

**Archivo Arquidiocesano-Trujillo Sección: Idolatrías / Archive of the Archdiocese of Trujillo (Peru). Idolatry Section (Archival Transcription of the Original)<sup>1</sup>**

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**Year 1771 – Proscution of María Francisca, Indian woman from Calipuy, accused of sorcery.**

**Document No. DD-1-4**

1r Illustrious Lord.

I Joseph Acero Jaico, from the village of Tauca appear before your lordship as the law requires and state that Maria Francisca Indian woman from the same town as me has carried out a blatant [act of] malefice<sup>2</sup> on my daughter Maria Santos who worked for Doña Ysabel Navarro and other women. [...] My daughter went to the kitchen and she found a very tasty looking apple placed on a windowsill and she ate it thinking it was put there by one of her mistresses. But no, it was Maria Francisca who had placed it there with the intention that my daughter or one of the mistresses would eat it, and this is what my daughter declared before she was silenced.<sup>3</sup> And she [Maria Francisca] carried out the malefice on the aforementioned apple using the devil's art and this took place on the 24th of January. And this caused my daughter to become bedridden, unable to speak, in danger of losing her life vomiting two thousand filthy things from her mouth every 24 hours as I will declare before your Lordship, [caused by] the hand of the aforementioned Maria Francisca. And, if your Lordship goes to her house to arrest her you will find nothing [for] truly the province knows the manifest evil that she has committed and [...] they chased her out of the town of Tauca for having done the same thing, for she is well-known [notorious] and it is right that [...] your Lordship issues the pious justification to seize the property that she has [in one of] three places [as she uses them] in order to go [from one to the other] or she could be hidden in one of those houses of hers. My

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<sup>1</sup> Working translation by Andrew Redden.

<sup>2</sup> Lit. *daño*, meaning 'harm'. It refers to malevolent witchcraft or malefice and the term is still used today in northern Peru.

<sup>3</sup> Lit. *ante se cate la boca*: before her mouth was closed.

daughter is in real danger and if it God pleases [the] Holy Tribunal [might intervene] for the benefit of many and these goods would be under the control of the law and if she does not want to hand them over, the defendent is rich, [so] arrest her until she hands everything over which she must [to pay] for the costs that would fall on me if [my daughter] were to die.

Joseph Acero Jaico,

Santiago, February 4th, 1771.

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With respect to the fact that this declaration shows that [1v] the Indian woman Maria Francisca is fugitive [...] in the Province of Conchucos where she is a widow; nevertheless, you are to search for this woman and see that she is placed in custody and under guard, and go to the place where she lives to place her goods under embargo wherever they might be and at the same time search for them in the houses that they have been placed and they should be placed in the care of the most trustworthy person as a deposit. And so I arrange, order and sign. [...] His lordship Don Bernardo Seicha, his Majesty's regular officer.

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Don Juan Chrysostomo de Espejo, priest, vicar, and ecclesiastical Judge of Idolatries [moved] to apprehend the Indian woman Maria Francisca resident of the aforementioned town who has been accused of a certain malefice and for having arrested the aforementioned [...] on the 10th day of the month of February of the year '771.

Juan Chrysostomo de Espejo

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2r On the Hacienda<sup>4</sup> of Santa Catherina de Calipuy on the 14th day of the month of February of 1771, the Señor Licenciado Don Juan Chrysostomo de Espejo, priest and vicar, Ecclesiastical Judge of Idolatries and Malefice of these parishes and their boundaries and jurisdiction; for the summary information in the prosecution being carried out against the person of the defendant Maria Francisca, Indian woman; widow and native of the town of Tauca, and resident in the town of Santiago de Chuco, for certain sorceries and malefices that she has been accused of doing in the aforementioned town, before me the current named notary, officers and witnesses; with his lordship the aforementioned [2v] Señor Vicar present, her confession was taken under oath [...]

To the first question that was put to her, as to whether it was true that she had placed an apple in a window of the kitchen of Doña Ysabel Navarro, so that the aforementioned lady or La China<sup>5</sup> her servant girl, Maria de los Santos, daughter of Joseph Acero Jaico would eat it ([La China] who [was affected by the] malefice for having eaten it is now in danger of dying): she said that one day she went to see Doña Ysabel Navarro in her house because Doña Maria<sup>6</sup> had asked her why she had not come to visit? And she replied, 'it's true señora that not having come to visit was because she had been suffering from a sickness in her stomach/womb'; and then the aforementioned lady told her that this pain comes from the Mother<sup>7</sup> and that she would give her a remedy made

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<sup>4</sup> A *hacienda* is (usually) a large rural estate.

<sup>5</sup> The term used in the document is *la china* which in this part of Peru can refer to an indigenous woman, or a mixed race (indigenous / Spanish woman). During this period (latter half of the c.18<sup>th</sup>), cultural (as opposed to biological) classifications of race were becoming more rigid and complex, and, in Mexico at least, a *chino* or *china* (not a chinese person) was the offspring of a *morisco* and a Spanish woman. A *morisco* was the offspring of a mulatto and a Spanish woman. A mulatto was the offspring of a Spaniard and a black man. In this case, however the term does not refer to these very specific classifications, but instead is a colloquial way of referring simply to a young indigenous woman. It appears to be used as the young woman's nickname.

<sup>6</sup> The title '*doña*' is one of respect and suggests social status. In Peru usage of the terms '*don*' and '*doña*' became commonplace out of courtesy for other members of the community. Nevertheless it is not quite clear if this *Doña Maria* is Maria de los Santos or another of the 'mistresses' who Maria de los Santos (La China) worked for, or simply another Doña Maria in the community. What is subsequently said seems to imply that *Doña Maria* and La China are different women and this would make sense given the familiarity between Maria Francisca and La China (Maria de los Santos).

<sup>7</sup> Lit, '*la Madre*' There is no explanation of who 'the Mother' is. Initially (in a Christian context) one might suspect Mary, mother of God, but later details in the testimony imply otherwise. Broadly, in an indigenous Andean (Quechua) context one might also suspect *Pachamama* (Mother Earth), but normally entities like Pachamama would be familiar even to Spaniards and Creoles (by this time) and it would be unusual to see the name translated into Spanish or used in the Spanish form (even if Maria Francisca's community is Spanish speaking).

from spirit liquor, incense, and rue<sup>8</sup> so that she could make a paste to apply as a cure, and after this conversation she said that she should go and see La China and advise her to be careful, and that she should proceed without seeing her as [much as] she should and that then she went to advise La China about all that she could and that she should not be like other dishonest [women] and other things to benefit her as she was her relative.<sup>9</sup> And then the aforementioned China replied that her mistress liked her a lot and had given her cotton to spin and other things that made her happy. And that she [Maria Francisca] neither offered to give La China nor her mistress an apple, nor did she put one on the windowsill.

To the second question that was put to her asking what her motive was to harm the China and to clamp her mouth [using malefice] so that she could not speak a word, she said she knew that the China had run away having stolen from her master six yards of course cloth, six of flannel, and a shawl made from Castilian cloth; and that she went to the place called Gurraday, to a ravine where a stream of water runs and she was approached by an elegant lady dressed in a petticoat and a poncho, covered by a black shawl<sup>10</sup>; and this woman told her [la China] that she had been harmed by malefice by having eaten an apple, assuring her [la China] that with the apple, the defendant, [Maria Francisca] had carried out the malefice, when this was not true. Instead she contests that because she [Maria Francisca—the defendant] was her [La China's] relative she took pity on her when she heard that she was sick in bed as a result of the malefice and took her a little pot of food. And she took it not having anything else to take and afterwards she found out that that the food she had taken they had given to a dog that

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<sup>8</sup> Rue is an aromatic and bitter herb used in medicine.

<sup>9</sup> The testimony is confused here. As a brief summary/reiteration, it appears that the defendant (according to her testimony) was in conversation with a woman called Doña Maria, who gave her a remedy for her stomach pains / pains of the womb and told her to go and talk to La China. The defendant did that and advised La China on various matters because she was related to her. The advice seems to have been about how she should behave in her new employment (domestic service).

<sup>10</sup> The sources of springs in the Andes were considered sacred and often had guardian spirits with whom indignant people would interact for various reasons. A possible implication here is that the 'elegant woman' dressed in indigenous clothing is the spirit (*huaca*) of the spring who informs the girl that she has been bewitched by the defendant Maria Francisca. If so, perhaps this lady is 'the Mother'. Another explanation might be that the woman instead is the human guardian of the spring, a *huacapillac* ('one who speaks to the *huacas*'). It is worth noting that it is/was quite unusual for *huacas* of springs to be female (c.f. the *Huarochiri Manuscript*: water (with the exception of the sea, *mamacocha*) is masculine, earth is feminine). In fact this is the only case that I have come across. Note that the terminology used by the notary is very non-committal. He describes her as 'the woman', rather than the *huaca*.

had subsequently come out in welts, and as a result of this they were sure that she had committed malefice out of jealousy and those who had gone to visit the sick woman, [especially] her father said that her condition seemed to be worsening [...] and they were certain that the defendant had committed the malefice against her.

To the third question that was put to her, whether she had a pact with the devil in order to cause the China to go dumb and to cause her to [3r] vomit those filthy things out of her mouth with the sorcery that she had done; and if she had not committed this malefice, why did she flee the town? She said that the reason she had left town was because her landlady Salinas, and the son of Nicolás Gregorio Marinero and other various individuals terrified her by saying that they were going to denounce her to the Lord Bishop and to the Lord *Corregidor*<sup>11</sup> so that they would punish her; and so she absented herself from the town and went elsewhere; and fearful and ashamed she said she left, and she came with the intention of going to her native village and that she reached the place called Ascape, and the house of Juliana the Indian woman. And this was not because she had committed any crime. And [she also said] that the father of La China could easily purge the sick woman because he knows about purges [and cures]; because on one occasion he purged the defendant on the mountain of Aguiñuay, and if he accuses her of having harmed his daughter, then he was her teacher.<sup>12</sup> And so she [denounces] this, and [says] that the two will die [together]<sup>13</sup> and that he came from his land to the mines with her husband now dead and in the time that she lived with him she learned some filthy sorceries from him.<sup>14</sup>

To the fourth question that was put to her about the harm that she had done to La China who was sick and suffering from vomiting various filthy things; and that people were also

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<sup>11</sup> The *corregidor* was a royal official tasked with collecting tribute and administering royal justice to the indigenous people under his jurisdiction.

<sup>12</sup> This is a particularly interesting counter-accusation. If Joseph Acero purged Maria Francisca, then he too was a healer. If he did it on the mountain then he did it with the power of the mountain *huaca*. Maria Francisca is accusing Joseph Acero of teaching her the magic she knows (without actually admitting to having done any magic herself).

<sup>13</sup> It is not clear whether she is saying that she wants to bring down Joseph Acero with her (that they can both die together), or whether she is saying Acero and his daughter can both die (i.e. that they can both go to hell, metaphorically speaking). From the tenor of the testimony, it is most likely that she means the former.

<sup>14</sup> She appears to be saying that she and Joseph Acero were once lovers, and that he taught her magic (and healing) during this time.

saying that she had killed a daughter of hers<sup>15</sup> with a malefice that she had mixed into a pot of maize pudding that she had made for another woman and who had eaten it in her absence. She said that with La China sick, they were falsely accusing her [Maria Francisca] of having done her [La China] [magical] harm: In the same way [La China's] father was falsely accusing her of having done harmful malefice; because she [La China] told her on one occasion that her father had mined two pots of gold in the place called Sullsayape, and that from one that he took to Cajamarca to sell, he paid for nine masses to be said to the patron Saint Santiago; and that her aforementioned father had hidden the other in the aforementioned place underneath some *sayapes*<sup>16</sup>; and she assured her that she would take her as if they were going to gather flowers to show her the gold so that she would believe her, and they never went. And with regard to the fact that her daughter died of malefice, as they say from a jug of water, and after that, from a maize pudding; this never entered her imagination, and that the aforementioned daughter had died aged two from an accident that she suffered from from having dried up<sup>17</sup>; but she does not know the cause, as is well-known in the aforementioned town.

To the fifth question that was put to her, if she had anything else to add with respect to the matter? She said she had nothing further to say, and that which she has said and declared under the oath that she made she reaffirmed and ratified.

Juan Chysostomo de Espejo

Pedro Pablo Valerias,

Gregorio Ponluis

Before me, Eusebio Sanchez, the appointed notary.

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<sup>15</sup> They appear to be saying that Maria Francisca killed one of La China's daughters.

<sup>16</sup> I cannot find a translation for this word *sayape*. It appears to be something local to the place (and be linked to its name: Sullsayape). Sullsayape is in the northern highlands of Peru in Pallasca Province, Ancash. From the context, the word appears to refer to a native plant (a particular type of tree).

<sup>17</sup> Lit. *de haverse secado*. This generally refers to a type of consumptive illness, but it can also refer to a bewitchment. The magic causes the victim to become progressively thinner and drier like the dead—a living mummy, until they actually die.

At the Hacienda of Santa Catharina de Calipuy on the 15th day of [3v] the month of February of 1771 years. Having registered the indigenous defendant's things that were used by her and not having found anything else of any worth, in a little tied bag was found a small stone that appeared to be metal inside some iron filings; and asked what sort of stone it was she said that it was a magnet that she kept as a remedy. In the same way another round and polished stone was found that she said was a bezoar stone that she also kept as a remedy.<sup>18</sup> Some very blond and shining hairs were found; these she said were from a bezoar stone. Similarly was found a little bag of cured Cordovan leather, in which untied were some little yellow stones the colour of peppered gold; This she said was a little bag of venom that she carried with her as a remedy against bad airs. Searching through her two flannel undershirts, in one of them was found a charm that contained some curly black hairs; these she said she carried as a remedy against bad winds; and she carried them on her person and that she had them with her as protection.<sup>19</sup> And not having found anything else, it was all gathered and tied together and entrusted to the magistrate in the presence of his Lordship the aforementioned Señor Vicar and the witnesses who were councillors, [and] before me the present notary. And so that all is legitimate I document this according to procedure.

[signed]

Juan Chysostomo de Espejo,

Pedro Pablo Valerias,

Gregorio Pon Luis

In the presence of myself Eusebio Sanchez the appointed notary.

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<sup>18</sup> These were rare fibrous masses that were occasionally found in the gut of deer and other animals that could calcify and become stones. They were considered to be panaceas (cures for everything) and particularly powerful antidotes to venom.

<sup>19</sup> Lit. *los tenía para su compañía por preservativo*. 'Protection' (*protección*) is a rather tentative way to translate this. The modern translation of *preservativo* is 'contraceptive' (or condom) but given Maria Francisca's age and circumstance this is highly unlikely. Nevertheless, given her interest in love magic ('to make respected men esteem and love her'—see below) it is possible that this was a type of magical contraceptive.

At the Hacienda of Santa Catharina de Calipuy on the 16<sup>th</sup> day of the month of February of 1771 [...] for the confession of Maria Francisca, Indian woman, defendant, she appeared [before the tribunal]; and from whom his Lordship the aforementioned Señor Vicar took her oath which she made in the name of the Lord Our God and with the sign of the Cross, in the presence of myself the notary and witnesses.

[...]

4r She said it was true, that when she was a girl<sup>20</sup>, she was very inclined towards learning the art of herbalism, not to harm anyone, rather to make respected men esteem and love her<sup>21</sup> and also so that her husband, now dead would esteem and love her. Because she was engaged in illicit business with a woman<sup>22</sup> this [man] mistreated her with word and deed<sup>23</sup> and as a result she lived under a state of persecution. She went to a woman named Nicolasa who is now dead, and asked for a remedy<sup>24</sup>, knowing that she was of the art<sup>25</sup> so that her husband would love her and not mistreat her. And so she [Nicolasa] asked her [Maria Francisca] to bring the buds and flowers of the white and red floripondio<sup>26</sup>, and having taken them to her, on the following day she gave the infusion to her to give to her husband to drink and she was also to drink it; what was left over she was to place in a crack in her doorway; and then it would have the effect that her husband would love her. And seeing that the remedy had no effect whatsoever, and her husband even abused her worse than before, she went to a woman named Rosa (who she also says is dead) taking to her the aforementioned remedy to teach her [what it was]; and having seen it [Rosa] said to her that it would not serve and that she would give her another remedy in which she was to take the hair of her husband, and of herself and woven together she was to place it underneath [a statue of] Señor Saint Joseph

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<sup>20</sup> Lit. *mosa* – teenaged girl or young woman. The inference is one of youth rather than maturity.

<sup>21</sup> She is now confessing to wanting to practice 'love magic' through the use of herblore. Unfortunately the specific question put to her has not been transcribed.

<sup>22</sup> This presumably refers to the magic she was so inclined towards.

<sup>23</sup> He physically and psychologically abused her.

<sup>24</sup> Magic remedies were one way women could (sometimes effectively) protect themselves against male abuse.

<sup>25</sup> Lit. *era del arte* (was of the art) i.e. knew the secrets.

<sup>26</sup> *Floripondio* (scientific name: *Brugmansia*) is from the Solanaceae family of plants and is related to the *Datura* plant. It is hallucinogenic but is also highly toxic if not prepared properly. It can cause permanent insanity (similar to LSD) and even death if the incorrect (or correct depending on your intention) dose is given. It is still used today in shamanic medicine in Peru, and is also still used in malefice.



with a lighted candle; and this would have the effect that she finally desired; and having put into action this second remedy she verified that her husband loved her.<sup>27</sup>

Similarly, she said that on another occasion she went to a married woman named Flora, who lives on the other side of Chachicadan to ask for a remedy so that men of high-standing would esteem and love her. She asked the aforementioned Flora because she knew that she was of the art. And so the aforementioned flora gave her four cloves, two white, two pink, and in the middle of those, a bud, and told her to take it.

Another occasion: she says that having arrived in town on the occasion of the feast of the Patron [Saint] Santiago, a woman from Conchucos called Maria Benita was spreading around that the women of that province are famous [for their sorcery]; that they are of the art; she consulted the aforementioned woman who was carrying a sprig of a herb in her hand that looked like rosemary; and having engaged her in conversation she told [asked] her to teach her something that she knew about curing with herbs so that she would be loved and also so that she too could know something about the art. This was something that the aforementioned woman promised, telling her that the next time she returned from her land<sup>28</sup> she would teach her everything she knew. And she promised her that she would carry this out and that she should look out for her return. And, having gone back to the place she was from, the aforementioned woman never returned to the town because she [Maria Francisca] was very [4v] careful to watch out for her at the house where she used to arrive. And it is also true that she has been very enthusiastic about these herbs because the aforementioned woman from Conchucos told her that Saint Monica was a herbalist.<sup>29</sup> And for this reason when she was a girl she was curious to know about what she has already said. And this, she says and everything is all her fault, and, under the oath she has made, everything she has declared she affirmed and ratified.

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<sup>27</sup> I.e. it worked and Saint Joseph (seemingly) caused/allowed the magic to do its job.

<sup>28</sup> Lit. *su tierra* (her land), meaning the place where she was from.

<sup>29</sup> This is still part of shamanic tradition in northern Peru, healing would be and still carried out with the use of herbs but also by invoking Saint Monica as part of the healing rite. St Monica (d.387AD) was the mother of St Augustine (d.430A.D). She was a Roman noblewoman from Tagaste, North Africa and was also a Christian educating Augustine in the same religion before he apostasised and became a Manichaeian in his youth. Augustine then reconverted to Christianity after he discovered Neo-platonism.

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On the 25th day of the month of April of 1771...

She said = that to discharge her conscience she declared that it was true that she had carried out the sorcery [malefice] and poisoned the apple which she had previously denied doing. [She did this] with Hilaria Murga, resident of the town of Santiago, who she consulted when the aforementioned China now sick, had disrespected her and wanted to hit her. And because of her irritation she wanted to take revenge on her by carrying out the malefice. And that she had determined to call on Neblicamissa (so-called<sup>30</sup>) and Rosa Baras who were capable of doing this; and then the aforementioned Hilaria said to her that when she was there neither of those aforementioned women were necessary, and so it was for the creation [poisoning/bewitching] of the apple. Four women [5r] got together and these were the defendant, Thomasa de Agueda (her neighbour) and Thomasa Gordillo who lived in her house; but [she said] that all the composition of the powders from various compounds was applied by the aforementioned Hilaria in the presence of the four.<sup>31</sup> With various ceremonies and secret words she scattered it around [and over] the apple. And when the defendant asked the aforementioned Hilaria what powders they were she replied that they were burned feathers<sup>32</sup> of a condor, of a partridge, burned fur of a deer, sulphate, and other filth that she carried with her in a tied bundle, and she ordered the defendant to place the apple in the window of the kitchen or in a place where the aforementioned China works, and so she went to leave it. And even while she was there the aforementioned China only saw a shadow and when she looked up she saw the apple; and as it was so beautiful and ripe, she took it and she ate it. And from this resulted the sickness she is now suffering from. And unable to speak and only able to move, they inflicted various remedies<sup>33</sup> on her, which were made in the presence of various [people]; a little statue of a condor, bristles, white and blue cloths, some little straw ropes and various wood

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<sup>30</sup> This a nickname for another woman. Its precise meaning is unclear. *Misa* (or *Missa*) has to do with the Catholic Mass. *Neblica* is an unknown word, possibly mistranscribed.

<sup>31</sup> There is a confusion regarding the numbers present. Hilaria Murga appears to be one of the four even though the implication is that there were four women in addition to Hilaria.

<sup>32</sup> The document uses the term *pelos* (meaning hairs) rather than *plumas* (feathers).

<sup>33</sup> An interesting choice of words. Lit. *remedios* (meaning 'remedies'). In this context it refers to further malefice (so the opposite of remedies). Maria Francisca seems to be using it as a generic word for magic.

chips, wool, and other nonsensical items all tied together; And on seeing that insult, the father of La China, gathered everything up and went to this Hacienda of Calipuy where she [Maria Francisca] was already held prisoner and on showing them, it was decided that they be handed over to the defendant so that she could untie them<sup>34</sup>; And *de facto* having untied them, La China continued as sick as before. To complete the cure, the aforementioned defendant instructed the father to give his daughter: *Pasca*<sup>35</sup> stone, *mullo*<sup>36</sup>, *aocacolpa*<sup>37</sup>, and a herb called *Pacra*, and *Cuti Maize*<sup>38</sup>; and with all these remedies that were to be given to her she would be completely cured, as *de facto* was verified with the aforementioned sick woman now convalescing.

This defendant was asked what other malefices had she carried out? She replied that to discharge her conscience she had done malefice to a painter named Martín Flores, who died as a result of the malefice. She gave him chilli seeds, dog and chicken filth, mixed with her saliva, and this is truth regarding that malefice.

Similarly she also declared that Maria Leocadia, wife<sup>39</sup> of Juan Evangelista Guaso, consulted her in order to do malefice against Nicolás Sion her [Maria Leocadia's] brother-in-law and to take his life because he was a cantor [singer] with her aforementioned husband and she wanted him to be the only one remaining in the choir and loved by everyone. And when Maria Leocadia came to her house she told her that she did not know much about those things and that she should consult the Indian woman Hilaria. And so she did, both of them went to the house of Maria Leocadia in which they baked some bread having kneaded filth into the dough:

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<sup>34</sup> This is significant and highlights the danger of simply disregarding witchcraft as superstitious nonsense. There was a tendency to do this in ecclesiastical courts, nevertheless, if there were a possibility that the malefice or evil charm was efficacious then it would need to be properly countered, simply burning or destroying the object might cause even greater harm.

<sup>35</sup> *Piedra Pasca* or *pasca* stone is a type of rock local to the region (central-northern Andean highlands)

<sup>36</sup> *Mullo* (*mullu*) is a type of coral.

<sup>37</sup> This is the Spanish spelling of a Quechua term. I was unable to find an exact translation into either Spanish or English, but the root *Aoca*, may well be rendered *Auca* or *Aucca* which has to do with warfare. I would surmise that it is a metaphorical name. *Colpa* or *Ccollpa* is a type of salt mineral (sulphate) that was used in indigenous healing. It is also used to make green dye.

<sup>38</sup> According to the Jesuit Diego González Holguin, *Cuti çara* (or *Cuti Maize*) is 'maize that grows upside down, with the grain pointing downwards'. Presumably this is referring to the maize cob. If so, this is most unusual which would explain why it is used in magic (*Vocabulario de la Lengva General de todo el Perv llamada Lengva Qquichua o del Inca* (Lima: imprenta de Francisco del Canto, 1608), p.66, <[www.illa-a.org/cd/diccionarios/VocabularioQqichuaDeHolguin.pdf](http://www.illa-a.org/cd/diccionarios/VocabularioQqichuaDeHolguin.pdf)> , [accessed, 22/04/2015].

<sup>39</sup> Lit. *muger* (*mujer*) meaning 'woman'.

5v feathers of turkey buzzard, chicken and dog excrement, with other filth. And she [Hilaria] ordered that this bread be placed with some more [uncontaminated] loaves with the maleficed bread in a position of prominence on top of the others. And it should be given to the aforementioned *maestro* Nicolás Sión as Hilaria had indicated. But she did not know whether it was given to him; yet she did hear that he had died [...]; They had prepared another mixture, of sulphates, deer fur and partridge feathers, and mixed into a dough so that this could be placed on the seat where the aforementioned *maestro* studied at the foot of a willow tree. All this was under the instructions of the aforementioned Hilaria, but she did not know whether they put it there or not, and this is the truth...

Similarly she declares that she did harm and malefice to Ignacio Gerónimo, who is currently suffering from leprosy all over his body, and this was simply because he had reprimanded the aforementioned defendant. And that she made the aforementioned harm from sulphate, partridge feathers, deer fur, *chillca*<sup>40</sup>, and all this she gathered together, served to him while saying that he should be mangy, mangy, mangy three times and the effect happened immediately and this is the truth. She said that as a cure she would give *pasca* stone, *mullo*, *aocacolpa*, *pacra* herb, and *cuti* maize so that he would get better.

Similarly she declares that Maria Micaela, sister of the aforementioned Leocadia, came to ask her to put together a remedy so that she could marry Manuel de Angamarca; and she created the aforementioned remedy with four cloves, a piece of wax containing a wick. And on lighting it, it appeared to want to go out and she said to her, 'it looks like you can't get married'. And as the candle began to burn more vigorously she said to her this time, 'oh, you're going to get married'. And so it happened.

Similarly she declares that Maria de la Natividad who lives in Andamarca came to ask her for a remedy so that the officials of the law would not do anything to her and would fear her. And she prepared a mixture of *contrayerba*<sup>41</sup>, *chillca*, red and white floripondio,

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<sup>40</sup> *Chillca* is a leafy bush whose leaves are boiled with *colpa* to make green dye.

<sup>41</sup> *Contrayerba* (scientific name: *dorstenia brasiliensis*) is an aromatic herb used to treat fever, inflammation and poisonous bites.

with the herb that they call *lilau*<sup>42</sup> and with everything together she instructed that it be carried in the corset and she would see the effect that it would have. And this happened.

Similarly she declares that having been in a wicked friendship<sup>43</sup> with a man and after he left her she asked for a remedy from the aforementioned Hilaria who told her to look for the worms called *pogillos*<sup>44</sup> which can be found in springs, and if these became golden in colour, the aforementioned man would return to her friendship. And [she] declares that she went [6r] to look for the aforementioned little worms and having found them on the farm of Don Diego Maldonado in a well, she brought them and placed them in the doorway of her aforementioned lover, offering him a *masamorra*<sup>45</sup> so that he would never leave her = and this is the truth.

Similarly the aforementioned [defendant] declares that having lived badly with<sup>46</sup> her husband she went to consult Paula Savala who assured her that she would give her a remedy so that her husband would live together and in conformity with Joseph Acero Jaico, with whom she was in a wicked friendship [having an affair] and of whom her aforementioned husband was jealous. And once Paula Savala had prepared the combination of turkey buzzard excrement with the powders from partridge feathers and deer tail. And having mixed the burned tip of all this with sulphate she had to scatter these saying: '*Collo, collo, collo*'<sup>47</sup> three times. And *de facto* the subsequent effect was that all three lived together, in so far as her husband mistreated her if she did not take care of the aforementioned charm. And [she said] that this is the truth.

Similarly, she declares that one night of this week just passed, while alone in the prison of this hacienda, sleeping, she heard a loud noise as if people were breaking down the door of the gaol. And having got up half-dressed, she asked who was there, and having

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<sup>42</sup> Unfortunately I cannot find a translation or meaning for this word. It may be mistranscribed or it may be so local that it has not been documented.

<sup>43</sup> Lit. *mala amistad* which is a euphemism for extra-marital (and sexual) relations.

<sup>44</sup> Again I have not been able to find a suitable translation for this word.

<sup>45</sup> *Masamorra* is a pudding made from ground maize.

<sup>46</sup> Lit. *vivió mal con su marido*. The implication here is that they were arguing, the reason becomes immediately clear.

<sup>47</sup> González Holguin (*Vocabulario de la lengua Qquichua*, p.71) glosses *Ccollu* as 'the bad and vain omen of destruction'. The root word implies destruction and consumption. It is not certain that this is the same word, however.

said 'Jesus' something backed off from the door to the square in the figure of a ferocious vulture which then said to her in a human voice: 'don't you know me? I am Thomasa de Agueda your friend and I've come to get you out of this gaol so you don't [say anything that you] later regret. You have to come with me now because you are implicating me and confessing what we've done. And we're companions, as you are the white cockrel and I am the condor. And [she said] that [Thomasa / the condor-vulture] flew off in the direction of the bell-tower and the aforementioned defendant returned to bed in a confused state, the next morning telling [what she had seen] to everyone and asking to be accompanied<sup>48</sup>; and that this is the truth...

Similarly this defendant said that Gregoria Garcia, resident of the aforementioned town came to her house to ask for a remedy so that her husband Agustin de Grados would loathe a daughter from his first marriage whom he loved a great deal and if [Maria Francisca] helped her [Gregoria] with this she would give whatever she asked. And so she took yellow chilli to the aforementioned Hilaria who added to it deer fur and partridge feathers, dog and chicken filth, and the aforementioned Hilaria instructed her to bury this mixture [6v] under the doorway where her husband would go in and out. And that this is the truth under the restrictions of her oath.

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I, the abovementioned Don Juan de Espejo certify that having brought these aforementioned women to my tribunal so that they could be face-to-face with the aforementioned witch, to each and every one of them she gave them signs<sup>49</sup> and what they had paid her, how when they had done this and who else was involved. With respect to this it was the aforementioned Hilaria Murga with whom she made all the enchantments as her declarations make clear. And without any punishment I returned them to the charge of their own priest who I had exhorted to send them to me. Señor Dr Don Domingo de Negreiros, in whose territory they live, carried this out punctually and [I

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<sup>48</sup> There is an implication here that she is afraid of the women she is betraying in her confessions and is asking for protection.

<sup>49</sup> Lit. *les dio las señas* meaning 'she gave them the signs' or 'she signalled to them'.

request] that your Illustrious Holiness<sup>50</sup> send him instructions according to your superior judgement and I sign on the aforementioned day and month.

Juan Chrysostomo de Espejo.<sup>51</sup>

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**Year of 1774 – The Priest and Vicar of the *Estancias*<sup>52</sup> of the District of Choquizongo and its environs, Judge of Idolatry, makes known the acts of sorcery committed by María Francisca Javiera and others in the town of Santiago de Chuco.**

**Document No. DD-1-9**

*31 January 1774*

1r Illustrious Lord, Dr. Don Francisco Xavier de Luna Victoria.

My Lord.

Juan de Espejo Valenzuela, Presbyter<sup>53</sup>, Curate and Vicar of the *Estancias* of the District of Choquisongo and its environs [...] After kneeling at the superior feet of your most illustrious holiness, with due submission it is necessary for me to act participate as Judge of the acts of idolatry that without your wise intervention would become much worse. Their contents are outlined in the following chapters.

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<sup>50</sup> This is a copy of a 'memo' to the Bishop of Trujillo asking for his judgement on the matter.

<sup>51</sup> Frustratingly many of these trial documents do not conclude for various reasons. Often it is that the copies have been damaged or the final sections have been lost. In this case, however, in 1774 Espejo tried to re-open the case and it appears from the letter (dated 17<sup>th</sup> January 1774) that he no longer had Maria Francisca in custody as he asks the priest of the town of Llapo, Dr Don Pedro Ortiz de Avilez to take her testimony again. He states, somewhat remarkably, that: 'without knowing how, she disappeared'. It would seem then, that she escaped. Unfortunately I do not have any further records. In a letter a few days earlier, however, he does summarise the content of the testimonies, including the attempted breakout from gaol by the condor Thomasa de Agueda. Perhaps not surprisingly, he does not draw any conclusions.

<sup>52</sup> *Estancias* are large rural estates, usually for rearing livestock. The word is generally synonymous with *haciendas*.

<sup>53</sup> A *presbyter* is the traditional word for a priest, from the Greek (via Latin) *presbyteros* meaning 'elder'.

Last year in 1771<sup>54</sup> with a letter of request from Dr don Domingo Negreiros, Priest and Vicar of the town of Santiago de Chuco, I imprisoned Maria Francisca Javiera resident of the aforementioned town in this, my neighbouring jurisdiction. She had fled due to a malefice and enchantment that she had been accused of. Although at first she denied having committed the sorcery that they had charged her with, it was verified that they found items of the aforementioned witchcraft on her person. She declared without any pressure, before me, the official notary and other witnesses, that [the accusation of] the aforementioned malefice was true. She had done it with Hilaria Murga, an Indian woman of the aforementioned town, against Maria Acero, daughter of Joseph Acero who was in a wicked friendship<sup>55</sup> with the aforementioned Francisca. And, to avenge a certain dispute that she had with her, she began to consider that with a pact she would take her life. She remembered the abovementioned Hilaria Murga (with whom she had already made other fatal enchantments<sup>56</sup> and malefices) and she communicated her intention with her. Having heard what she had to say the aforementioned Hilaria told her not to worry, 'look for a nice looking apple, I will prepare it and when you place it where she will find it and eat it you will see then the effect', as *ispo*<sup>57</sup> then occurred. When the aforementioned Maria Acero ate the apple she went crazy and fell down as if dead, suffering many days with such an infectious poison<sup>58</sup>. They tried to find cures and with a purge that they found, she vomited from her mouth and in the vomit was an animal in the form of a vulture that had been tied with many charms.<sup>59</sup> Her father brought it to show me and, to receive him I called the magistrate and witnesses with whom I ordered that she [Maria Francisca] be jailed, telling her that if she knew that that bundle

1v was witchcraft she was to untie it, which she did without question. This test I carried out, Lord, to confirm and clarify my doubts about her denial and to see if the sick woman

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<sup>54</sup> There appears to be a mistake here. He says *el año pasado de 1771* meaning 'the previous year of 1771'. Nevertheless this document is signed in various places as being written in 1774.

<sup>55</sup> Lit. *mala amistad*, meaning, 'extramarital [sexual] affair'.

<sup>56</sup> Lit. *insultos de muertes*, meaning 'fatal insults', or 'fatal attacks'.

<sup>57</sup> *Ipsa facto*, 'by that very fact' (as a direct consequence).

<sup>58</sup> Somewhat strangely, he uses the phrase 'con tan inficionada cura' meaning 'with such an infectious cure'. The word 'cure' here simply refers to the toxin or drug that was consumed. As we have seen in the 1771 documents the word 'remedy' (*remedio*) can apply to malefice (magical harm) as well as magical cures. It would seem that the same is true of the word '*cura*' or 'cure'.

<sup>59</sup> He says 'a thousand' (*mil*) but simply means lots.



got better. Once it was undone, she did *de facto* get better and she [Maria Francisca] mentioned other remedies that should be given to her so that she could recover completely. And this occurrence Illustrious Lord is public and notorious.

Very similar to the abovementioned was something that happened in the aforementioned town to a singer<sup>60</sup> in the choir who died in this way after Maria Leocadia an Indian woman married to Juan Evangelista Guasa, official singer, had gone to ask Francisca Javiera to kill the Master of the Chapel [Choirmaster] Nicolás Sion in order that her husband would take control of the choir. She told her that without the help of Hilaria Murga (who she had successfully worked with previously) she could not make the enchantment, and that she should seek her out. She asked her, paid her and asked her and Maria Javiera<sup>61</sup> in particular if, after naming various women from the district if any of those women would be needed to join them in order to produce the desired effect. And Hilaria Murga considered the suggestion saying that not one of those women she had named would be necessary, because she was an expert, and given what she knew and understood neither the Varas [woman] nor the Nebli, nor other women from the district could prepare what she knew. Once this interview was concluded she asked Maria Leocadia for a loaf of bread on which to work the deadly malefice intended for the Master of the Chapel. She prepared it there and then and by accident this bread was bitten by the unfortunate treble, the apprentice of the aforementioned Master and he died without remedy as the investigation documents make clear, and it is notorious.<sup>62</sup>

The same thing happened to a miserable sculptor who was in an illicit friendship<sup>63</sup> with Maria Javiera, who out of impulse broke off the relationship, letting his disordered appetites rule. Irritated by having had her friendship ended by this poor man, she took revenge on him and killed him as stated in the documentation.

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<sup>60</sup> He uses the term '*tiple*' meaning 'treble'. This would imply that the singer was a boy whose voice had not broken, although it might (incorrectly) refer to an adult counter-tenor who sang in falsetto.

<sup>61</sup> Her name is Maria Francisca Javiera. The letter seems to use a variety of combinations.

<sup>62</sup> Note that this appears to be slightly different information to that which was in Maria Francisca's testimony of 1771. Maria Francisca appeared to imply that Nicolás Sion, the choirmaster had died, and there was no mention of the boy treble. It is not clear whether Espejo has later received further information; presumably he would have been able to verify who had died after Maria Francisca gave her testimony.

<sup>63</sup> Again, a euphemism for an extramarital sexual affair.

In the same way Maria Javiera had prepared an enchantment for another with the intention of taking her life, by accident, her very daughter ate it and suffered extreme pain, lesions, both internal and external, and she died.

2r The section of the confession of the aforementioned Maria Javiera is no less significant [...] she said that Hilaria Murga appeared to her in the form of a cat and she, in fear of something that looked so strange asked her who she was. She responded in a human voice: 'Don't you know me? I'm Hilaria and I've come to get you out of this gaol in order to shut you up because you're fingering me time and again'. Maria Javiera replied carefully that yes she wanted to get out but it was not the right time, and [Hilaria] disappeared.<sup>64</sup>

Similarly she confessed that Tomaza Caypo a white woman<sup>65</sup> from the Town of Santiago appeared to her in the form of a Condor, with a horrible racket—it seemed to her that the building was collapsing—she reached the door and Maria Javiera asked her 'who are you?' It replied: 'Don't you know me? I am the great condor and you are the white cockrel. If you don't know me I'm Tomaza Caypo, and I've come to free you from this prison because you're my neighbour and comrade. If you want, I'll open this door.' And she responded 'no' because she had made a decision to pay for her crimes.<sup>66</sup> On hearing her resolve, she replied 'save yourself then'<sup>67</sup> and flew off.

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<sup>64</sup> This particular exchange does not appear in the transcript of the original testimony in 1771. Various explanations are possible. It is possible that this section has not been transcribed accidentally, or the original section was lost or irreparably damaged. It is also possible that the priest is embellishing Maria Javiera's 1771 testimony. I suspect one of the former is more likely.

<sup>65</sup> Lit. *muger blanca*, meaning 'white woman'. This is a highly unusual epithet. It is possible that this refers to a Spanish woman (as opposed to an indigenous woman) except the name 'Caypo' (or Caipo) is not common to the Iberian Peninsula. Added to which, in the majority of cases the categorisation would be 'Spanish', even if a description might be 'white skinned'. If it is true that Tomaza is Spanish, it is interesting that a Spanish woman would be involved in witchcraft practices with indigenous women and is indicative of how easily magical practices transcended ethnic and cultural boundaries.

<sup>66</sup> Again this is slightly different to the 1771 transcript. It is possible that there is information missing from the transcript. Regards her motives for remaining imprisoned it might be interesting to speculate (and it can only be speculation) as to why she refused to break out. The priest, Espejo, would certainly want to believe that she had made a sincere conversion and regretted her actions. Nevertheless there exists the possibility that she wanted to remain under the protection of the ecclesiastical authorities (in the safety of the gaol) because she was afraid of what Hilaria Murga might do to her.

<sup>67</sup> Lit. '*Hallate se lo haya*'. 'Save yourself then' is a very loose translation of a phrase that is not particularly clear.

Another Indian woman, the sister of Maria Leocadia, was in an illicit friendship with an Indian man who wanted to marry another woman. [So] she asked Maria Javiera for a remedy so that with this preparation and belief his will and his desire for the woman he wanted to be his wife would fade, and instead he would replace her with his false friend.<sup>68</sup> And she told her to ask Hilaria Murga so that the miracle could happen. She consulted her and [Hilaria] prepared what was to take place telling her that even though she felt betrayed by the Indian man's will, she should not worry because what she had prepared was sufficient to make him seek her out, as de facto occurred. And the very same Indian man confessed this before me, the magistrate and witnesses, that not having the slightest intention to marry this one [the sister of Maria Leocadia], moved by he did not know what impulse, he sought her out and married her, leaving the other woman.

Similarly, Gregoria Garcia, a white woman from Santiago asked for a malefice intended to kill a stepdaughter of hers who, if she had not found a powerful [2v] cure very quickly, would have died. And so the malefice did not have its intended effect.<sup>69</sup> The declarations in the judicial documents confirm firstly that the *maestra* who taught her and the other women asked for the remedies.<sup>70</sup> And, secondly, she affirmed to all the women what she had explained in the first instance, to confirm and testify to the truth which she ratified immutably.

All the sections summarised here, Illustrious Lord, are probable causes of the highly tempestuous tragedy that the miserable people have suffered in their Christianity at the

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<sup>68</sup> The sister of Maria Leocadia. Again note the discrepancies.

<sup>69</sup> These allegations are testament to a community riven by internal and highly aggressive domestic conflicts, exacerbated by witchcraft practices that appear to be commonplace.

<sup>70</sup> *Maestra* means 'female teacher'. It is unclear whether this means the teacher of the step-daughter victim (and we would have to be careful not to wrongly assume a nineteenth-century European model of a village teacher who runs a village school), and if that is the case we might wonder in what capacity was the woman a teacher (and of what)? More commonly the epithet *maestro* and *maestra* in these documents refers to an expert herbalist/healer (and, by implication, native religious practitioner). As we have seen, however, the term 'remedy' is ambiguous and may refer to either the malefice or its cure, so the *maestra* might be the *malera* (the one who did the malefice) rather than the *curandera* (the healer). Either way this is more evidence of an entire network of women in the region involved in and practicing herbal magic as a norm.

hands of these [false] goddesses<sup>71</sup>: deaths, leprosy, paralyses, and other insults that they suffer and will continue to suffer if the Christian zeal of Your Holiness delays in providing a solution and which by recording [...] such lamentable occurrences, the most righteous Tribunal of Your Holy Illustriousness might determine the destruction of such monstrous and tremendous discord. And so that the Catholic Faith, which currently is in such a dejected state, might be restored and re-edified, Your Illustrious Holiness should determine what [best to do] according to your superior judgement.

Written in this *hacienda* of Santa Catharina de Calipuy with the witnesses, and the notary and magistrate with whom I sign so that all is in order on the 31<sup>st</sup> January of 1774.

Juan de Espejo Valenzuela~~

Aruego del Rexia~~

Pablo Ermenegildo~~

Juan Fel[icia?]no Oliv[er]o~~

Pedro Pablo Valerias~~

Gregorio Ponluis~~

In my presence

Pedro del Castillo the appointed notary~~~

3r Señor Vicar Dr Juan Espejo y Valenzuela,

Esteemed Sir,

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<sup>71</sup> Lit. *Diosas*. Given how unlikely it would be for an extirpator to use the epithet 'goddesses' to refer to a group of women accused of witchcraft, I double (and triple)-checked and that was what was in the archival document. It is worth bearing in mind that this document was itself a copy (transcript) and so is potentially a mistranscription of the original. If we are to take the word on face value, we can safely assume that this priest clearly does not believe these women are goddesses so must be using the term in some sort of disparaging way, perhaps omitting the word 'false' but using it as a useful term to indicate the hold these women appear to have over the community through magical practices.

Today [I received a letter from you] in which you charge me with seeking the person of Francisca Javiera, an Indian woman who your lordship says has resorted to the crime of idolatry and malefice, from which crime has followed deaths and at the same time various judges have been sullied by this infernal trick<sup>72</sup> so that I proceed to take her statement and ratification of that which your lordship says has already been declared. [This is on] the supposition that she has been located in my jurisdiction and I find it convenient to send her to your lordship [...] on the assumption of having sent to you the judicial decrees to allow me to proceed as judge.

Etc...

To the one who can<sup>73</sup>, Ancos<sup>74</sup> January 17 of 1774

I am the humble Captain of your lordship.

Pedro Ortiz de Aviles~~

4r Illustrious Lord, Dr Don Francisco Javier de Luna Victoria<sup>75</sup>

My Lord,

Obedient to the superior order of the council of Your Illustrious Holiness I sent to the Town of Ancos, in the jurisdiction of the Archdiocese. I exhort, plead and charge Dr Don Pedro Ortiz, Priest and Vicar of the Town of Llapo, who is to be found in Ancos, an annex of his jurisdiction to take once again the testimony of his parishioner, Maria Francisca Javiera, Indian woman and witch whom I prosecuted as is common

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<sup>72</sup> Unfortunately there is no further explanation of this. These 'sullied judges' have not been named nor does this memo go into any detail of how they had been compromised.

<sup>73</sup> A strange way to sign a letter – lit. *Al que puede*.

<sup>74</sup> If Santiago de Chucos and Calipuy were at the hypotenuse of the triangle, Ancos would be at the corner of the right angle, in the northern highlands of Peru to the northeast of the city of Chimbote (which is on the coast).

<sup>75</sup> Francisco Javier de Luna Victoria y Castro was appointed bishop of Trujillo in 1758, installed in 1759 and died in 1777.

knowledge and as soon as he saw the order he ordered her to be rewarded<sup>76</sup> and, without knowing how, she disappeared<sup>77</sup> from before the ministers to the great surprise<sup>78</sup> of those present<sup>79</sup> including that of the aforementioned Dr who I remit included in this [document with which] I satisfy Your Illustrious Holiness and this similarly accompanies the extract that I send here in which the aforementioned [woman] testified in the presence of the magistrate and witness, the first time in custody and the second after she had been released,<sup>80</sup> without any reward nor punishment [other than] patience<sup>81</sup> [...] [after I] exhorted Dr Don Domingo Negreiros, Priest and Vicar of the town of Santiago [to take her testimony].<sup>82</sup> Having caught one of the women, affirming and making them know the how and when [of the case] and the interest it held for me and once concluded they had nothing to respond, especially Maria Hilaria Murga, who with regard to the [diabolical] pact was primarily responsible for the deaths and malefices that the declarations and documents that I sent demonstrate.

[4v] To your Illustrious Holiness, through the hand of the Licenciado Don Bernabé Caballero, priest and vicar of the town of Otusco whose letter I have received and have, (I do not send it on because it seems trivial<sup>83</sup>), I make known to your Holiness [...] that you send your superior order of whatever you deem to be of justice so that those who

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<sup>76</sup> This is quite perplexing. Lit. *y luego que vio la mi[siv]a, la mandó premiar* => And as soon as he / she saw the letter he/she ordered her to be rewarded. It could perhaps be referring to Maria Francisca Javiera ('as soon as she saw the order'), but this makes the order of reward harder to understand. Could this be suggestive of rivalry between the two priests even as they promise each other co-operation?

<sup>77</sup> Lit. *y sin saber el como, se desapareció*.

<sup>78</sup> He uses the word *admiración* (lit. admiration) which can also mean 'surprise'.

<sup>79</sup> He seems to be suggesting that she literally disappeared from in front of them and not simply that she escaped while their guard was down.

<sup>80</sup> This appears to explain the discrepancy in Espejo's letters. Only one of those testimonies (the first when Maria Francisca was in custody) appears to have been transcribed.

<sup>81</sup> This is statement that she confessed without other inducements and without physical coercion. It does not discount the fact that her very confinement (and the possibility of that being repeated) ground her down and convinced her to confess which would explain his use of the phrase *sin ningun apremio ni castigo en paciencia* ('with neither reward nor punishment in patience...'). This may also explain the perplexing comment discussed in note 74: *la mandó premiar*. Is that referring to an inducement to provide evidence? If so, it would be highly unusual (at least it is not commonly documented).

<sup>82</sup> It is this testimony which appears to be missing from the Archive.

<sup>83</sup> He actually uses the double negative and says that he does not send it on because it *does not* look trivial (*no remito por no parecer nimio*) but this would not make sense as it would imply that he only sends trivial information on to the bishop.

have remained without just reprehension do not damage the healthy plant with their darnel.<sup>84</sup>

May God preserve the most important life of Your Illustrious Lordship for the repair of your most holy Faith, with complete health for many years.

Calipuy, February 4<sup>th</sup> of [1]774

Juan Chryostomo de Espejo~~

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Trujillo, 17th of February of 1774 ==

Declaration of the receipt of this letter with the documents that accompany it, together with the judicial decrees referring to the matter [...] ===

In my presence

T. Ortega##~~

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<sup>84</sup> The healthy plant refers to the Christian/Catholic community/faith, while darnel is a ryegrass and weed that could seriously damage a wheat crop should it get in amongst the crop.