that the witches really did fly to the *aquelarres*,³⁷ the council emphasized the need to exercise due diligence in determining whether the acts of *maleficia* were really committed or not.³⁸ In the extant document,³⁹ we read both their legal interest over proper punishments and their pastoral concern for stopping the spread of such a disruptive and violent sect. Those who attended the consultation were even trying to determine the role of the Inquisition in witch-hunts; in question four, the inquisitors considered the idea that the Inquisition should not play a role in witchcraft trials:

“Fourth Question: Whether knowledge of the those evil deeds [maleficia] and their punishment should concern inquisitors of heretical depravity, [or] whether it is [even] appropriate for the inquisitors to know about those deeds”⁴⁰

Of course, each of the consultants promptly agreed that witchcraft was “infidelity” to God and rightly resided under the purview of the Inquisition, despite the mixed company of the consultation.⁴¹ However, this question could also be interpreted as a concern over the proper jurisdiction of witchcraft cases. In the previous chapter, I have already discussed the issues inquisitors faced in battles for jurisdiction with secular authorities and bishops. In fact, the 1526 witch-hunts involved the secular magistrates directly,⁴² so surely the *Suprema* would have seen the merit in solidifying their right to join (or perhaps take over) such cases.

Thus, Inquisitors Valle and Becerra, and eventually Salazar, may have held a diversity of views about their own roles in addressing the heresy of witchcraft. In fact, their interpretations (according to the *Suprema* 1526 consultation) might have been more in line with the *Canon*

³⁷ See the “First Question” in LuAnn Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 155-156.

³⁸ See in particular Licentiate Valdés’ answer to the “Second Question” in Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 157.

³⁹ See “Document 13: Pondering Witchcraft, Deliberations on the Reality and Heresy of Witchcraft, 1526” in Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 153-163.

⁴⁰ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 158.

⁴¹ Inquisitors were not the only participants in the Granada consultation; famous learned men who corresponded with Desiderius Erasmus like Dr. Luis Coronel, a number of bishops, and other major leaders in the *Suprema* made up the group. See Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 155 – 156.

⁴² Licenciado Balanza, a member of the Consejo Real de Navarra was the instigator of the 1526 hunt which focused on witchcraft activity in lower Navarra particularly. See Idoate, *La Brujería en Navarra*, 23-30.

Episcopi, and therefore more concerned with eradicating the witches and saving their souls. This brings us to another notable aspect of the Inquisition's operation when it came to witchcraft. The *calificadores* and bishops of the 1526 consultation displayed pastoral concerns by ending their meeting with a discussion of the best ways in which to "destroy the plague of those witches."⁴³ Often hidden beneath the misogyny of even the most popular European elite texts, worry over the spiritual health of the afflicted flock is omnipresent. So, even at the Granada meeting, the inquisitors make it explicitly clear that increased preaching (even of the *Canon Episcopi* itself)⁴⁴ and good Catholic teaching would help to turn the people away from the Devil's sect. Clerical reforms, the inclusion of holy water and crosses in the witches' homes, and the construction of crosses over probable *aquejarre* locations would all defer demonic practice among the "simple people of those mountains."⁴⁵ The inquisitors at Logroño possibly had all of these arguments and precedents, even of the pastoral variety, at their disposal in order to frame their actions against the witches' sect. What authorities might have thought about witches and the Devil was not merely crafted by elite literature; rather, legal and spiritual precedents contained in the writings of past witch-hunts might have deeply influenced the expectations and beliefs of inquisitors. Even if Becerra and Valle were "somewhat at a loss"⁴⁶ upon receiving news of the witches' sect at first, they soon could gain a much clearer sense of their goal and mission against the witches through reading the Inquisition's own records.

Yet even with our inquisitors properly situated, the question still remains: what acts did the "real" witches of Zugarramurdi confess to committing? How did the real witch encountered during the hunts compare with what the inquisitors may have expected? Were the legal

⁴³ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 160.

⁴⁴ The Bishop of Mondoñedo recommended explicitly that "the clergy shall deliver an educational sermon, and teach the people the things relayed by the *Canon Episcopi*." Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 161.

⁴⁵ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 161.

⁴⁶ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 51.

precedents and elite vernacular texts enough to help the Logroño inquisitors understand what they were up against?

First, it should be noted that all of the extant records about the Zugarramurdi witches, whether letters to the *Suprema*, visitation letters from Inquisitors Valle and Salazar, legal summaries like *el cuaderno*, and the second-hand accounts of the *auto de fe* (like the pamphlet by Juan de Mongastón), all contain only the reconstructed voice of the accused witch.⁴⁷ In other words, no document written by the accused witches themselves remains to this day; all the historian has to work from are the sources mediated by the men with power and authority over the accused. Thus, getting at a victim's voice in any witchcraft history becomes fraught with problems since filtered descriptions are all that exist. Furthermore, the role of torture, fear, sickness and even collusion in the jails where the witches were imprisoned (both secular and inquisitorial) also skews the reliability of the existing confessions. And of course, just like the inquisitors, the historian must be concerned that the witches' confessions were nothing more than the products of imaginative story-telling or Devil-induced illusions. All we have to work from, then, are these incredibly complicated and problematic sources.

So, according to the Zugarramurdi witches' own confessions, not any elite idea,⁴⁸ how did they describe themselves and their activities? A notable distinction seemingly absent from both the *Malleus* and the *Canon Episcopi* was the Zugarramurdi Witches' organization. There was a clear hierarchy among the witches descending from the Queen (Graciana de Barrenechea and after her, Maria de Arburu), through the senior witches, down to the new novitiates and even

⁴⁷ Henningsen has an excellent graph in *The Witches' Advocate* which outlines who possessed information about the witch trials. Unfortunately, most of these sources are lost. See Diagram 3 in *The Witches' Advocate*, 196.

⁴⁸ Again, it should be stressed that just because the witches confessed to certain acts does not mean they were creating a completely original representation of their activities. They were most likely very aware of the existing elite preconceptions and expectations towards witches and may have confessed accordingly. The interplay between the popular creation of witchcraft activity and belief and the elite expectations of witchcraft is something that makes studying the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts particularly difficult.

the children. Men and children attended the sabbaths; many of the participants were family members as well.⁴⁹ The “King of the *Aquelarre*” was Miguel de Goiburu, yet he was still subordinate to the Queen in an interesting gender reversal. Another notable witch of the Zugarramurdi sect was Estavanía de Yriarte who was “on the most intimate terms with the Devil.”⁵⁰ Although this diabolic hierarchy demonstrates the elite’s love for inversion, few of the documents Becerra and Valle may have read depicted such an organized group of witches.

Another notable aspect of the witches’ organization came from one of the four witches described above, Miguel de Goiburu. Supposedly, the Zugarramurdi Devil would lead his sect not just on visits to other local covens headed by other Devils, but also to a regional Navarrese meeting presided over by the Pamplona Devil who “was respected by all the others as their head.”⁵¹ This information might have especially worried the inquisitors as descriptions of such large-scale, regional sabbaths were lacking in both the vernacular and legal sources. They would be facing a completely unknown situation if such accounts of a wide-scale *aquelarre* were a reality.

Other than this large meeting, the witches assembled three times a week on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, as well as on holy days. These assemblies, as noted above, were known as *aquelarres*, the Castilian spelling of the Basque *akellarre*, meaning “meadow of the he-goat.”⁵² This is a reasonable name given that the Devil was often present at the *aquelarre* in the form of a male goat. To arrive at the *aquelarre*, the witches confessed to walking by foot in a group or flying through cracks in the walls and windows of their homes to the arranged meeting place. Once there, they would greet the Devil by kissing him on various parts of his body.

⁴⁹ Henningsen has another helpful graph on page 33 of *The Witches’ Advocate* which outlines the many familial relationships which existed between the Zugarramurdi Witches.

⁵⁰ Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 91.

⁵¹ Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 92.

⁵² Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 71.

Then the witches would engage in a number of different activities; if new witches were to be admitted to the sect, the *Reniego* would be performed. The novitiate had to renounce God, Mary, and all the saints; his or her baptism and confirmation, as well as the sacramental oils used on those occasions, and his or her godparents, parents and other Christians; “for she would have to accept the Devil as her Lord and Master.”⁵³ Oftentimes, the new witch was then asked to seal the *Reniego* with the anal kiss (in which the witch kissed the Devil under his tail) and was subsequently marked with the Devil’s mark (often a small prick) and give her very own toad dressed in a colored suit.⁵⁴ Few of the witches’ confessions seemed to stray from this basic formula.

Clearly, inversion provided a framework for the witches’ activities. Inversion of Christian sacraments and oaths (such as the *Reniego*) were common themes in witchcraft across Europe. However, the explicit confessions of the Zugarramurdi witches painted a much more virulent form of inversion: in the descriptions of demonic activity given by these witches, the Holy Eucharist, the kiss of peace, and even the ceremonial nature of holy processions serve the purposes of the Devil in an inverted form. In every way (according to Becerra and Valle), it seems the witches confessed to acts which were deliberate and unequivocal opposites of proper Christian belief and practice.

Following their acceptance into the sect, a *maestra* witch would keep the new initiate’s toad until they had advanced enough in the sect to care for it properly themselves. The toad familiars are a notable characteristic of Zugarramurdi witchcraft; in fact, except for English witches, witches’ familiars were not often found on the Continent. However, the toads played an

⁵³ Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 73.

⁵⁴ Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 75.

integral part in the Zugarramurdi witches' lives; they acted as more than just "guardian angels."⁵⁵ They provided the witch with knowledge of when to go to the *aquejarre*, and the little demon toad had to be well-cared for everyday or else the witch would suffer punishment from the Devil if the toad complained. Curiously enough, the toads were the main ingredient used to create potions and powders with which to accomplish their evil acts and arrive at the *aquejarre* as well:

"Every day when the toad had finished eating, the witch would whip it with a small switch. The toad would swell up, take on a poisonous color, and finally say, "That will do." Next the witch would tread on it with the left foot so that the excrement burst out at both ends. The substance was a greenish-black fluid. The witch would collect it carefully and put it into a little bowl; this was the salve that was used as the means of traveling to the sabbath. Whether the journey was undertaken on foot or through the air, the witches were always accompanied by their toads, which could either hop along or else fly at the witch's left side."⁵⁶

Once at the *aquejarre*, children witches shepherded the herds of toads. While the younger witches looked on, the adults danced to music⁵⁷ around a fire which did not burn the witches' flesh. After dancing, the witches would engage in mutual intercourse with the Devil and the other demonic minions present. However, as exemplified in María de Zozaya's testimony as well as many others', the Devil would often visit the women both during the day and the night to engage in sexual acts.

In one pivotal act of spiritual inversion, the witches often held a Black Mass at their *aquejarre*. First, the Devil would hear the confessions of the witches' Christian acts against the sect. As a choir raucously sang, the Devil robed himself in appropriate black vestments, alms were collected, and forgiveness dispensed for the witches' sins against him. Finally the Devil's Eucharist of foul-tasting black bread and acrid wine was shared. A feast of roasted meat was

⁵⁵ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 78.

⁵⁶ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 79.

⁵⁷ Two male witches in particular confessed to being the drum players for such dancing. See Henningsen's graph in *The Witches' Advocate*, 198.

shared on such feast and “holy” days for the sect as well. However, this meat came from the bodies of deceased witches and other victims which were dug up from tombs. All the witches were required to partake of the meal, even if it required them to consume their own deceased child or spouse.⁵⁸ Such a celebration mimicked the real religious experience of Christians; feast day celebrations at the local level would have been marked by very similar activities, albeit directed towards the glory of God and not characterized by such morally corrupted behavior.

To perform magic intended to harm (or *maleficia*) the witches often made potions and powders from the human remains of the feast and the excrement of the toads. They even met in one another’s homes to make the more complicated poisons. These poisons could then be used to harm humans in an act of revenge. The powders were often put right into the mouths of the sleeping victims after the Devil put a special sleeping spell over the entire house. Nausea and violent vomiting were then reported, possibly followed by death. In comparison, children were often killed by vampirism; the witches would suck the blood from the children while they slept in their cradles.⁵⁹

These confessions, which amounted to attacks on fertility, mesh well with Lyndal Roper’s argument in *Witch Craze*, where she holds that the witches’ neighbors and accusers “could become inclined to see threats to fertility lurking everywhere, and to expect older women to envy the fecund young.”⁶⁰ Fertility in humans, animals and crops was a gift and blessing from God; any attack against it or a celebration of infertility (such as the Black Mass), was the work of the Devil against the divine wishes of God.⁶¹

⁵⁸ Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 83-84.

⁵⁹ Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 86-88.

⁶⁰ Roper, *Witch Craze*, 8.

⁶¹ Roper, *Witch Craze*, 150.

Another notable behavior of the Zugarramurdi witches included physical mistreatment. The Devil cruelly whipped witches accused of disobeying the rules of the sect or failing to attend the *aquelarres*.⁶² The Devil marked his novitiates (adult and child alike) with a painful mark until they reached the age of majority and could be officially initiated. The Logroño inquisitors desperately sought out the Devil's mark in order to test it with pricks and verify its' demonic nature.⁶³

Again, it becomes clear after reviewing such fantastic claims, that everything the witches *allegedly* confessed to and what the inquisitors actually heard were all set within existing frames of belief and expectation. The cultural literacies regarding witchcraft differed greatly between the witches and Becerra and Valle, yet in some way through these trials both the elite and popular ideas of the witch were woven together and preserved in the existing documents. For example, the idea of an old woman often being a witch is a perfect illustration of such a dynamic intersection. An inquisitor, some other secular justice, or even a village person could be expected to accuse the oldest women in the village of witchcraft first. Because of the existing sexual notions regarding old women⁶⁴ and through the scape-goating and social isolation perpetrated against them, a preference for older female witches makes sense in a world driven by expectations about fertility.

Once an old woman was denounced, then the tale of her life-long involvement in the witches' sect could begin. Old women such as the Zugarramurdi Queen, Graciana de Barrenechea, would confess to being witches for decades and converting countless numbers of

⁶² Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 91-92.

⁶³ For an example of Inquisitor Valle's inspection of the Devil's marks, see *The Witches' Advocate*, 117.

⁶⁴ Roper outlines the background of humoral medicine and existing beliefs of the ageing process for women. According to such prevalent notions, women became drier, less likely to rid their bodies of impurities through menstruation and thus craved moisture (to be found in sex) as they aged. Such a desire for sexuality at an old age on the part of women is terrifying, for their desire cannot lead to fertility. Thus, older women could very quickly become reasonable targets for witch-hunts. See Roper, *Witch Craze*, 162-164.

people, including their own children, grandchildren, and other relatives.⁶⁵ Older women were often the sexual victims of the Devil, as *el cuaderno* attests: of the ten women referenced in the Devil-sex *acto*, six were over the age of 50.⁶⁶ In reality, these women may have just been lonely widows deprived of any amorous life; therefore such stories, in which the women seemed to crave a caring lover even in the form of the Devil, evince a deeper, more psychological component to the confession stories of the accused.

In terms of the deaths allegedly caused by witches, infant mortality and child mortality rates were very high in the early modern age. It was easy for parents to blame the woman who watched their child while they were away as the cause behind an unexpected deadly illness. Even adult people died suddenly, seemingly without explanation. If a local woman knew medicinal remedies, attempted them, and then failed, another charge of witchcraft could be easily made. In such a way, midwives were often blamed for infant deaths, as the *Malleus* so blatantly emphasizes.⁶⁷

It seems though, that the inquisitors in Logroño were aware of all these contingencies. The *Suprema* certainly advised them throughout the trial of the initial witches that such variables could thwart their pursuit of truth and justice. Yet they still decided to burn most of the witches, whether alive or dead, in their November 1610 *auto de fe*. How the inquisitors at Logroño arrived at such a verdict came from their personal interactions with the witches, whether in the courtroom, the jail, or the many witch-infested villages, and their own personal convictions on the activities of the accursed sect. The first of these documented interactions between inquisitor and witch came with Inquisitor Valle's visitation in 1609. As Becerra, Valle and Salazar

⁶⁵ Graciana de Barrenechea confessed to converting her children, the two Yriarte women, and possibly a niece. See Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 33.

⁶⁶ Archivo Real y General de Navarra, MSS Códice L. 3, 1612, fol. 41v-41r.

⁶⁷ Kramer and Sprenger, *The Hammer of Witches*, 212.

collected evidence and ran the trials against the Zugarramurdi witches' sect, they were confronted with the witches themselves and forced to reconcile or alter their pre-existing notions of what it meant to be a witch – especially as they themselves began to disagree over the true nature of the witchcraft in Navarre. As Becerra and Valle recognized Salazar to be a fierce opponent to *their* conception of the Zugarramurdi witch, they created their own defensive document utilizing the many witchcraft discourses available to them. This process, ironically enough resulted in yet another elite (albeit unique) text on the proven acts of witchcraft committed by thousands of Navarrese Catholics, *el cuaderno*.

Chapter 3: El Cuaderno

In the manuscript entitled “*Inquisición de Navarra. Cuaderno de actos comprobados de bruxos,*”¹ Inquisitors Becerra and Valle compiled their evidence for the veracity of witchcraft in the case against their junior inquisitor Salazar. The extant 65-folio manuscript was certainly only meant for the eyes of the *Suprema*, and, according to Gustav Henningsen, may have been only the first part of a two-part verdict.² Regardless, it remains to this day the largest extant statement dealing with the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts. A close study of this neglected document in the proper context sheds light on the argumentative strategies of Inquisitors Becerra and Valle; *el cuaderno* also reveals a notable pervasiveness of witchcraft beliefs among the accused, a consistency of certain witchcraft tropes among the confessed and the inquisitors, and the impressive organizational skills of the tribunal.

This document can be used by different historians in different ways. Gender studies could certainly use *el cuaderno* in order to interpret what made neighbors and inquisitors suspect certain types of women to join the Devil’s sect, and what the experiences of accused women may have been like over the course of a witch-hunt. Legal historians (especially of the Spanish Inquisition) may also find in *el cuaderno* a wealth of legal practice and argumentative tropes. The religious historian may use *el cuaderno* in an attempt to highlight expectations about heresy and witchcraft in general. And even the folklore historian can read *el cuaderno* in the pursuit of literary and genre conceits from the early modern period. In my brief overview, I shall attempt to read *el cuaderno* through these perspectives. Along the way, I hope to dispel a few continued

¹ Archivo Real y General de Navarra (AGN), MSS Códice L. 3, 1612.

² Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 336.

misconceptions about Becerra and Valle's seemingly ineffective argumentative choices and instead shed light on the reasons why the two men wrote *el cuaderno* the way they did.

Reviewing the lay-out of the large text offers a helpful first step into understanding Becerra and Valle's arguments. In the margins of the title page, we read

“The book bound in parchment is about *actos comprobados*, but in that one the particular and individual acts that the witches confessed with other witnesses are proven, and in this one the common things the witches uniformly confess are proven with single actions.”³

From the beginning then, it is clear that *el cuaderno* was meant to compile and summarize all the evidence from the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunts which Becerra and Valle deemed to be especially consistent and damning among the witches' testimonies. In other words, Becerra and Valle planned to strengthen their argument for the veracity of witchcraft in Navarre by amassing those things which the witches uniformly confessed in common. Furthermore, this distinction between using evidence which was confessed by many witches consistently (which *el cuaderno* proposes to do) and other perhaps atypical witch confessions which were verified by witnesses helps the reader to interpret the manuscript's purpose. We can expect, then, that *el cuaderno* will name accused witches only, that it will include a large number of citations, and that the evidence may seem repetitive since the nature of the manuscript was to summarize those *actos* which were unvarying across a large number of witch confessions.

Supposedly written by inquisitorial secretary Juan de Agüero,⁴ the manuscript is organized according to a table of contents written on the first few pages. The list, aptly titled

³ “El libro encuadernado en pergamino es de Actos comprobados, pero en aquel se comprueban los Actos singulares e individuales que confesaron los bruxos con otros testigos, y en este se comprueban con Actos singulares, las cosas comunes que uniformemente confiesan los bruxos” AGN, MSS Códice L. 3, 1612.

⁴ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 337.

“what the *actos positivos* of this *cuaderno* contain and at which folio is each one,”⁵ begins the list of acts to be verified. The term *acto comprobado* (or *positivo*) refers to literally “a verified act;” in this case, the *actos comprobados* were meant to be seen as statements of proven truth, ratified and verified through witness testimony or witches’ confessions, and thus supportive of Becerra and Valle’s position on the veracity of witchcraft. Such a term accurately reflects the legal concerns of the inquisitors over what kinds of evidence carried more legal weight. Again, Roman legal precedent in the practice of the Spanish Inquisition is key; the observance of external acts viewed by at least two outside eyewitnesses was tantamount to proof and a confession of guilt.⁶ Thus, witchcraft events confessed by the accused had to be proven and ratified in a similar way. Wrapped up in this as well was the belief in the age of majority; at a certain age, children and young people could be expected to tell the truth and accurately relay the events they saw.⁷ As we shall see, Becerra, Valle and Salazar were all concerned with these facets of legal practice in the creation of their defensive documents and the *actos comprobados*.

Each *acto comprobado* (of which there are 32) begins with a description of the heretical activity of the witches’ sect meant to be proven by the evidence that follows. After the narrative of each *acto*, snippets of compelling witness testimony include the name of the witch who provided the supporting evidence, his or her age, home, and a reference to the pertinent records where the full trial or confession information might be found. According to Henningsen, Becerra and Valle took their sources from a variety of places. Material from the 1610 *auto de fe* in Logroño used both to convict the witches and declare their heretical activities to the gathered audience makes up a portion of *el cuaderno*’s sources. *El cuaderno* also includes confessions

⁵ “Sumario de lo que contienen los Actos positivos deste cuaderno y a quantas fojas esta cada uno,” AGN, MSS Códice L. 3, 1612.

⁶ Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xi.

⁷ In one document, Homza finds that the “minors under the age of twenty ... [must be] receive[d] kindly and with light penances, even if they come after the period of grace...” See Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 66.

from suspects imprisoned at the tribunal. Finally, evidence collected by Inquisitors Valle and Salazar during their respective visitations rounds out the sources for Becerra and Valle's legal summary.⁸

Becerra and Valle arranged the 32 *actos comprobados* in a very specific way. In general, the majority of the *actos* laid out the diabolic events that occurred in going to, participating in, and leaving the *aquejarre*, the Basque term for the witches' sabbath. *Actos* 1 – 8⁹ and 13¹⁰ present verified proof that *aquejarres* were corporally experienced; in many cases these *actos* also address the persuasive measures the witches and the Devil used to add new recruits. *Acto* 10 discusses the cruel treatment witches received if they considered leaving the sect or missed *aquejarre* meetings.¹¹ *Actos* 9,¹² 12 and 13¹³ address the spiritual consequences of becoming a witch: afterwards, witches could not bear to hear the name of God, nor could they confess, pray, or see the Holy Host during Mass. Belonging to the sect was manifested through both verbal agreements (the *Reniego*) and physical maltreatment (in the form of the Devil's Mark) and covered in *acto* 11.¹⁴ *Actos* 14 through 16¹⁵ describe the hierarchy of the sect and the many "perks" that came with initiation and advancement through it, such as the assignment of a demonic familiar (or literally "a guardian angel"¹⁶) in the form of a toad. Becerra and Valle then enter into descriptions of the evil acts (or *maleficia*) practiced by the witches in the form of

⁸ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 338.

⁹ AGN, MSS Códice L. 3, 1612, fol. 1r – 17v.

¹⁰ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 23v – 24v.

¹¹ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 19v – 24v.

¹² MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 17v – 19v.

¹³ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 21v – 23v.

¹⁴ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 21r.

¹⁵ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 25r. – 31r.

¹⁶ In the description for *Acto* 14, Becerra and Valle describe the toads as being "dressed in different colors, with an entire vest, adjusted to their size and body with a little cap. ... And [the Devil] gives [the new witches] the [toads] as a guardian angel..." in MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 25r.

potions and powders in *actos* 17 – 19.¹⁷ *Actos* 20 – 22¹⁸ deal with the cannibalistic practices of the witches. The evidence only becomes more shocking and horrific as Becerra and Valle spend the next three *actos* (23 – 25)¹⁹ discussing the sexual acts of the Devil and his witch consorts. In *actos* 26 and 27,²⁰ Becerra and Valle amass evidence which proves not only that the Devil meets with his witches to discuss usual diabolical activities during the day, but also that he attempts to intervene in their efforts to confess to the Holy Office. *Actos* 28 and 29²¹ address the thorny issue of whether the witches leave their beds or not to attend the *aquelarre* and how they sometimes leave a visible demon resembling themselves in their beds. Becerra and Valle inject religious fear into *acto* 30²² which describes the practices of the witches' Black Mass even during the solemn festivals of the Christian calendar. Finally, *actos* 31 and 32²³ narrate the effects of the Inquisition's investigation into the Devil's sect: evidence describing how the Devil verbally persuades or physically punishes those who leave the sect or confess their guilt makes up the last of the *actos*. So not only do Becerra and Valle bring the reader through time to the present dealings with the witches' sect in the arrangement of the *actos*, but they also weave a narrative of life-long involvement with the Devil and all that such an unholy alliance entails; in fact, many of the most cited and notorious witches in *el cuaderno* are those witches who are over 60 years of age.

After the *actos* a few folios are used to list the names, ages and villages of witches reconciled during visitations and at the tribunal.²⁴ And finally, curiously tacked on at the end of

¹⁷ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 31r – 38v.

¹⁸ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 38v – 40v.

¹⁹ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 40v – 42v.

²⁰ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 42v – 46r.

²¹ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 46r – 48v.

²² MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 48v – 49v.

²³ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 49v – 53v.

²⁴ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 54r – 60r.

the 32 *actos comprobados* is a 9-page copy of the 1611 confession of Doña María de Endara of the village of Lesaca.²⁵ Although the first references to María de Endara are in the actual body of the *actos*, her stirring fairy tale-like confession of meeting the handsome Devil and becoming a witch caps off *el cuaderno* on a dramatic note.

Though not my goal, *el cuaderno* might be used as a tool to recreate the content of the lost trials precisely because of its extensive organization and source-filled notes. Such organizational and filing expertise is an often-overlooked consequence of the bureaucracy of the Spanish Inquisition. In reading *el cuaderno* with its many lists, tables and indexing notes for every piece of supporting testimony, we are provided with a prime example of Inquisitorial process and obsession with paper; this manuscript was supposed to be searchable, and its contents verifiable, for its readers. But, although some historians have used *el cuaderno* as such a sourcebook for the missing testimony, Becerra and Valle organized their manuscript in order to convince readers of the truth of their argument. They were aware that an effective defensive document relied on referenced sources. Including references to supplementary visitation confessions and writing additional case numbers in the margins contributed not just paper weight, but argumentative weight as well.²⁶

²⁵ María de Endara's confession covers folios 61r – 65r. Henningsen infers that this 1611 confession by María de Endara should have constituted the beginning of the second verdict document created by Inquisitors Becerra and Valle; in fact, Henningsen asserts that the confession is copied in Valle's own hand. I must disagree with Henningsen for in no way does the transition into María de Endara's confession contain any preface material to denote it as the beginning of a second entirely separate document. Moreover, on the verso side of the last folio of the Endara confession, there is a table sketched out which seems to bookend the manuscript. I would assert that *el cuaderno* should be viewed as one single manuscript and not a compilation of other that might have belonged in additional "memorials." There does seem to be sufficient evidence to suggest that other verdict documents may have been written; but *el cuaderno* is a complete manuscript and should be interpreted as such. See Henningsen, "Chapter 12.4: The Verdict of Becerra and Valle," "12.5: The Pamplona Manuscript (Memorial A)," and "12.6: The Lost Memorials" in *The Witches' Advocate*, 336-346.

²⁶ See the end of *Acto 1* for just such a list of supplementary evidence: MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 3v.

Furthermore, in *el cuaderno* Becerra and Valle created an especially unique and novel document in comparison to the usual records of the Spanish Inquisition. Typically, Spanish inquisitors relied on trial records to substantiate their opinions with the *Suprema*, but *el cuaderno* appears to have been a substitute or a supplement for that process: the manuscript mentions such a large number of individuals that the paper involved in shipping the records would have swamped the already inundated *Suprema*. And, of course, the rift between Becerra and Valle and inquisitor Salazar made this document part of an intra-tribunal debate. The fact that *el cuaderno* was not just a legal summary, but a defensive document for Becerra and Valle against their junior inquisitor also makes it unique and sets it apart from typical tribunal records.

Of course, the “usual” tribunal record of a tribunal in the Spanish Inquisition could vary widely. Letters were extremely common and may have come from *comisarios* placed in locations far from the tribunal, inquisitors on visitation, or even the *Suprema* itself. Records of actual witness testimony, denunciations against suspected heretics, and the confessions of the accused also number among the documents written by the inquisitors and their secretaries. A full trial record could include the words (though mediated through the secretary’s hand) of denunciation against a suspected heretic, the responses of the heretic to allegations or the inquisitors’ questions, statements of witnesses, and the whole chronological flow of the trial.²⁷ Visitation records were also included in the archives of tribunals and could be as simple as Valle’s narrative letters or as lengthy as Salazar’s Reports. Tribunals also stored many annual trial summaries called *relaciones de causas* in which (ideally) the bare basics of every trial were recorded including the charges against a suspected heretic, their conduct during the trial, and the

²⁷ For an excellent example of such a trial record, see “Document 4” in Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, 17 -26.

sentence.²⁸ Finally, written records of the proceedings of *autos de fe* round out the usual texts written by and archived for future use in tribunals.²⁹ *El cuaderno*, by contrast, does not easily fit into any of these usual document types and is therefore a notable exception.

Inquisitors were especially adept in their use of such diverse records. Although James Given's conclusions about the technologies of medieval French inquisitorial documentation seem far afield both in time and place from the Zugarramurdi witch-hunt, his assertion that "[inquisitors] seem to have made unusually skillful use of their records..." certainly applies to *el cuaderno*. Given says "the care with which the inquisitors prepared and ordered their documents gave them unusual control of the written word,"³⁰ Becerra and Valle presented their argument in a precise way as well, using section headings, copying the text included in *el cuaderno* from the original record sources, and indexing their evidence topographically and thematically, just as Given claims the French inquisitors did.³¹ In dealing with the confessions of heretics, Given also asserts that inquisitors were well prepared to shape the dangerous and "oblique discourse [of suspected heretics' confessions] so as to reveal the damning 'truth' that they believed lay hidden within it."³² For Becerra and Valle, this truth -- which they certainly manipulated within the arrangement and argumentation of *el cuaderno* -- was made up the verified acts of witchcraft,

²⁸ *Relaciones de causa* are popular documents for Spanish Inquisition historians to use since so many statistics can be calculated from them. See the initial pages of William Monter's "Chapter 2: The Aragonese century of the Spanish Inquisition, 1530 – 1630" in *Frontiers of Heresy: The Spanish Inquisition from the Basque Lands to Sicily* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990) 29 – 32.

²⁹ See Homza, "Document 26" in *The Spanish Inquisition 1478 – 1614*, 257 – 266.

³⁰ James Given, *The Inquisition & Medieval Society: Power, Discipline, and Resistance in Languedoc* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 1997) 50.

³¹ Given, *The Inquisition & Medieval Society*, 26 – 35. In the lists which follow the *Actos comprobados* and precede the Endara confession, the witnesses are more or less grouped topographically just as Given claims. See MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 54r – 60r.

³² Given, *The Inquisition & Medieval Society*, 51.

“...which happened really and truly, without being able to claim that dream or illusion intervened.”³³

Though the purpose of their text was unusual, Becerra and Valle may have taken argumentative cues from several earlier sources, such as the second report that Salazar wrote on March 24 and sent to the Inquisitor General. Salazar’s reports, as Henningsen calls them, were the summaries of his visitation trip, which lasted from May 22, 1611 to January 10, 1612, when he returned to the tribunal in Logroño.³⁴ With an Edict of Grace, Salazar traveled extensively through upper Navarre, into Guipúzcoa and Vizcaya, and finally through Alava before returning to his colleagues.³⁵ Upon his return, he shut himself up with the two secretaries who had accompanied him³⁶ and immediately set to work preparing the five thousand folios of notes taken during his visitation, as he himself stated.³⁷ Both Salazar’s first and second reports are dated the same day, right before the expiration of the Edict of Grace under which he conducted his visitation.³⁸ The second report, which most resembles *el cuaderno* in content and layout, serves as an interesting comparison to the manuscript of Becerra and Valle. Salazar orders an account of his entire visitation under four section headings: the first discusses the *aquejarres* and how the witches arrive at and depart from the sabbath, the second describes what witches do, the third discusses the *actos positivos* Salazar endeavored to prove, and the last heading provides an assessment of the evidence and what guilt might be derived from it.³⁹

³³ “...las quales pasan real y verdaderamente, sin que se pueda pretender que interbenga sueño ni ylusion...” AGN, MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 1r.

³⁴ Henningsen, *The Witches’ Advocate*, 235 and 307.

³⁵ Henningsen provides both a brief description of Salazar’s Edict of Grace and a map of the visitation route in *The Witches’ Advocate*, 237-238.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, 307. Henningsen makes no reference to whether the two Basque translators, Fray Doming de Sardo and Fray Josef de Elizondo, helped the inquisitor to write his reports. See *ibid.*, 235.

³⁷ Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 349.

³⁸ Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 252.

³⁹ Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 269.

Initially, the organizational and narrative differences between Salazar's second report and *el cuaderno* grab the reader's attention; for example, at no point do Becerra and Valle discuss the legal consequences of their chosen *actos comprobados*. Salazar does gloss his evidence in a similar style to the indexing preference of *el cuaderno*, but the way in which he presents his argument and evidence is very different from Becerra and Valle. First, Salazar often counts: in other words, he uses numbers to describe and support his evidence. Besides beginning his second report with exact numbers of *revocantes*, relapsed, absolved, and reconciled witches,⁴⁰ Salazar regularly gives the number of witnesses who appeared before him at a given time to declare or make a revocation. Throughout, Salazar commits himself to a narrative and persuasive style with little naming of actual witches until his third article. He focuses on facts and events. He often inserts his opinion on the proper interpretation of the confessions and evidence presented. He even lingers on his own experiences, relating the stories of *maleficia* supposedly perpetrated against him.⁴¹ And, perhaps most importantly, he consistently focuses on the necessary requirements for proving heretical guilt within the inquisition's court.

One of the ways in which these requirements crop up in Salazar's second report is in the many references to witnesses who were not suspected of witchcraft. According to the law requirements of the Spanish Inquisition, confession of guilt or testimony of two witnesses was necessary for "complete proof" of heretical guilt.⁴² With the problematic confessions of the witches, Salazar was forced to consider the alternative of eye witnesses. In his third article, numbers 25 – 47 all deal with the fact that pertinent witnesses to acts of witchcraft did not in fact verify the events described by the witches. Parents who kept vigil over their children at night,

⁴⁰ Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 267.

⁴¹ See number 16 under Salazar's second article for an example of his first-person experiences; Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 287 – 289.

⁴² Homza, *The Spanish Inquisition*, xi.

matrons who inspected the virginity of young girls raped by the Devil, shepherds, doctors, masters of servants, other *comisarios* and *licenciados* of the Holy Office, and even Salazar himself all round out a group of witnesses who were unable to testify to the truth of the witches' testimony.⁴³

Moreover, throughout the report, Salazar places an emphasis on describing witnesses or witches as being responsible, mature, reasonable, or “of sound disposition.”⁴⁴ Salazar applies these adjectives to older men,⁴⁵ and only once each to a 16-year-old girl and a 40-year-old non-witch male.⁴⁶ He seems, then, very concerned with the ability of witnesses (both witch and non-witch alike) to testify accurately and without falling prey to the apparent hysteria gripping the countryside. These witches and witness who are labeled as “possessing reason” give very detailed accounts of their experiences; they mention specifics such as where they were when the diabolical event occurred, how long ago it happened, and what they saw and heard.⁴⁷ Salazar's usage of the “reasonable” adjective for both witch and non-witch is curious, though; perhaps he describes these witnesses as “of sound disposition” to impress upon the reader the seriousness of the witch hysteria. If even reasonable older men can admit to being witches and viewing unexplainable witch-like activity, how dangerous must this mass hysteria be?

In contrast, Becerra and Valle rarely cite the testimony of outside witnesses. To be fair, this matches the initial goal of *el cuaderno* to focus only on the testimony of the witches and not outside witnesses, which another evidence book was meant to cover. But in a handful of

⁴³ Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 295 – 311.

⁴⁴ “...un Juan de Saldías, hombre de ochenta años y de muy buen natural y discurso...” [my italics], Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 277.

⁴⁵ Juan de Saldías and Martín de Igunen are the two male witches Salazar labels as possessing “sound reason.” See Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 283.

⁴⁶ The sixteen year old girl is María de Larralde and the non-witch male is Francisco Martínez de Aranoz. See Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 291.

⁴⁷ See de Aranoz's statements in number 19 of the second article as an example, Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 291 – 293.

instances, Becerra and Valle do in fact use testimony from non-witches, albeit in a very limited fashion.⁴⁸ Otherwise, they often conveniently overlook the possibility for outside witness testimony. In the 17th *acto*, testimony of individuals who are not witches is neglected in order to support the claims of potion-making; despite one witch declaring that holding potion-making sessions in her mother's home was not comfortable given the fact that many non-witches lived in the home, Becerra and Valle do not do anything to substantiate the claim with evidence from the non-witches of the household.⁴⁹ Instead, they focus on the uniformity with which a large number of witches confessed to the same thing (as stated in the prefatory statement on the cover of *el cuaderno*) or the astonishing nature of some of the older women's testimony.

Still, Becerra and Valle often make the physical evidence of witchcraft a central theme to the *actos*. For example, digging up and quartering dead bodies for meat to eat during the *aquelarres* required knives and shovels which went missing from the witches' homes.⁵⁰ In Salazar's third article on the *actos positivos*, the inquisitor seems to emphasize the physical evidence of witchcraft too; however, Salazar deviates from Becerra and Valle's treatment of physical evidence in one notable fashion. He does not simply rely on the confessions of the witches in regards to their missing knives, wet garments, and pots of evil powders. Salazar describes the work of a number of doctors and apothecaries to verify the nature of the 22 pots of the witches' potions and powders collected for inspection.⁵¹ In fact, the doctors and apothecaries went so far as to perform experiments with the unctions, feeding them to animals and even to a reputed witch. The potions were ruled ineffectual by the professionals. Salazar proves himself

⁴⁸ After the name of the individual is listed, "que no es bruxo/a" follows to delineate a witness who was not suspected of witchcraft themselves. Very few of these outside witness are included in *el cuaderno*, however. See the last entry for *Acto 29*, Magdalena de Masalde, as one of the few examples; AGN, MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 48v.

⁴⁹ Maria de Yriarte makes this claim saying that her father, her sister, her brother-in-law and other children all live in the home. See MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 32r.

⁵⁰ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 40r.

⁵¹ No. 50, Third Article of Salazar's Second Report in Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 313.

deeply committed to uncovering positive and verified evidence; he even goes out into a field to inspect grass with his fellow secretaries for the signs of trampling that should accompany a possible *aquelarre* site.⁵² But the *actos positivos* Salazar finds only point to the unreality of the witches' claims.

In comparison, Becerra and Valle occasionally include evidence that physical proof of witchcraft, like the Devil's Mark, was tested for its veracity. Although they regularly esteem those *actos comprobados* which the witches confess uniformly, they do not always regard the witches' statements about physical abuse as true simply because the witches have testified it. In one case in the 13th *acto*, Becerra and Valle recount a needle test performed upon a Devil's Mark in the tribunal:

“And to perform the test, a prick was made with a needle on [the mark] and the needle was pressed until it stayed stuck, without falling and well stuck, and [Johanes de Yribarren] said that he could not feel anything.”⁵³

But overall, Becerra and Valle were less concerned with relaying reports of experiments or evidence-collecting. Simply including the words of the witches about their acts seemed to be sufficient evidence for most of the *actos*, without the proof of first-hand examination that Salazar loved to add. For example, in the case of the toads birthed by the most senior witches, physical proof of such hideous births is absent from *el cuaderno*. Only three witches' testimonies are used in this *acto* (number 25) and just their confessions of pain, midwifery assistance by the Devil himself, and feeling the toads moving in their wombs suffice as evidence for Becerra and Valle.⁵⁴

⁵² Henningsen, *The Salazar Documents*, 307.

⁵³ “Y para hazer la prueba, con un afiler se le pico en ella y apreto hasta que el afiler se quedo hincado, sin caerse y bien apegado, y dixo que no sintia cosa ninguna.” MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 23v.

⁵⁴ MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 25, fols. 41v – 42v.

This seems to suggest that Becerra and Valle were either less concerned about the role of hysteria in creating such lurid tales or perhaps they simply believed what they heard. In her book on Baroque German witch-hunts, Lyndal Roper asserts that interrogators of witches felt a deep empathy with the accused women they were questioning. Roper insists that interrogators (and in this case, inquisitors) “who had a certain sensitivity to the mental states of others, who had the capacity to enter into their emotional worlds, often made the best prosecutors.”⁵⁵ Perhaps Salazar was in fact more detached from the fears of the thousands who accused their neighbors and members of their own family in his over-reliance on proof which could hold up in court; maybe Becerra and Valle were more in tune with the witches, especially the *anciana* women who confessed to lasting diabolical relationships. Such a reliance on the confession of the witches can be seen later in *el cuaderno* (specifically numbers 23 – 25) where relatively few witches are referenced, yet their confessions are longer and perhaps more emotionally charged. However, it may also be the case that Becerra and Valle were simply unwilling to allow the witches to revoke their initial confessions. On the other hand, Salazar spent a significant amount of his time during visitation listening to the witches’ countless revocations.

Thus far, then, it is clear that Salazar’s second report emphasizes different aspects of the witches’ confessions in comparison to Becerra and Valle. It is worth noting how often Salazar dwells on the more fantastic elements of transvection, transformation, and invisibility in the confessions. In both the first and second articles, Salazar gives prominence to stories of witches flying to *aquelarres*, turning into houseflies,⁵⁶ and attempting to kill Salazar as he is listening to their confessions in the audience room.⁵⁷ Essentially, one may read a sarcastic tone

⁵⁵ Lyndal Roper, *Witch Craze*, 57-58.

⁵⁶ Henningsen, *Salazar Documents*, Article 1, number 2, 273.

⁵⁷ Henningsen, *Salazar Documents*, Article 2, number 16, 287.

into these sections, as it was clear to Salazar that he found insufficient evidence for such fantastic claims. Including such amazing “evidence” in his reports allowed him to place the witches’ actions in the realm of dreams and illusions.

Surprisingly enough, Becerra and Valle include evidence of transvection in *el cuaderno* as well. Yet it is never what they emphasize; instead, any claims of flying through the air to an *aquelarre* are consistently paired with phrases which assert the regularity and unanimity of the witches’ confessions that they *walk* to the sabbaths as well. For example, the testimony of María de Çozaya follows such a pattern:

“And then she would take some witches and this one sometimes went through the air, and other times, after anointing, she left through the front door of her house on foot and she closed the door with a key from the outside, and she went with her distaff, spinning, in order to fool the neighbors, until she had left the village.”⁵⁸

This confession of the 80-year-old woman provides believable elements for a walk to an *aquelarre*; María de Çozaya obviously gives physical evidence to the claim that she walks to the Devil-meetings, instead of flying; one can easily imagine her covering up a clandestine meeting with such a mundane, daylight activity as spinning after locking her front door behind her. Through such specific (and yet routine and relatable) evidence as this, Becerra and Valle meet their goal of making the witches and their *maleficia* into a daily reality.

Finally, Salazar offers an assessment of the evidence collected. In the fourth and last article, Salazar not only proposes a number of reasons which may explain the lack of supported evidence for the witches’ testimony, but he also emphasizes the role that local hysteria and fear of the Holy Office itself played in creating false testimony. At most, he suggests in his Second

⁵⁸ “Y entonces llevaba consigo algunas bruxas y esta yba algunas bezes por el ayre, y otras bezes, despues de untada, se salia por la puerta principal de su casa a pie y la cerrava con llabe por fuera, y se yba con su rrueca, hilando, por disumular con las bezinas, hasta salir de la villa,” MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 43r.

Report that the witches were guilty of falsehood only. He believed the Devil was at work in Navarre, no doubt; but it was only through the “miseries and misfortunes”⁵⁹ caused by the thousands of empty accusations. One of his more popular quotes among contemporary historians summarizes his hypothesis of hysteria: “...there were neither witches nor bewitched in a place until one began to handle and write about them.”⁶⁰ Salazar worries what the continuing public atmosphere of this witch-hunt will do in number 71 of his last article. Salazar doubts the efficacy of new edicts; in fact, he believes the edicts may instigate more false accusations which he must then waste his time in investigating.⁶¹ These false accusations put the souls of the accusers in “danger of condemnation,”⁶² and thus the people he and his fellow inquisitors are in charge of protecting against heresy and the Devil will continue to suffer from these disruptive evils.

No such blatant assessment exists in *el cuaderno*; instead of inserting explicit worries about the spiritual health of the witches in their manuscript, Becerra and Valle rely on the witches’ testimony of the Devil’s persuasion to reflect the troublesome spiritual tension of Navarre. Moreover, they do not consider the possible psychological or social origins of the witches’ claims. They do not even seem to mention the fact that *el cuaderno* was written as a response to the intra-tribunal debate, either. Salazar does, though; his last clause, number 77, speaks of Becerra and Valle’s staunch pledge to fight his opinion.⁶³ In contrast, an un-informed reader of *el cuaderno* might simply guess that the document was merely a compendium of evidence and not the product of a ferocious debate.

⁵⁹ Henningsen, *Salazar Documents*, Article 4, number 67, 339.

⁶⁰ “... de que no hubo brujas ni embrujadas en el lugar hasta que se comenzó a tratar y escribir de ellos.” Henningsen, *Salazar Documents*, Article 4, number 71, 343.

⁶¹ Henningsen, *Salazar Documents*, Article 4, number 71, 343.

⁶² Henningsen, *Salazar Documents*, Article 4, number 70, 341.

⁶³ Henningsen, *Salazar Documents*, Article 4, number 77, 349.

So then, it seems that although Becerra and Valle read Salazar's reports, *el cuaderno* differs too drastically to consider the second report as the only source which directly affected their verdict's argumentative goals. Another even more relevant document for comparison with *el cuaderno* did exist for Becerra and Valle, though. This was the *Suprema* Questionnaire sent to the Logroño tribunal on March 11, 1609. This document, meant to help the inquisitors collect *actos positivos* of witchcraft, was certainly influential, for not only did *el cuaderno* directly answer the questions posed by the *Suprema*, but the *Actos* in some cases were copied verbatim from the format of the questionnaire. For example, the *Suprema*'s first question reads

“1. On what days did they have the meetings and...when they were there or going and coming did they hear clock bells or dogs or cocks from the nearest place...”⁶⁴

El cuaderno accordingly contains *actos* which address these concerns. For instance, *Acto 5* deals with the sensory perception of noises heard on the way to and from the *aquejarres*; in some cases, the witches even confess to hearing exactly what the *Suprema* (and thus Becerra and Valle) expected them to hear.⁶⁵ The *Suprema* letter goes on to ask about the necessity of being anointed before leaving for the *aquejarre* in question 9. Becerra and Valle answer this question with an entire *acto*, number 2: “Like all the older witches, to go to the *aquejarre* they anoint themselves first...”⁶⁶ The same parallels continue between *el cuaderno*'s responses and the *Suprema* questions over and over again; it is as if *el cuaderno* was meant to be a mirror faithfully reflecting the concerns of the *Suprema* letter.⁶⁷ In a sense, one can imagine that Becerra and

⁶⁴ “1. En que días tenían las juntas y quanto tiempo estaban en ellas y a que hora yvan y volvían y si estando alli o yendo o viniendo oyan relox campanas o perros o gallos del lugar mas cercano...” in Julio Caro Baroja, *De Nuevo sobre la historia de la brujería (1609-1619): Dos Legajos de la Inquisición con Papeles sobre la Brujería*, (Pamplona: Diputación Foral de Navarra, 1969) 746.

⁶⁵ Martin de Laspuria confesses to hearing the people that talk, dogs that bark, and bells that ring nearly verbatim to the questions of the *Suprema*. See AGN, MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 10r.

⁶⁶ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 4r.

⁶⁷ For example, the *Suprema*'s question 10 about communication between witches is answered by *Acto 7*; question 7 about the power of the name of Jesus is answered by *Acto 9*; question 8 about the potions of the witches is answered

Valle may have been working from these rules and questions sent to them from the beginning of the witch-hunt; maybe they merely sought to prove their adherence to the *Suprema's* desires by including so much of the requested proof. Becerra and Valle take this argumentative angle to such an extreme that they neglect much of the new visitation information collected by Salazar. Indeed, a majority of the witches included in *el cuaderno* were either among the first Zugarramurdi witches persecuted in the 1610 *auto de fe* or those interrogated by Valle during his earlier visitation. Although it was likely that Becerra and Valle were able to read Salazar's reports before he sent them to the Inquisitor-General,⁶⁸ they composed *el cuaderno* as if only the events up to the end of Valle's visitation were worthy of inclusion in their defense, and as if they were responding to the *Suprema* alone.

Even so, the close resemblance of *el cuaderno* to the questionnaire still does not account for all of the *actos*. Why include such religiously sensitive evidence from *actos* 9, 11 and 12?⁶⁹ Why dwell on sex with the Devil and the demonic familiars in the form of toads? Why include the confession of María de Endara at the very end? I proposed earlier that Becerra and Valle seemed to be aware of the arch of their argument. In noting the sequence of the *actos* and the evidence Becerra and Valle chose to include outside of the *Suprema's* interest (and in some cases, not mentioned in Salazar's reports either) we may try to understand the specific persuasive aims of *el cuaderno*.

by *Actos* 16 – 19; question 11 about the possibility of going to the *aquelarres* in fantasy only is answered by *Actos* 2 – 4. See MSS Códice L. 3, “Sumario de lo que contienen...” and Julio Caro Baroja, *De Nuevo sobre la historia de la brujería (1609-1619): Dos Legajos de la Inquisición con Papeles sobre la Brujería*, 746-747.

⁶⁸ See note 36 above.

⁶⁹ *Acto* 9 discusses the power of the name of Jesus to dispel the witches; *Acto* 11 describes how the witch can no longer perform the acts of the Christian once initiated into the sect; *Acto* 12 illustrates the process of the *Reniego*, AGN, MSS Códice L. 3, “Sumario de lo que contienen...”

One thing is quite clear: Becerra and Valle relied heavily on “sensational proof” of witchcraft. “Sensational proof” refers to that evidence which could be seen, heard, felt, smelled, and even tasted. “Sensational proof” also describes proof with a kind of shock value, a fairy tale-like narration of heinous and *nearly* unbelievable diabolical activity which inspires wonder and terror in the reader. Initially, basic sensory evidence of the witches is confirmed through seeing and hearing. But the witches’ sect becomes more and more dangerous as the sensory evidence becomes not only more heinous – such as the taste of dead flesh which turns the stomachs of the witches⁷⁰ -- but more difficult to trust. In particular, the 28th *acto* discusses how the spouses of witches are deceived by a demon into believing their husbands and wives never left their beds.⁷¹

Becerra and Valle also rely heavily upon volume to persuade the reader in *el cuaderno*. Here, Becerra and Valle reveal their statistical and organizational tendencies: the first ten *actos* contain the largest number of indexed people to support their claims. Essentially, the first third of the *actos* are those pieces of evidence that the witches most uniformly and consistently confessed to practicing. Near the middle of *el cuaderno* though, these large numbers of witches dwindle in some cases (*acto* 25) to only three witches. However, in this case the volume which Becerra and Valle so value is offset by the fact that the testimony of each witch is much longer, or in some cases more shocking. These *actos* consistently include the testimony of either the oldest witches or those middle-aged witches with a notable length of exposure to the sect. Finally, for the last third or fourth of the *actos*, Becerra and Valle emphasize the more fairy-tale, wonder-inducing elements of the witches’ confessions. These confessions are also longer in length despite listing fewer actual witches. And as the capstone, the confession of María de Endara increases the sensational shock for a dramatic final note to *el cuaderno*.

⁷⁰ MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 20, fol. 37v.

⁷¹ MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 46r.

The initial third of *el cuaderno* relies heavily on *actos comprobados* proved through sensory experience which negates the possibility for dreams or illusions. The second *acto* reads “that all of the senior witches to go to the *aquejarre* first anoint themselves and always go awake.”⁷² Focusing on the impossibility of dreaming the *aquejarre* is one of the main goals of Becerra and Valle. In fact, throughout most of the *actos* and the following testimonials, emphasis is given to information that the witness was not asleep in their bed or that they did in fact remember leaving their bed to attend the *aquejarre*. In one case, Joana de Telechea reported being unable to attend the *aquejarre* because when her husband slept at home instead of at his workplace, she was forced to stay in bed.⁷³

Often, precedence is given to testimony which holds that *aquejarres* were held during the day; María de Endara’s first encounter with the Devil was during the day: “...they went on foot to a meadow that is here very close and next to the Aranduriarecha border, very near to the river, where they saw that some people were swimming.”⁷⁴ This kind of evidence, which proves the witches were fully awake and in control of their senses, helps to ward off the illusory possibility of *aquejarres* or other devil-meetings. According to *el cuaderno*, the Devil seems able to invade the lives of his witches at any point during their day: for instance, the Devil may force the witches into sexual intercourse whether they may be in their kitchen, outside in the countryside, at the *aquejarres*, or in their beds at night.⁷⁵ Becerra and Valle make the Devil a daily experience for the witches.

⁷² MSS Códice L. 3, “Sumario de lo que contienen...”

⁷³ MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 10, fol. 19v.

⁷⁴ “... y se fueron a pie a un prado, que esta allí muy cerca y junto a la borda Aranduriarecha, muy cerca del rio, donde vieron que se estaban nadando algunas personas...” MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 61v.

⁷⁵ See *Acto* 24, MSS, Códice L. 3, fol. 41r. – 41v.

Furthermore, the repeated mention of the witches returning to their homes from *aquejarres* with wet feet and wet clothes⁷⁶ helps further the reality of their experience. Witnesses speak of the Devil encircling them in a dark cloud once they arrive at the sabbath, since he dislikes the water.⁷⁷ But the cloud departs as they make their way home and many of their family members then question the wet dresses of their wives, daughters and sisters the next morning. Over forty witches are counted in confessing to this verified act,⁷⁸ showing yet again Becerra and Valle's concern for volume and acknowledging those acts which were most uniformly confessed.

The emphasis Becerra and Valle place on the fact that the witches often walked rather than flew to their witch-meetings also strengthens their argument. The difficulty in being able to prove that witches fly to their *aquejarres* is avoided by the third *acto*, which specifically says that many times the witches all walk together.⁷⁹ This way, Becerra and Valle avoid the skepticism which Salazar levels against the confessions of flying witches in his second report. This *acto* works in conjunction with the sixth *acto*, which states that in coming and going from the sabbath, the witches all recognize and talk to one another along the way.⁸⁰ Becerra and Valle literally bring the witches back down to earth, and in doing so increase the likelihood of the truth of their statements. Again, this could be read as yet another attempt to make the daily lives of the witches accessible and relatable. Were Becerra and Valle to fill *el cuaderno* with animal transformations and flying stories, the witches would become absolute fairy tales rather than the

⁷⁶ MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 4, fol. 8r.

⁷⁷ "Y mientras estan en el aquejarre, el demonio los defiende del agua con una nube que les pone encima." MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 4, fol. 8r.

⁷⁸ Actually, Becerra and Valle stop listing additional references for this *acto*. See MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 9v.

⁷⁹ "3. Como muchas becas los bruxos van al aquejarre andando por sus pies." MSS Códice L. 3, "Sumario de lo que contiene..."

⁸⁰ "6. Que en el camino, hiendo y biniendo del aquejarre, topan y conocen las personas pasajeras y los bruxos de su complicidad." MSS Códice L. 3, "Sumario de lo que contiene..."

day-to-day menace the senior inquisitors believed them to be.⁸¹ *El cuaderno* narrates the daily sensory experience of the witches, and in the process the manuscript becomes like a guidebook for understanding witch behavior.

On a more sinister note, “sensational evidence” of contact with the Devil or attendance at the *aquelarres* can take the form of bodily harm. *Acto* 13 in particular describes the Mark of the Devil. It reads, “The Devil marks his witches, scratching them in some part of the body with his nail, which makes them bleed and gives them pain; and the mark remains permanently.”⁸² Witches precisely report how the mark remains the following day; the pain lasts anywhere from 20 to 30 days to more than two months in some cases. Becerra and Valle also report seeing the marks and testing them in their court. This *acto* is notable in terms of religious inversion, for these evil marks can be seen as diabolical opposites to a common Catholic practice; the *reniego* and the devil’s mark is a mirror to the Profession of faith and mark of the cross of Christ, with which both the witches and the inquisitors would be familiar from their own Catholic baptisms and confirmations.

More sensational evidence in the form of physical harm is also manifested in whippings. The fear that the Devil and the older witches may severely beat a witch for disobedience furthers Becerra and Valle’s idea that his influence over the witches runs deep, affects many, and terrifies countless villages. In one notable case, 11-year old Pascuala Miguel and her 6-year old sister Gracia confessed to being witches in the village of Uztárroz and declared that their teacher witches “...have beaten them cruelly and the last time they were very mistreated and their bodies

⁸¹ Becerra and Valle aren’t even consistent in this endeavor, though; in a few cases they include information about witches transforming into animals. For example, Miguel de Goiburu confesses to seeing a group of witches transformed into pigs outside his house. MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 10r.

⁸² “13. Marca el demonio sus bruxos, incandoles en alguna parte del cuerpo la uña, de que sale sangre, sienten dolor y queda perpetuamente la marca.” MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 13, “Sumario de lo que contiene...”

[were] full of the signs and bruises of the whippings.”⁸³ As the two sisters testified, witches were supposedly beaten for not attending the *aquejarres* regularly, for coming to confess before the Inquisitorial tribunal, for returning before the Holy Office to revoke their confessions, or for other crimes against the Devil’s sect. In the case of the Miguel sisters, their mother was so horrified by the bruises that she brought them to the door of the church at the hour of Vespers, and “teaching the town[,] clamored and pleaded for justice.” The description continues, “This was verified with a large number of witnesses who saw the signs [of the whipping].”⁸⁴

Finally, to round out the sensory proof of the *aquejarres*, Becerra and Valle include the sickness that ensues from eating the Devil’s Black Mass. In effect, an entire *acto* (number 20) describes the vomiting that often follows the consumption of bad meat at the *aquejarre*. This meat is described as being the bodies of witches who have died, as well as other deceased people. Becerra and Valle write:

“...And of the meats that they eat, they are of dead people that they disinter and take out of the cemeteries, and especially all the bodies of those who have been witches. Many declare that they know very well the things that they eat there, and others say that it disgusts them and their stomachs rebel and they vomit...in their homes.”⁸⁵

The stomach-turning reality of the witches’ diet and the sickness that could last for days afterwards serves as yet another convincing physical proof for Becerra and Valle, especially since a large number of people confessed to this *acto*.

⁸³ “...las an açotado en el cruelmente. Y la ultima se quedaron muy maltradas y sus cuerpos, llenos de las señales y cardenales de los açotes.” MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 32, fol. 52r.

⁸⁴ “...y que las enseñaron al pueblo, clamando y pidiendo justicia. Esta comprovado con mucho numero de testigos, que vieron las señales...” MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 52v.

⁸⁵ “Y que las carnes que comen, son de personas difuntas que desentierran y sacan de los çemeterios, y en especial todos los cuerpos de los que an sido bruxos. Y muchos declaran que les saben muy bien las cosas que allí comen, y otros dicen que les causan asco y se les rebuelde el esotomago, y las vomitan ... en sus casas.” MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 20, fol. 37v.

Another prevalent type of physical proof included in *el cuaderno* was the inability of the heretical witch to perform certain Christian acts after her conversion. In committing the *Reniego*, or Denial, the novice witch denies God, the Virgin Mary, all of the saints, their Baptism and Confirmation, the Holy Oils which they have received, their Godparents and Parents, and all of the sacraments.⁸⁶ The moment the witches commit this fatal heresy and join the Devil's sect, they cease to perform the works of a Christian. And even if they do try to return to the Holy Faith, they are unable to see the Holy Host during the Sacrament of the Eucharist, and a black cloud is put before their eyes so that they cannot even view the altar. The inability to perform the external actions of the Christian life in itself becomes an *acto comprovado* of the heresy present in the practice of witchcraft. Oddly enough, despite it being a major part of the life of the witch, Becerra and Valle only mention that 374 people have confessed this; in other words, this *acto* contains no additional names or snippets of testimony. It stands alone. Unfortunately, I do not have a satisfactory reason for why Becerra and Valle leave such an integral *acto* seemingly incomplete compared to all the others.

The heretical nature of the witches' religious inversion does comprise a number of other *actos*, though. Witches confess to gathering on the holy days of the Catholic faith to perform their own diabolical mass at their *aquejarres*.⁸⁷ So, not only are the witches not performing the external actions of the Christian faith, but they *are* performing diabolical ceremonies. This kind of inversion was a notable characteristic of all witchcraft trials in Europe, and in their Black Mass, the Navarrese witches were only taking a prevalent trope to the extreme. Thus, these external actions, which take place truthfully and bodily, can only prove the heretical nature of the witch.

⁸⁶ MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 11, fol. 21r.

⁸⁷ MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 30, "Sumario de lo que contienen..."

Finally, in their conception of the Devil himself, Becerra and Valle were sure to include physical evidence reported at their tribunal. The Devil gives his new witches money -- physical coins which could be carried and held.⁸⁸ *El cuaderno* reports the coins as sometimes disappearing, but other times the coins remain and can actually be spent. The Devil is also a giver of a guardian angel in the form of a toad. These little toads are reported to be dressed in clothes, carried around and kept in the homes of the witches, and always present at the *aquelarres*, although to Becerra and Valle's regret one was never actually brought before the tribunal as substantial proof of this unusual and fantastic claim.

But the most basic sensory evidence contained in *el cuaderno* was the pure sight of the Devil, often described as an ugly black man, fully dressed, with lighted horns and often bearing a tail.⁸⁹ Most of the time, *el cuaderno* reports the Devil as being evilly persuasive, physically abusive, and sexually depraved. He marks his witches with a painful scratch, he beats them, and he rapes them. *Actos* 23, 24, 25 and 30 all contain evidence of sex with the Devil. Pregnancies resulting in birthing multiple toads were common among the senior witches.⁹⁰ Although these *actos* usually contain fewer pieces of supporting testimony, each devil-sex testimonial is very long compared to earlier snippets, and they often feature women brought before the tribunal who are in their 60s, 70s, and 80s. These women report to have been with the Devil many times throughout their witching career. The pain associated with the rape and subsequent toad births, the time of day of the carnal act (which happens as often during the day as during the night), and the blood that is left after the completed act all makes the Devil a very real presence for Becerra and Valle.

⁸⁸ MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 15, "Sumario de lo que contienen..."

⁸⁹ MSS Códice L. 3, *Acto* 27, "Sumario de lo que contienen..."

⁹⁰ See *Acto* 25 for more on toad births. MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 41r.

These last few descriptions in which the Devil is given a terrifying appearance and an anti-Christ-like personality close the *actos comprobados* before María de Endara's confession begins. Again, the volume of witnesses decreases by the end, despite the initial goal of including those *actos* which were uniformly confessed by a majority of witches. But horrific, sensational proof is at its peak, especially in describing the interest of the Devil in each of his witches. In tracking this shift from an emphasis on numbers and basic sensory perception in the first *actos*, to a growing sense of social and religious disruption by the middle of *el cuaderno*, ultimately culminating in the zenith of María de Endara's fairy-tale-like confession, I believe that Becerra and Valle intended this progression to contain a clear rhetorical goal.

María de Endara's confession certainly fits the ending of such a persuasive arc. Despite its unique characteristics which in some ways contrasted greatly with the rest of the *actos*, the confession was the perfect ending for Becerra and Valle's argumentative discourse. Described by the inquisitors as young and wealthy, she is singled out in the first *acto*:

“And for the notable way in which she became a witch and because it resulted from other *actos positivos*, and because she is of good understanding, illustrious, and rich, we have taken a copy of the beginning her confession, which is in the *cuaderno de actos comprobados*, fol. 27. I tell you that it comes at the end of this *cuaderno* ...”⁹¹

María's confession is notable for a few reasons; she was rich, and titled as a “doña.” Most of the other witches were shepherds or agriculturalists, servants, old women, and children, all people with little power or authority. Her confession is also unusual in that she describes the Devil in anomalous terms: he is dressed in gold, handsome, and well-spoken.⁹² Granted, the Devil still

⁹¹ “Y por ser notable el modo como se hizo ser bruxa y resultar del otros Actos positivos, y ella ser de buen entendimiento principal y rica, se sacara una copia del principio de su confession, en el que va en el cuaderno de actos comprobados, fol. 27. Digo que va al fin deste cuaderno ...” MSS Codice L. 3, *Acto* 1, fol. 3v.

⁹² “...y luego el demonio se bino ...en figura de hombre hermoso y de buen talle.” MSS Codice L. 3, “Confesion de María de Endara,” fol. 62r.

had a peculiar gold cap with flaps like a skirt to cover his two horns; he was still not a real man by any means.

After meeting the Devil in the well-lit meadow, the story deepens as the Devil offers María money; when she doubts his ability to deliver, a fountain of golden *reales* appears.⁹³ The Devil then pushes her to commit the *Reniego*, but María wisely skirts the issue and gets away without actually saying the words. She is invited to a dance, where the witches dance with partners appropriate for their wealth and social standing. For a few more days and devil-meetings, María succeeds in deflecting the *Reniego*, but eventually, she gives in. She is finally taken to an actual *aquejarre* to celebrate the Black Mass, and the Devil suddenly does not seem so handsome.⁹⁴ She refuses to commit the denial yet again, but when she is fetched from her kitchen a few days later and flown to the *aquejarre*, she finally submits.⁹⁵ She is offered a large toad dressed in yellow for agreeing to join the sect. And the confession ends with her *serora* friend (who is also a witch) telling her to be happy and content.

María's confession seems to exemplify ideas of spiritual struggle. Though such struggles are common throughout *el cuaderno*, María's confession relates the process of devilish persuasion with a true story-telling flourish. She refuses to commit the *Reniego* a surprising number of times. And yet the Devil still seeks her membership in his sect; in her confession, the Devil's greed for more followers (and especially ones of influence) surmounts all else. Such a confession would surely capture the notice of Becerra and Valle for these reasons beyond María's unique social status.

⁹³ MSS Codice L. 3, fol. 62v.

⁹⁴ "...y el demonio y todos los demas, no le parecio tan bien como la primera noche." MSS Codice L. 3, fol. 64r.

⁹⁵ MSS Codice L. 3, fol. 64v.

Perhaps then it is unfair to present the two inquisitors as being insensitive to issues of spirituality or individual psychology. Maybe instead of Salazar's blunt presentation of his opinions and facts, Becerra and Valle preferred to tell the story of witchcraft in Navarre more subtly through the engaging confessions of many unanimous witches. It is for this reason that something of the victim's voice is more discernable in *el cuaderno* than in the reports of Salazar. In fact, Becerra and Valle may have made a very calculated decision to allow *el cuaderno* to speak and persuade through the confessions of the accused. Just as María de Endara's confession seems to bear her voice and story-telling ability, so too do the Devil sex *actos* supported by few older women. When the reader encounters such confessions as the following, it becomes easier to imagine these women as they might have been before their inquisitorial interviews:

“And some nights [the Devil] would lie down with her in her bed and they would stay three or four hours together, hugging and kissing one another like man and wife, and talking and chatting about amorous things, and he would tell her that she should enjoy herself and take pleasure.”⁹⁶

When we consider, then, all of the persuasive techniques Becerra and Valle employed in *el cuaderno*, it is clear that the men carefully crafted their legal summary. They relied upon unanimity to convince the readers of the virulence of the witches' sect. Becerra and Valle encapsulated spiritual struggle and personal concerns of the witches in moving confessions. And they highlighted those *actos comprobados* which most directly pointed to the true corporal experience of the witches – one that took place out in the open, during the day, and certainly not amid dreams nor Devil-created illusions. To reduce the meaning of *el cuaderno* into a repetitive collection of unexplained witchcraft confessions overlooks the attention the two inquisitors paid to their argumentative arc and their careful selection of evidence. They certainly had no notion of

⁹⁶ “Y algunas noches se acostava con ella en su cama y se estaban tres o quarto oras juntos, abraçados y besándose el uno al otro como hombre y muger, y hablando y platicando cosas amorosas, y el le dezia que se holgase y tomase placer.” See the confession of Catalina de Porto, age 60 in MSS Codice L. 3. *Acto* 24, fol. 41v.

who would win the debate in the end; but the idea that they simply threw together evidence they liked best to create their defensive document is a misleading and short-sighted interpretation.

Conclusion

The debate over the treatment of witchcraft in the Logroño tribunal did not end with the writing of *el cuaderno*. Rather, a number of letters discussing fresh outbreaks of witchcraft, grievances among the inquisitors, and a number of other matters flew between Logroño and Madrid from 1612 – 1614. Becerra, Valle and Salazar each implored the *Suprema* to quickly make a decision regarding the future of the witches involved.¹ Salazar in particular continued to write his own exhaustive reports, examining in detail the arguments of Becerra and Valle and pointing out their shortcomings.² Not to be outdone, Becerra and Valle also wrote letters to the *Suprema* and Bishops attempting to persuade the Council and others in positions of influence to recognize the merits of their verdicts on the witch-hunts.³

It wasn't until two years after Salazar presented his first reports and *el cuaderno* was written that the *Suprema* finally began to deliberate on the witch-hunt. Both Becerra and Salazar were in Madrid participating in the discussions, leaving Valle to lead the tribunal in Logroño.⁴ After about four months of deliberation, the *Suprema* sent the witch-infested tribunal new instructions. These instructions began with a statement acknowledging the gravity and complexity of the situation, the errors committed by “relatives [of the witches], justices, and other persons,” and establishing the succeeding 32 clauses as the definitive instructions in future witchcraft cases.⁵ According to Henningsen's table of the clauses, all of the instruction's content

¹ For more background on the actions of the Logroño tribunal from 1612 – 1614, see “Chapter 12.3 The Long Wait” in Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 322 – 336.

² See “Chapter 12.7: Salazar's Rejoinder” in Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 346 – 355.

³ Becerra and Valle also made a number of excuses; they went so far as to request permission to withdraw from normal inquisitorial activities so that they could write their verdicts. This petition was soundly denied by the *Suprema* in a prompt response letter. See Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 326.

⁴ In fact, Becerra had become the new *fiscal* to the *Suprema* in fall of 1613. Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 364.

⁵ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 370.

is traceable to past *Suprema* instructions to the tribunal or Salazar's reports.⁶ Becerra and Valle unequivocally lost the debate. The new instructions were put into operation immediately, and not just in Logroño. Throughout the Empire, witches continued to appear; but, because of the implementation of these 1614 Instructions, the tenor of witch-hunting was drastically transformed and not a single witch was ever burned at the stake again by the Spanish Inquisition.⁷

However, just because Becerra and Valle's argument (and thus, *el cuaderno*) was abandoned does not mean that their example is not still worthy of study. These last rules bring to the forefront the bigger and deeper questions embedded in the Zugarramurdi Witch-Hunt and the documents and people involved. In the end, this entire event only proves further that although understanding the *Suprema* and the bureaucratic practices of the Spanish Inquisition is important, the individual methods and personal goals of every inquisitor have a more powerful effect on events on the ground. Despite the many instructions from Madrid, the inquisitors operated on their own directives and on occasion ignored or neglected the council's advice. On the periphery of *Suprema* governance, the inquisitors exercised their own control over their jobs, concerns and beliefs about heretical activity.

Although they could ignore the *Suprema* at times, Becerra and Valle were not immune to the effects of time. Throughout the witch-hunt, new confessions from witnesses, new instructions from the *Suprema*, and new evidence from *comisarios* in the field gave the men new challenges to address. Sometimes this new evidence resulted in drastic changes in approach: visitations were notable examples of shifts in tactics against the witches' sect. Other times, new evidence could

⁶ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 371 – 376.

⁷ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 389.

be ignored; for Becerra and Valle this is most clear in their reluctance to acknowledge the revocations of many of their star witnesses. In the face of such changes, it is clear that they altered their persuasive strategies in order to reach their own goals. And the main goal of Becerra and Valle was to prove that the Devil was at work in their little piece of Christendom. They proved to be independent thinkers who skillfully crafted their own discourse on what witchcraft in Navarre looked like, despite the convincing evidence collected by their opponent Salazar.

One of their main concerns revolved around the issue of time. They placed special emphasis on the confessions of *ancianas* (old witches) throughout the 32 *actos*.⁸ The stories of life-long diabolical activity only proved the troublesome duration of the sect. Furthermore, these witches who often confessed to being converted by their mothers as children bring up another concern for Becerra and Valle. The role of families is extremely important in *el cuaderno*. The Barrenechea and Yriarte families invoked throughout the manuscript give weight to this concern.⁹ Furthermore, witches could not reproduce themselves to grow their sect; they were forced to recruit, and Becerra and Valle believed they were often successful in this recruitment. In one view, the inverted families created by the recruitment of children and other young people into hierarchies of reliance on older witches in the sect also invoke this preoccupation with familial relationships.

Becerra and Valle's favorite witches in *el cuaderno* are also the ones who tell unique stories. Despite the initial claims of *el cuaderno* to focus on the shared and repetitive confessions of the witches, the inquisitors seem to care for individuals and their personal suffering at the

⁸ The Queen of the Zugarramurdi *aquejarre*, 80-year-old Graciana de Barrenechea, is a prime example of such an over-reliance on the testimony of old witches; she is featured in 16 of the 32 *Actos*. Miguel de Goiburu (aged 66) and María de Zozaya y Arramendi (aged 80) are each referenced in 19 *Actos*. See "Table 11. Contents of the Confessions of the Nineteen Witch Confitentes at the Auto de Fe (1610), According to the Pamplona Manuscript (1613) in Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 339 – 340.

⁹ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 33.

hands of the Devil. Personalized confessions full of emotion, pain and daily experience characterize *el cuaderno* and problematize our belief that elite authorities always attempted to place witches into a set model.

Finally, Becerra and Valle's conception of the Devil was unique in many ways. Their Devil deeply cares about his witches; he warns them against the work of the Holy Office and personally seeks to convert many of the witches himself. The Devil protects his witches from the water he so despises with a black cloud, he assists them in fooling their spouses by leaving a demon in their image at home.¹⁰ He is incredibly patient with his witches, giving them chances to correct their bad behavior (following punishment of course) and visiting many of them to solidify his bond with them intimately.¹¹ He wants them to worship him often and him alone.

In all ways, the Devil is like an inverted Christ, wishing to expand his hold on Spanish Christians by recruiting more people and increasing his number of worshipping communities.¹² This in turn reveals a concern with numbers and geography. How many witches are there? How many are children? Where are the largest *aquelarres*? How many new sects are springing up and where? All of these rather terrifying questions regarding the souls of their flock preoccupied Becerra and Valle to the extent that their image of the witches' sect became ever more complicated, nuanced and difficult to describe.

For molding such an intricate scene of spiritual battle between the dangerously persuasive Devil and the weak souls of their Christian brothers and sisters, Becerra and Valle used the confessions of thousands of men, women, and children to fit their own means. In spite of this

¹⁰ See *Actos* 27 – 29 and 31 – 32 respectively, AGN, MSS Códice L. 3, 1612, “Sumario de lo que contiene...”

¹¹ See *Actos* 31 – 32 and 24 respectively, AGN, MSS Códice L. 3, 1612.

¹² The confession of Miguel de Gioburu is the probable source for evidence of a regional bishopric of the witches' sect with large general meetings held in Pamplona. Another Devil, the “Lord of Pamplona” presides over the meeting of 12 other covens. See Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 92 – 93.

powerful hold over the stories (and sometimes, fates) of these people, it might have been possible for these Navarrese suspects to exercise some limited form of agency over their fates. It is well known that many victims of the Spanish Inquisition were able to communicate with one another even from within the tribunal's prisons.¹³ And for groups of neighbors sequestered together in secular prisons or traveling together to revoke confessions, collusion was inevitable. In many ways, they may have been fed by their interrogators; but the witches certainly were able to inject some of their daily lives and concerns into their stories of witchcraft. The witch who walked to the *aqueelarre* while spinning wool is a prime example of this in *el cuaderno*.¹⁴ Even in an undeniably elite-mediated document, the voices and personalities of the accused cannot be denied their place in this manuscript.

The ability to unearth the lives, emotions and concerns of all of these people from the past in one document is truly amazing. Inquisition documents often tend to reveal something personal and stirring about the people they describe. But *el cuaderno* is unique in that it allows so many different people to speak at once: the Devil, scared shepherds, worried priests, imaginative servant girls, coerced young children, nervous yet embattled inquisitors, and lonely old Basque women speak from one manuscript. My test in this research has been to try to listen to them all and determine what their lives and concerns may have been like during an otherwise insignificant five-year period in the history of northern Spain. At least for the memory of the losers in this case, Inquisitors Becerra and Valle, I hope I have rubbed a bit of polish on their otherwise tarnished memories in history's textbooks.

¹³ Henningsen, *The Witches' Advocate*, 34.

¹⁴ This is 80-year-old María de Çozaya; see MSS Códice L. 3, fol. 43r.

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